



Program Policies

State EcSA Community Reinvestment Program (CRP)

Business Support Policy

POLICY #:	<i>P-S-EcSA-1021, Rev. 4</i>
EFFECTIVE:	<i>July 24, 2026</i>
SUPERSEDES:	<i>State EcSA Business Support and Subsidized Training Policy, Rev. 3, effective September 24, 2025</i>

PURPOSE:

This policy provides guidance and instruction for WorkForce Central's business services funded through the State's Economic Security for All (EcSA) Community Reinvestment Program (CRP).

This policy was revised to:

- Replace the name of WA State's management information system (MIS) commonly referred to as "ETO" with the new MIS called "WA Works".

BACKGROUND:

In 2022, the Washington State Legislature established the \$200 million Community Reinvestment Account in the State Treasury. The funds were designed to address racial, economic, and social disparities created by the historic design and enforcement of state and federal criminal laws and penalties for drug possession (otherwise known as "The War on Drugs").

In 2025, the Washington State Legislature designated \$60 million to continue the programs as established in the Community Reinvestment Plan (CRP). The State Department of Commerce allocated \$14.475 million in partnership with EcSA with \$4,365,000 of this fund dedicated to EcSA Business Support to provide business navigator services and business grants to support business startup, recovery, and growth.

POLICY:

EcSA CRP Business Support funds are dedicated to increasing equity by placing a focus on assisting historically underserved communities, with an emphasis on supporting Black, Tribal, Latine, Asian, Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander-owned or operated businesses and individuals from these communities who are starting a business, with focus on EcSA participants who want to start a

business or businesses who employ or plan to hire EcSA participants. While other populations may be served with the funds, significant efforts must be made to serve these priority populations.

Each Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) is required to provide business navigator services to help Community Reinvestment Businesses, and individuals starting a business, identify and connect with existing state systems to help their company succeed as well as access business grants to support business startup, recovery, and growth. Business navigators must provide grant application support and technical assistance to businesses, in collaboration with By-and-For organizations.

WorkForce Central will support eligible Pierce County licensed businesses with 50 or less employees, or eligible individuals who are starting a business with wage reimbursement (on-the-job training). Wage reimbursement training (i.e., on-the-job training) offers eligible businesses the opportunity to receive 100% reimbursement of a new employee's wages for up to \$5,000 of total wages, while the employer trains the new hire on the skills necessary for the position. Businesses must commit to retaining the new hire after completion of the wage reimbursement training, be registered with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and be licensed to operate in the State of Washington.

PROCEDURES:

Business Eligibility and Grant Application Process

Businesses eligible to apply for EcSA CRP Business Support wage reimbursement training opportunities must be licensed to operate in Pierce County, Washington, have 50 or fewer employees, and be Black, Tribal, Latine, Asian, Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander-owned or operated businesses and individuals from these communities who are starting a business, with focus on EcSA participants who want to start a business or businesses who employ or plan to hire EcSA participants. Interested businesses must submit the [Small Business Grant Application](#) (located at [Small Business Grants - WorkForce Central \(workforce-central.org\)](#)). Applications will be reviewed on a minimum monthly basis or more frequently depending on volume of applications received.

WorkForce Central will notify grant applicants via email within three (3) business days of receipt of application. WorkForce Central will notify grant applicants via email within two (2) weeks of their grant submission if their application has been approved, denied, or if additional information is needed before a determination can be made.

Following the grant award, WorkForce Central and the business will enter into a grant agreement that establishes the award amount, purpose of the award, and required follow-up activities. Follow-up activities may include reporting increases in revenue, staff retention or wage gains, or other positive impacts of the grant award.

WorkForce Central may limit the number of grants awarded based on funding availability or other factors.

Trainee Reporting Requirements

Individuals who receive EcSA CRP Business Support wage reimbursement/on-the-job training opportunities must be currently employed with a business who has been awarded EcSA CRP Business Support funds and must register with WorkSourceWA.com. WorkSourceWA.com accounts must be completed in full with current demographic information recorded at the time of program enrollment. Participants may select “decline to answer” on demographic questions.

Individuals receiving wage reimbursement training must be recorded in the state’s management information system, commonly referred to as “WA Works”, with a complete demographic profile recorded in WA Works. Individuals must be enrolled in the Community Reinvestment Program with the applicable training service recorded in WA Works linked to that program of enrollment. The name of the employer awarded EcSA CRP Business Support funds must be documented in WA Works, along with a note stating the awarded business is interested in hiring or retaining the individual receiving the EcSA CRP Business Support funded training. Progress in training should be documented in case notes recorded in WA Works.

Individuals engaged in EcSA CRP Business Support wage reimbursement training opportunities may be co-enrolled in the State’s Economic Security for All (EcSA) program, but it is not required. Individuals who may benefit from additional assistance, such as case management or supportive services will need co-enrollment into other programs as these services are not available through the EcSA CRP Business Support Program. Case management and supportive services are not authorized EcSA CRP Business Support activities.

The State EcSA CRP Business Support Program will be monitored by Employment Security Department (ESD).

REFERENCES:

- ESD Policy 7000 (current revision) – *State Guidance and Instructions for the State Economic for All (EcSA) Program*
- ESD Policy 7005 (current revision) – *Community Reinvestment Fund*

WorkForce Central is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request for individuals with disabilities. Washington Relay Service – 711.