



Bridging the gap between job seekers, employers, and community organizations

WFC Executive Board Meeting MINUTES

March 20, 2026 • 12:00-1:30pm

WorkForce Central • via TEAMS

Ryan Mello, presiding.

Present: Ryan Mello, Rosie Ayala, Dave Shaw, Anders Ibsen

Staff: Katie Condit, Steve Grimstad, Karen Downing

- Welcome
Ryan called the meeting to order at 12:03pm
- Public Comment
No public comment
- Consent Agenda (*Board Vote*)
 - December 2025 Meeting Minutes
 - January 2026 Financial Report
 - Voucher Approvals: December 2025, January 2026, February 2026
 - Annual COLA 2.8%
 - Workforce Board Member Approval – John AdamsMotion to approve the consent agenda as presented made by Dave; seconded by Rosie;
Approved
- Funding Structure & Budget – Katie Condit & Board
Katie presented the quarterly financial report (approved and included in the board packet), noting that financials reflect performance through January 2026, with most expenditures reported through December due to invoicing timing. WorkForce Central remains on track within the July–June program year, with expenditures aligned across three strategic areas. No concerns were raised for the current fiscal year.
Steve outlined the Program Year 2026 budget development process (July 1, 2026–June 30, 2027), including draft budget reviews in late April and late May, with final approval anticipated at the June Executive Board meeting.
- Governance Structure – Katie Condit & Board
Katie reviewed WorkForce Central’s governance model, including the state-designated structure of Washington’s 12 local workforce boards and Pierce County’s designation as the local workforce area since 1982. WorkForce Central operates under an interlocal agreement between the City of Tacoma and Pierce County, overseen by this five-member Executive Board and a private-sector-led Workforce Development Board (WDB). WorkForce Central serves as the administrative backbone of the workforce system, which is a branded network





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of service providers delivering direct job seeker services. Board members are encouraged to recommend private-sector leaders for future WDB appointments.

- **Priority Strategies & Providers – Katie Condit & Board**
Katie highlighted WorkForce Central’s role in funding and stewarding local service providers, citing examples such as Palmer Scholars’ construction pre-apprenticeship program and the newly approved Tacoma Community House Reach Center as a young adult workforce provider. The Workforce Development Board oversees provider selection to ensure alignment with regional workforce needs. WorkForce Central is doubling down on re-entry, following an 18-month ecosystem mapping effort integrating workforce, housing, and behavioral health services. Katie emphasized the need for greater coordination across city and county efforts and sought feedback on the potential value of a unified regional approach or task force. Discussion underscored the importance of aligning re-entry efforts with existing housing and homelessness priorities and emphasized the connection between employment, housing stability, and reduced recidivism.
- **Federal and State Landscape – Katie Condit**
Katie noted that Pierce County has an opportunity to increase its influence on state workforce and economic development policy. WorkForce Central will convene a cross-sector group (economic development, education, workforce partners) to identify 3–5 shared legislative policy priorities and host legislative roundtables to proactively engage state lawmakers.
- **Immigrant and Refugee Workers – Oleksandr & Marianna**
Alexander and Mariana shared an overview of their work supporting immigrant, refugee, and asylum-seeking job seekers through WorkSource. Over the past three years, they have served nearly 400 individuals, supported 200+ credential attainments, and placed participants into high-demand sectors such as healthcare, transportation, IT, and construction. Key challenges discussed included foreign credential transfer barriers, housing instability, and recent federal changes restricting eligibility for non-domiciled CDL renewals, which may significantly impact trained workers and local employers. WorkForce Central reaffirmed its commitment to this priority population.
- **Good of the Order**
Board discussed that Pierce County reported significant disruption and uncertainty related to federal funding following changes under the current federal administration. Issues included temporary grant stoppages, increased restrictions on federal funds, and heightened administrative barriers affecting local government, community-based organizations, and the private sector. While litigation has temporarily preserved some funding, it was noted that this is not a sustainable solution. In response, Pierce County convened a cross-sector Resiliency Hub to improve coordination, information-sharing, and preparedness across public, private, nonprofit, and philanthropic





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partners. The Hub focuses on identifying emerging impacts, analyzing data trends, and developing mitigation strategies, recognizing that local entities cannot fully replace lost federal funding but can reduce harm through earlier coordination. The Hub includes approximately 40 organizations and is supported by Pierce County staff and the Greater Tacoma Community Foundation, with participation from city leadership, county council leadership, workforce, philanthropy, and community organizations.

Katie shared emerging impacts related to SNAP (food benefit) policy changes, particularly expanded work requirements affecting new populations, including individuals over age 54 and households with younger children. These changes are expected to impact more than 7,000 additional individuals in Pierce County, increasing demand for workforce and employment supports.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:12pm

