

Talent and Prosperity for All (TAP)

2025 Workforce System Legislative Agenda

The Workforce Board and its partners have crafted a unified policy agenda for 2025 to advance the goals of Washington's workforce plan, [Talent and Prosperity for All \(TAP\)](#). Focused on six priorities, this agenda reflects a commitment to building an equitable, dynamic system that strengthens communities, fuels economic growth, and empowers workers and businesses to succeed.

Digital Workforce Pathways Initiative – For five years, a collective impact group has driven the creation and expansion of policies meant to support increased access to, and creation of, training, education, and support programs focused on digital literacy and IT career pathways. These are designed to close race, gender, and ability gaps in the IT workforce by reducing digital illiteracy and building accessible entry points into IT careers. With a one-time state funding investment in 2024, the Board kickstarted this essential work and laid the groundwork for ongoing progress. A [legislative request](#) has been submitted to ensure continued efforts to bridge this critical digital divide.

No Wrong Door – Data Integration for Integrated Service Delivery – The Workforce Board and a multi-agency stakeholder team have developed a proposal for the technology solution to begin data sharing in support of streamlined customer intake across the workforce system. The Governor and Legislature provided two-year funding for the planning phase, which ends June 30, 2025. Activities culminated in a [feasibility and analysis report](#) and a request for funds to build out the technology solution, including the resource needs of partner agencies for full, systemwide implementation over four to six years.

Workforce Impact of Benefits Cliffs – The workforce system has long recognized the need to tackle the damaging effects of benefits cliffs on workforce development. When individuals surpass income thresholds, they often face the abrupt loss of critical public assistance, like healthcare, childcare, housing, and disability supports, leaving families struggling just as they near self-sufficiency. This not only undermines financial stability but also hampers employers' ability to retain skilled talent. We are calling for decisive action from policymakers: protect and enhance benefit incentives, provide comprehensive wrap-around services to help workers advance into higher-paying careers while managing the loss of benefits, and dramatically expand access to affordable childcare and housing.

Provide Additional Funding for the Job Skills Program (JSP) – In partnership with SBCTC and local community and technical colleges, this investment will address unmet need for employers by expanding program and college capacity. [SBCTC has put in a request](#) to increase grant funds available for this program. System partners are in support of their request and ask policymakers to support investment in the program. More on JSP [here](#).

Maintain Funding for the Economic Security for All (EcSA) Program, with ongoing appropriations to the Employment Security Department (ESD) for the core EcSA services adjusted for inflation. Simplify EcSA funding streams under a single maintenance budget line item to support local board services to move people out of poverty and into self-sufficiency, including post-employment retention support. This request presumes a continued interagency agreement with ESD and the Department of Commerce to direct Community Reinvestment Funds to enhance EcSA pro-equity poverty reduction services. More on EcSA [here](#).

Fully Fund the Washington Award for Vocational Excellence (WAVE) to up to \$12,000 a year for two years. The [WAVE Scholarship](#) supports up to 147 winners per year, or three per 49 Legislative Districts. This scholarship sends a clear message that career and technical education (CTE) is valued, that the students enrolled and excelling in CTE are valued, and that Washington proudly supports this work with scholarship awards. This scholarship provides a financial incentive and encourages students to further their education. Agency request legislation submitted by the Workforce Board will implement this request in statute and add registered apprenticeship participants at community and technical colleges as eligible applicants.