

# EASTERN WASHINGTON PARTNERSHIP

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

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WDC Policy #: 204  
Effective Date: 7/1/2001  
Revision Date: 07/01/2015

SUBJECT POLICY FOR DETERMINING QUALIFYING OCCUPATIONS LIST

### PURPOSE

This policy establishes the process that the Workforce Development Council (WDC) shall use for developing and maintaining a local list that identifies increasing and decreasing occupations and skill sets in the region.

### BACKGROUND

Senate House Bill 3077 requires that by July 1, 2001, each local workforce development council, in cooperation with Employment Security Department and its Labor Market Information Division, must identify a list of occupations and skill sets for which the demand is increasing or declining. The list will serve as a foundation for

- the Workforce Development Council's strategic planning
- service providers' decisions on requests for training using Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) training funds
- determining eligibility for extended unemployment training benefits for dislocated workers
- determining eligibility for the Skills Gap Training Fund
- service providers' decisions on requests for WorkFirst and Commissioner-Approved training

### POLICY

The Workforce Development Council shall maintain a list of occupations and skill sets (Qualifying Occupations list) that identifies the increasing and decreasing demand for such in the local and adjacent workforce development areas.

The Qualifying Occupations list will be developed and approved by the WDC's Quality Assurance committee or other such committee as appointed by the WDC. Sources of this information include, but are not limited to:

- Washington State information sources at LMEA, UI, and WILMA

- Skills gap analysis studies, such as those developed under the recent grant programs for Agriculture/Food Processing and for Metals, Woods, and Plastics
- Input from the Regional Economist for LMEA in this area
- Input from recognized employment and training organizations that are experienced in placing job seekers in the local labor market
- Input from local and state Employment Security offices experienced in the development of job openings and announcements
- Local offices of nation employment service
- Economic Development Councils in the counties of the region
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Placement information from local training providers
- Employment information (placements and projected openings) from local businesses and labor organizations

In addition to an annual review, several kinds of events may prompt a revision to the Qualifying Occupations List.

- WARN-level or significant layoffs or plant closures
- Plant re-openings
- A “User Alert” from LMEA notifying of a significant change in the local economy
- New business openings or significant growth of an existing business
- Requests for exceptions to the Qualifying Occupations List that point to a possible change in demand (see below)

### EXCEPTIONS TO THE QUALIFYING OCCUPATIONS LIST

Requests for specific exceptions to the list may be approved on a case-by-case basis. Such requests for exceptions must be initially reviewed and approved by the requesting service provider’s administrator, and then approved by the Director of the WDC or his/her designee. Examples of criteria for approving exceptions may include:

- A participant’s documented willingness to relocate after completion of WIOA-funded training to an area where the occupation is in demand;
- The presentation of evidence that substantiates a bona fide employment opportunity upon successful completion of training;
- Documentation from the training provider of high placement rates by a training provider;
- Occupations not listed by LMEA for which employment opportunities can be documented to exist;
- An occupation for which demand is present but too small to be considered for a mid-year update to the list;

- The LMEA List of Qualifying Occupations will identify demand by occupational cluster. There may be individual occupations within a declining or neutral cluster that can be established to be in increasing demand; and
- Other evidence to support the employability of the participant after training, such as training plan, labor market information, employer contacts, etc.

The decision on exceptions to the list by the WDC Director/designee shall be final. All exceptions that are granted will be reported out to the committee. Decisions to approve or disapprove training or training benefits are the responsibility of the service provider and not that of the WDC.

The WDC-approved Qualifying Occupations list will be posted on the area WorkSource web sites and made available to partnership staff and other interested parties. The list will be sent to the LMEA division's contact person. Changes and modifications will also be posted on the sites as they are updated and provided to the interested parties.