



*Washington State*  
Department of Social  
& Health Services

**Report to the Governor and Legislature**

**Refugee and Immigrant Services  
(Language Training and Employment Services –  
LEP Pathway)**

***As Required by Chapter 50, Section 207 (7),  
Laws of 2011, First Special Session***

**December 2011**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chapter 50, Section 207 (7), Laws of 2011, First Special Session requires the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS or the Department) to report to the Legislature annually on all sources of available funding for refugee and immigrant employment services during the current fiscal year, amounts expended to-date by service type and funding source, the number of participants served, and program outcome data. The Department provides employment services to refugees and immigrants through the Limited English Proficient Pathway program (LEP Pathway).

### ***Program Overview***

The LEP Pathway Program (or Pathway) provides specialized and culturally appropriate services that lead to employment. LEP adults who receive cash assistance through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), State Family Assistance (SFA)<sup>1</sup>, or Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) programs are eligible for LEP Pathway services. Refugees<sup>2</sup> who are not receiving cash assistance are also eligible for Pathway services as long as they have resided in the U.S. for 5 years or less. LEP Pathway services include employability assessments, short-term job skills training, English as Second Language (ESL) training, job search and employment placement assistance, and job retention services. Additionally, Work Experience (WEX) or Community Services (CS) placements are available to TANF recipients.

The Office of Refugee & Immigrant Assistance (ORIA) in the Economic Services Administration, Community Services Division of DSHS provides LEP Pathway employment services through contracts with community based organizations (CBOs), voluntary refugee resettlement agencies (VOLAGs), and the Employment Security Department. Most ESL training is provided through contracts with local community and technical colleges.

### ***Program Budget***

LEP Pathway Services are provided with funding from three sources – funds from some sources can only be used for specific clients in the Pathway:

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<sup>1</sup> State funded TANF program.

<sup>2</sup> For purposes of this report, the term “refugee” refers to an individual who is eligible for benefits provided through the federal Refugee Assistance Program. These individuals include refugees, asylees, Amerasians, Cuban/Haitian Entrants, Special Immigrant Visa holders, and victims of human trafficking.

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds, federal and state, which can only be used for individuals receiving TANF cash assistance
- Funds from the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) , which can only be used to serve refugees who have resided in the U.S. for 5 years or less
- General state funds (GF-S) - which can be used to serve anyone eligible for LEP Pathway services

The following tables show the total budget for SFY 2012 and SFY 2011 by funding source:

SFY 2012 budget:	SFY 2011 budget:
\$ 3,600,000 TANF	\$ 3,213,000 TANF
\$ 2,201,934 ORR	\$ 2,107,427 ORR
<u>\$ 2,366,000 GF-S</u>	<u>\$ 3,031,000 GF-S</u>
<b>\$ 8,167,934 TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 8,351,427 TOTAL</b>

### Pathway Expenditures

Contract expenditures for Pathway services in SFY 2011 totaled \$7,926,577. For SFY 2012, only July 2011 expenditure data is available as of the writing of this report. Contractors submit invoices 45 days after the end of a month, making July invoices due by September 15. ORIA has 30 days from the date of receipt to process a billing for payment. As of October 26, 2011, \$390,422 was expended for Pathway services.

### Program Outcomes

Program outcomes are identified through the invoices contractors submit for payment. As of the writing of this report, only a limited number of invoices have been submitted and processed for the current fiscal year. Since there is very limited outcome data available at this time, we are providing outcome data for SFY 2011:

Services	Number of Participants Served
Number Of LEP Pathway Participants	5,471
Employment	1,756

Services	Number of Participants Served
Average Hourly Wage At Employment Entry Overall	\$ 9.75
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full-Time</li> </ul>	\$ 9.81
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part-Time</li> </ul>	\$ 9.63
Number Of Job Placements With Health Benefits	263
ESL Language Skill Level Gain (levels 1-6)	3,169 <sup>3</sup>
WEX (Work Experience)	436
CS (Community Services)	89
Skills Training	213
Retention - Employed 30 Days After Job Placement	1,243
Retention - Employed 90 Days After Job Placement	1,110

<sup>3</sup> One participant may have multiple language skill gains during the same fiscal year.

# SFY 2011 REPORT ON REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT SERVICES

## BACKGROUND

Washington State has a large and dynamic immigrant community. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 16.5% of the families in Washington speak a language other than English<sup>4</sup>. In King County, the state's most populous county, 22.9% of the families residing in the county speak a language other than English at home<sup>5</sup>.

According to the Department of Homeland Security, in federal fiscal year 2010 (October 2009 through September 2010), Washington State ranked eighth in the nation in resettling new refugees. Only Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, New York, and Texas resettled more refugees than Washington<sup>6</sup>. The refugee groups with the highest arrival rate in Washington over the last several years are Burmese, Bhutanese and Iraqi.

The LEP Pathway program began as a pilot project in King County in May 1999 and was implemented statewide in October 1999 to provide an array of employment services targeted specifically for non-English speaking people from a wide variety of countries and cultural backgrounds. The Pathway provides specialized services to refugees and other WorkFirst parents<sup>7</sup> with limited English skills to increase their employability and places them into jobs intended to lead to self-sufficiency.

The program aims to provide a single, seamless program for services to increase participants' employability so they can become self-sufficient and successfully integrate into their communities. A client entering the program receives consistent services despite changes in their immigration status or benefits (TANF, SFA, or RCA).

ORIA provides LEP Pathway services through 29 contracts statewide with these types of providers:

- Community-based organizations (CBOs)

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<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Quick Facts: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/53000.html>

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Quick Facts: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/53/53033.html>

<sup>6</sup> DHS, Refugee and Asylees: 2010: [http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/ois\\_rfa\\_fr\\_2010.pdf](http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/ois_rfa_fr_2010.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> TANF recipients who are required to participate in employment, job search, or training components to receive cash benefits.

- Local community and technical colleges
- Voluntary Refugee Resettlement Agencies (VOLAGs)
- Employment Security Department (ESD)
- Other organizations serving immigrants and refugees

Of the 29 contracts for LEP Pathway services, 16 include ESL training. 11 of the 16 contracts for ESL training are with local community and technical colleges. The remaining five contracts are with local CBOs. See **Attachment A** for a list of SFY 2012 contactors.

All Pathway contractors have a history of serving immigrants and refugees. Pathway service providers have close ties to refugee and immigrant communities, are experienced in addressing their needs, and able to provide services in culturally appropriate, language specific ways. Many Pathway providers hire staff who entered the U.S. as refugees thus enriching the program by incorporating personal resettlement experiences. Their knowledge, skills, and personal experience in serving refugees are critical to the success of the program.

## POPULATION SERVED

LEP Pathway serves the following groups:

- LEP individuals on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). There was an average of 4,254 LEP adults on TANF each month statewide in SFY 2011, which is approximately 9% of the total statewide TANF caseload for the same period.
- LEP individuals on State Family Assistance (SFA). SFA is a state-funded TANF program for legal immigrants who are ineligible for TANF under federal rules. An average of about 1,420 individuals per month received SFA in SFY 2011.
- Single adults without dependents who receive Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA). There was an average of 515 adult refugees receiving RCA each month statewide in SFY 2011.
- Refugees who do not receive cash assistance residing in the U.S. for 60 months or less.

# LEP PATHWAY SERVICES

The LEP Pathway program provides employment and English as a Second Language (ESL) services to employable adults who receive TANF, SFA and RCA program benefits and to refugees who have resided in the U.S. for less than 5 years.

## **A. Employment Services**

Pathway program participants receive an Employability Assessment to determine their educational level, English proficiency, work experience, and barriers to employment. Using results from the Employability Assessment, participants are placed into one or more of these activities to help them find work:

- Job Search Workshops – these may be provided to participants who have recently arrived to the US and have little experience in the U.S. labor market. A Basic Computer and Internet Introduction Workshop may be provided to introduce and train participants in the techniques for online job search.
- Skills Training<sup>8</sup> – Job skills training provided to LEP participants in selected occupations. Participants selected for training should have the skills and abilities to perform the job in the targeted field.
- Work Experience (WEX) and Community Service (CS) – work activities to improve the employability of LEP TANF parents by providing hands-on experience in a supportive and monitored work environment. Parents will practice positive employee behaviors and learn new job skills.
- Job Placement – Job search assistance to participants who are ready to enter the labor market, including referrals to employment opportunities that match their background, job skills, English proficiency, and abilities.
- Job Retention Assistance – Continued support is provided for a minimum of ninety (90) days to participants placed into employment by providing worksite advocacy, necessary workplace accommodation including interpretation, worksite conflict resolution, and addressing other issues as appropriate.

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<sup>8</sup> This service was eliminated effective January 1, 2011. However, this service is included in the current contract for SFY 2012 as a type of service that service providers can provide to participations under the contract.



## **B. English as a Second Language (ESL)**

The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) is used to assess an individual's English language proficiency in four areas – speaking, listening, reading, and writing. ESL level 1 indicates the client's English proficiency skills are at the low end of the scale, and higher ESL levels indicate higher English proficiencies. **Attachment B** provides detailed descriptions of CASAS proficiency levels.

If the CASAS assessment determines that the client is limited English proficient (ESL levels 1-6), the client is referred to the LEP Pathway for employment services. ORIA contracts with local community colleges and community based organizations to provide ESL classroom instruction, and develop employment related curriculum and training materials to students who have been assessed at ESL levels 1-6.

The provider works in partnership with the client and CSO staff to identify LEP Pathway work activities the individual must participate in while receiving assistance. TANF recipients must sign an Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP) to acknowledge and agree to participate in these activities. Most often, this includes ESL coupled with other work activities like job search or a WEX placement.

## **BARRIERS TO SUCCESS**

Refugees face significant challenges to success. Most come from areas of political and social strife, and some have been living in refugee camps for years or even decades before coming to the U.S. Some refugees are illiterate in their own language, many have had little experience with modern society, and most speak little or no English at all. However, most refugees are eager to adjust to their new lives in the U.S., find employment, and successfully integrate into their new communities.

Having employment is the key to a family's ability to become self-sufficient and successfully integrate into their community. However, many newly arriving refugees cannot speak English, some cannot read or write in their own language, and many need to develop the job skills they need to become employed in the US labor market.

In addition to personal barriers to employment, the ongoing economic recession at the national and local level also impacts Pathway

participants' ability to secure jobs. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports<sup>9</sup>:

The present economic downturn has made jobs normally available to refugees, such as entry-level jobs with limited English proficiency, scarce and more competitive. An ORR official stated that, before the current economic recession, refugees could regularly secure such jobs, but since the recession these positions are generally not available. Most of the resettlement agencies stated that it is taking longer than usual—often as long as 6 months, and in some cases, 9 to 10 months—for incoming refugees to find employment. U.S. officials and resettlement agencies stated that without jobs, some refugees are unable to get by on the levels of assistance afforded them by the U.S. refugee resettlement program.

The diversity of refugee groups arriving in the U.S. enriches our communities but also brings special challenges in meeting their needs with dwindling resources. Some newly-arriving refugee groups can be difficult to serve because we have very few interpreters that speak their languages. For example, we had very little language capacity to support Burmese Karen and Chin speakers and Kirundi speakers from Burundi when they first arrived. In other cases, in particular with Iraqi refugees, high expectations have brought about resistance to the work requirements implicit in TANF and RCA. Other cultural differences make it hard to serve some of these arrivals – for example cultural norms against women in the workplace, or work requirements for persons who are age 50 plus – in some cultures these persons are considered elderly and beyond employment age.

Despite these barriers, Pathway employment providers have been successful at placing these hard-to-serve LEP adults into employment. They have developed effective placement strategies, work closely with local businesses and have established close ties with employers who hire LEP individuals.

## **PROGRAM FUNDING**

There are three funding sources for Pathway services: Funds from ORR, TANF, and GF-S. These funds are combined into a single funding stream

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<sup>9</sup> Iraq: Iraqi Refugees and Special Immigrant Visa Holders Face Challenges Resettling in the United States and Obtaining U.S. Government Employment, Report to Congressional Committees, GAO-10-274, March 9, 2010, available at: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10274.pdf>.

that is used to provide Pathway employment & ESL services. The following chart shows total available funding the Pathway for:

SFY 2012 budget:	SFY 2011 budget:
\$ 3,600,000 TANF	\$ 3,213,000 TANF
\$ 2,201,934 ORR	\$ 2,107,427 ORR
<u>\$ 2,366,000 GF-S</u>	<u>\$ 3,031,000 GF-S</u>
<b>\$ 8,167,934 TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 8,351,427 TOTAL</b>

There are specific requirements for each funding source listed above.

Refugee Social Services (RSS) are ORR funds for services to refugees who have been in the country for 60 months or less. RSS funds are used for employment, ESL, information and referral and other resettlement services.

In addition, ORR provides a Targeted Assistance Grant (TAG) for counties with a high concentration of refugees. Washington receives TAG funding for three counties: King, Snohomish, and Spokane. Funds targeted by ORR specifically for these counties can only be used to provide services to refugees living there.

TANF funding can only be used for employment services to TANF recipients. This funding is not restricted by immigration status and can be used to serve any LEP adult receiving TANF.

General Funds-State has the most flexibility as they can be used for anyone in the Pathway, including those ineligible for federal assistance because of their immigration status.

## **PROGRAM DISBURSEMENTS<sup>10</sup>**

Total budget amount listed in the previous section represents the maximum contract payments ORIA may issue to cover services for a fiscal year. Contractors must provide eligible services and bill with the Department in order to receive disbursements from this budget. The following shows expenditures for SFY 2011 for selected services to refugees and TANF (including SFA) participants.

SFY 2011 refugee services expenditures:

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<sup>10</sup> Expenditure amounts are current as of September 30, 2011. Slight adjustments may occur when contractors bill and receive disbursements for services in SFY 2011 (ended June 30, 2011).

Service	ORR (federal)		State GF-S
	Refugee Social Services (RSS)	Targeted Assistance Grant (TAG)	
Employment	\$ 204,750.00	\$ 355,115.60	\$ 414,672.92
ESL Services	\$ 504,056.00	\$498,044.00	\$ 613,850.10
WEX (Work Experience)			\$ 101,025.00
CS (Community Services)			\$36,800.00
Other (contract model pilot) <sup>11</sup>			\$20,400.00
Skills Training	\$ 28,930.00	\$ 48,460.00	\$55,550.00
Retention (30 & 90 days post job placement)	\$ 284,832.60	\$ 349,548.40	\$ 1,031,439.00
10% Administrative Fees			\$ 167,510.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,022,568.60</b>	<b>\$ 1,251,168.00</b>	<b>\$ 2,441,247.02</b>

SFY 2011 TANF expenditures:

Service	TANF – Federal	TANF – State
Employment – Initial Placement	\$ 375,434.40	\$ 142,739.08
ESL Services	\$ 541,185.90	\$ 401,969.00
WEX (Work Experience)		\$ 724,575.00
CS (Community Services)		\$203,850.00
Skills Training	\$ 38,390.00	\$4,400.00
Retention (30 & 90 days post job placement)	\$ 406,175.60	\$ 372,874.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,361,185.90</b>	<b>\$ 1,850,407.48</b>

<sup>11</sup> This funding was used for a One-Stop service delivery model that was piloted in Seattle.

Contract expenditures for Pathway services in SFY 2011 totaled \$7,926,577.

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES<sup>12</sup>

Program outcomes are identified through the invoices contractors submit for payment. As of the writing of this report, only a limited number of invoices have been submitted and processed for the current fiscal year. Since there is very limited outcome data available at this time, we are providing outcome data for SFY 2011:

Services	Number of Participants Served
Number Of LEP Pathway Participants	5,471
Employment	1,756
Average Hourly Wage At Employment Entry Overall	\$ 9.75
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full-Time</li> </ul>	\$ 9.81
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part-Time</li> </ul>	\$ 9.63
Number Of Job Placements With Health Benefits	263
ESL Language Skill Level Gain (levels 1-6)	3,169 <sup>13</sup>
WEX (Work Experience)	436
CS (Community Services)	89
Skills Training	213
Retention - Employed 30 Days After Job Placement	1,243
Retention - Employed 90 Days After Job Placement	1,110

<sup>12</sup> Outcome data are current as of October 6, 2011. Slight changes may occur as contractors submit outcome data for SFY 2011 after the report run date.

<sup>13</sup> One participant may have multiple language skill gains during the same fiscal year.

## ATTACHMENT A

### SFY 2012 LEP PATHWAY CONTRACTORS

<b>Contractor Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Asian Counseling & Referral Services	\$168,347.00
Bellingham Technical College	\$43,762.00
Big Bend College	\$25,961.00
Clark College	\$242,713.00
Columbia Basin College	\$74,097.00
Community Colleges of Spokane	\$352,737.00
ESD - Spokane	\$142,166.00
Highline Community College	\$376,967.00
Jewish Family Service	\$429,383.00
Lutheran Community Services NW	\$145,216.00
Neighborhood House	\$107,140.00
North Seattle Community College	\$37,911.00
Partners in Careers	\$203,483.00
Ready By Five	\$32,966.00
Refugee & Immigrant Services NW	\$702,425.00
Refugee Federation - King	\$1,190,673.00
Refugee Federation - Pierce	\$64,696.00
Refugee Women's Alliance	\$693,091.00
Renton Technical College	\$315,568.00
Shoreline Community College	\$41,208.00
South Seattle Community College	\$354,797.00
Tacoma Community House	\$426,828.00
TRAC Associates - King	\$900,160.00
TRAC Associates - Pierce	\$123,174.00
TRAC Associates - Snohomish	\$34,862.00
TRAC Associates - Thurston	\$22,664.00
World Relief - King Co	\$388,944.00
World Relief - Spokane	\$221,697.00
World Relief – Tri-Cities	\$167,298.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,030,934.00<sup>14</sup></b>

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<sup>14</sup> Plus \$137,000 in unobligated funds.

## ATTACHMENT B

### Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) Score Correlation

ESL Level	Description	Score Range
<b>ESL 1</b>	<p><b>Beginning Literacy / Pre-Beginning ESL</b></p> <p>Listening/Speaking: Functions minimally, if at all, in English. Communicates only through gestures and a few isolated words.</p> <p>Reading/Writing: May not be literate in any language.</p> <p>Employability: Can handle very routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral or written communication in English and in which all tasks are easily demonstrated. Employment choices would be extremely limited.</p>	<b>180 and below</b>
<b>ESL 2</b>	<p><b>Low Beginning ESL</b></p> <p>Listening/Speaking: Functions in a very limited way in situations related to immediate needs; asks and responds to basic learned phrases spoken slowly and repeated often.</p> <p>Reading/Writing: Recognizes and writes letters and numbers and reads and understands common sight words. Can write own name and address.</p> <p>Employability: Can handle only routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral or written communication in English and in which all tasks are easily demonstrated.</p>	<b>181-190</b>
<b>ESL 3</b>	<p><b>High Beginning ESL</b></p> <p>Listening/Speaking: Functions with some difficulty in situations related to immediate needs; may have some simple oral communication abilities using basic learned phrases and sentences.</p> <p>Reading/Writing: Reads and writes letters and numbers and a limited number of basic sight words and simple phrases related to immediate needs. Can write basic personal information on simplified forms.</p> <p>Employability: Can handle routine entry-level jobs that involve only the most basic oral or written communication in English and in which all tasks can be demonstrated.</p>	<b>191-200</b>
<b>ESL 4</b>	<p><b>Low Intermediate ESL</b></p> <p>Listening/Speaking: Can satisfy basic survival needs and very routine social demands. Understands simple learned phrases easily and some new simple phrases containing familiar vocabulary, spoken slowly with frequent repetition.</p>	<b>201-210</b>

ESL Level	Description	Score Range
	<p>Reading/Writing: Can read and interpret simple material on familiar topics. Able to read and interpret simple directions, schedules, signs, maps, and menus. Can fill out forms requiring basic personal information and write short, simple notes and messages based on familiar situations.</p> <p>Employability: Can handle entry-level jobs that involve some simple oral and written communication but in which tasks can also be demonstrated and/or clarified orally.</p>	
ESL 5	<p><b>High Intermediate ESL</b></p> <p>Listening/Speaking: Can satisfy basic survival needs and limited social demands; can follow oral directions in familiar contexts. Has limited ability to understand on the telephone. Understands learned phrases easily and new phrases containing familiar vocabulary.</p> <p>Reading/Writing: Can read and interpret simplified and some authentic material on familiar subjects. Can write messages or notes related to basic needs. Can fill out basic medical forms and job applications.</p> <p>Employability: Can handle jobs and/or training that involve following basic oral and written instructions and diagrams if they can be clarified orally.</p>	211-220
ESL 6	<p><b>Advanced ESL</b></p> <p>Listening/Speaking: Can satisfy most survival needs and social demands. Has some ability to understand and communicate on the telephone on familiar topics. Can participate in conversations on a variety of topics.</p> <p>Reading/Writing: Can read and interpret simplified and some non-simplified materials on familiar topics. Can interpret simple charts, graphs, and labels; interpret a payroll stub; and complete a simple order form; fill out medical information forms and job applications. Can write short personal notes and letters and make simple log entries.</p> <p>Employability: Can handle jobs and job training situations that involve following oral and simple written instructions and multi-step diagrams and limited public contact. Can read a simple employee handbook. Persons at the upper end of this score range are able to begin GED preparation.</p>	221-235
	<b>Exit ESL Program</b>	236