

## QUALIFYING OCCUPATIONS POLICY

### **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Policies and Procedures**

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** July 1, 2007

**POLICY #:** P211

#### **I. PURPOSE:**

This policy sets the process by which the Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council (WDC) will maintain a list of occupations and skill sets that are in demand or decline in the region.

#### **II. BACKGROUND:**

State Law requires local Workforce Development Councils, in cooperation with Employment Security Department (ESD) and its Labor Market Information Division (LMI), to identify and make available a list of demand and decline occupations and skill sets in their service delivery areas. These occupations will comprise the “Qualifying Occupations List” that becomes the guideline for:

- Eligibility for training benefits under the Workforce Investment Act, Unemployment Insurance, WorkFirst, and Commissioner-Approved training.
- Strategic planning at the WDC.

#### **III. POLICY**

Effective July 1, 2001, the Workforce Development Council will make available a “Qualifying Occupations List” that catalogs occupations and skill sets that are in high demand and those that are declining in the Seattle-King County region. The WDC will approve this list based on information provided by the Labor Market Information Division (LMI).

#### **IV. PROCEDURES**

##### **A. Process –**

The LMI Division will provide an annual Qualifying Occupations List for the Seattle King County region. The WDC will review this list and determine whether the list needs to be modified. The list of occupations will be divided into “demand” and “decline” categories. Customers may receive training and other benefits toward training for a “demand” occupation, in which they can expect to find good opportunities for employment. Customers can also receive training in an occupation that has not been designated as “demand” or “decline” due to limited local labor market information, by demonstrating that they can expect to find good opportunities for employment. (See exceptions below.)

Once approved or modified by the WDC, this Qualifying Occupations List will be available on the WDC website ([www.seakingwdc.org](http://www.seakingwdc.org)) for the WorkSource system and service providers to

access no later than September of each year. The approved list will be sent to the LMI Division's contact person.

**B. Modification -**

The WDC will update and/or modify the Qualifying Occupations List at least once a year. Events that may prompt a modification to the list include:

- Significant changes in the local economy.
- Warning of significant layoffs or plant closures.
- New business openings, or significant growth of an existing business.

The WDC will approve any modification.

**C. Exceptions -**

Exceptions to receiving training or related benefits in an occupation that has been designated as "decline" can be granted on a case-by-case basis such as, but not limited to:

- a person planning to relocate or commute to an out of county area requests training for a job that is in decline in his or her current labor market yet is in demand in the area of relocation;
- the job seeker has evidence of job opportunities upon completion of the training program;
- the training offers incremental skill sets that would provide the individual good chance of re-employment in his or her former occupation;
- the training that would address a skills gap in a WDC identified priority industry.

Such requests for exceptions must be initially reviewed and approved by the requesting service provider's administrator in writing, and then approved by the WDC management or designee on a case-by-case basis. This decision shall be final.

**D. Documentation -**

Any request for exception must occur in writing to the WDC management or designate for approval. No retroactive exceptions will be approved.

**V. REFERENCES:**

1999-00 Washington State Substitute House Bill 3077