



Department of Commerce
Innovation is in our nature.

Commerce WorkFirst Programs

Everyone has abilities needed in today's workforce

January 2015

Commerce WorkFirst Program Overview

Serves Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF) recipients with little significant work history and numerous barriers to employment. These transitional jobs programs combine real work with skill development, supportive services, and case management.

- Contract with 21 local community organizations
- Program Length: varies from 3 – 12 months
 - **Community Jobs** prepares participants for employment by combining issue resolution with subsidized work-based learning
 - **Job Connection/Career Jump** combines job readiness and job hunting activities with subsidized work experience for participants with fewer barriers
 - **Career Development** provides participants with career field volunteer experience while enrolled in an education pathway
 - **Community Works** helps participants build references, networking connections, and job skills through volunteer work
- Since 1997, more than 43,204 participants have been served through local community organizations



Fiscal Year 2014 Data

All Commerce WorkFirst Programs:

- **5,000** participants received hands-on work experience through paid and unpaid programs
- More than **1,230** participants in paid programs left with unsubsidized employment of at least 20 hours per week
- The average hours of unsubsidized employment that participants left the program with was **32** hours per week earning an average wage of **\$10.73** per hour
- At 32 hours per week earning \$10.73 per hour, a household of two is earning over **\$1,000 more per month than they received on TANF**
- **New:** Community Works rolled out in October 2013 and enrollments have steadily increased



Fiscal Year 2014 Review

New Program Development:

\$5.2 million for Community Works was received by Commerce in October 2013. Ramping up the new program took several months and referrals didn't become steady until February 2014.

- Number of participants who enrolled at a worksite to date: 1,328

Decrease in referrals and enrollments to *Paid* Program:

While overall program enrollments have remained steady, there was a significant shift in Fiscal Year 2014 from paid enrollments to unpaid enrollments.

- FY2013, **4,777** or **93.5%** of program participants were in the paid program
- FY2014, **3,691** or **73.8%** of program participants were in the paid program



Trends in Fiscal Year 2014 vs. Fiscal Year 2015

	FY14 Enrollments July 1-Oct. 31, 2013	FY15 Enrollments July 1-Oct. 31, 2014
Community Jobs	729	551
Job Connection	605	328
Community Works	18*	444
Career Development	136	161
TOTAL SERVED	1,488	1,484
% in Paid Programs	90%	59%
% Unpaid Programs	10%	41%

*Community Works started Oct. 18, 2013



What's New

Focus on Sector Based Employment:

Current sectors being utilized include Healthcare, Warehouse, Childcare, and Truck Driving.

Once in the sector, contractors are providing resources to help participants move to the next rung in their career ladder.

Step 3: Registered Nurse

Wage: \$52,265

Schooling: 2-4 years

Step 2: Licensed Practical Nurse

Wage: \$39,598

Schooling: 1-2 years

Step 1: Nursing Assistant

Wage: 22,398

Schooling: 1-3 months



Success Story



COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS
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Committee on Ways & Means

**Rep. Dave Reichert (R-WA),
Human Resources Chairman**



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