



## PROCEDURE: LOW-INCOME AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY GUIDELINES

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**Procedure Number:** 2020c

**Effective Date:** May 20, 2024

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### Process

- **Low-Income Determination:** Subrecipients, contractors and partners should define “low-income” as follows for determination of priority of services under the Title I Adult and Youth funding streams.
  - **Priority of Services for Adults:** Adults whose personal or family income does not exceed or has not in the past six months exceeded 70% of poverty as per the table below are considered “low-income”. WIOA uses 70% of the lower living standard income level (LLSIL). Under WIOA there is no exclusion for payments of unemployment compensation, child support payments, and old-age survivor insurance benefits from the income calculation for determining if an individual is low income. An adult with a disability may be considered a family of one for low-income determination.
  - **Youth Eligibility:** Youth who meet the income guidelines in the table below relative to determined family size, or who are homeless, receiving or eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches, or foster children on behalf of whom state or local government payments are “low-income”. Income eligibility for youth with disabilities is based on the disabled youths’ own income rather than their family income.
- **Self-sufficiency Determination:** Self-sufficiency is unique to the needs of each job seeker/family, based on the costs of living in the community in which they live. Workforce Snohomish will use the [Washington Self-Sufficiency Calculator](#) to identify what self-sufficiency means for each job seeker. When determining job seeker self-sufficiency, subrecipients must document the self-sufficiency wage identified by the calculator in the job seeker’s service plan or case notes.
- **Determining Family Size:** For these purposes, “family” under WIOA means two

or more individuals related by blood, marriage, or decree of court, who are living in a single residence, and are included in one or more of the following categories:

- A married couple or state-registered domestic partnership, and dependent children;
- A parent or legal guardian and dependent children; or
- A married couple.

NOTE: An individual with a disability whose own income meets the low-income criteria may be considered low-income even if the family of the disabled individual does not meet that same income criteria.

- **Determining whether a youth is a “dependent”:** Washington State identifies three circumstances where youth must be considered dependents of parents or legal guardians for the purpose of determining family size for WIOA Title I youth and adult program eligibility:
  - Youth not yet 18, who are not emancipated youth nor runaway youth, living “at home” with their parents or legal guardians, including individuals in the temporary care of another individual or household (but not claimed as a dependent by that household)
  - Youth age 18-19 who are full-time students in a secondary school or equivalent and are living “at home” with their parents or legal guardians.
  - Youth age 18-24 who are not full-time students and are living “at home” with their parents or legal guardians and who are primarily supported by their parents.

A legal guardian is a blood relative (e.g., grandparent, aunt or uncle) or other legally recognized relative (e.g., by decree of the court) who claims the youth as a dependent.

Number in family	Federal Poverty Definition (*the higher of 70% LLSIL or HHS Poverty Guideline)
1*	\$15,566
2	\$25,498
3	\$35,007
4	\$43,211
5	\$50,995
6	\$59,636
7	\$68,277
8	\$76,918

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Cost of each additional family member  
over 8 in family

+\$8,641
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Updated May 17, 2024

- **Updating the guidelines:** Each April, using information published in the Federal Register, Workforce Snohomish staff will use the annual DOLETA lower living standard income level (LLSIL) data for the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue Metropolitan Statistical Area (published in March) to update the income guidelines as follows:
  - Low Income guidelines – this is 70% of the LLSIL.
  - Family of 1 through Family of 6, locate the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue Metropolitan Statistical Area row in appendix C of the LLSIL and find the value for 70% of LLSIL. Locate the values for a family of 1 through a family of 6 to update the table above. If any of the values are lower than that of the HHS Poverty Guideline in the corresponding year for that household size, use the higher value.
  - Subtract the value for a family of 5 from that of a family of 6 and use the difference to create values to families of 7 and 8. This value can also be used as stated above for each additional family member past 8.

#### Includable Income:

- Money, wages, and salaries before any deductions.
- Unemployment compensation.
- Child support.
- Alimony.
- Old Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI).
- Net receipts from non-farm self-employment (recipients from a person's own unincorporated business, professional enterprise, or partnership after deductions for business expense).
- Net receipts from farm self-employment (receipts from a farm which one operates as an owner, renter, or sharecropper, after deductions for farm operating expenses).
- Regular payments from railroad retirement, strike benefits from union funds, and worker's compensation (not lump sum) training stipends.
- Military family allotments or other regular support from an absent family member or someone not living in the household.
- Pensions whether private, government employee (including military retirement pay), law enforcement firefighters (LEF) disability income.
- Regular insurance or annuity payment.
- College or university grants, fellowships, assistantships, state work-study, (not needs based scholarships): the key is whether the money is a loan to be paid back. If it is to be paid back, then it is a loan, and excludable income, if not, then it is includable.
- Dividends, interest, net rental income, net royalties, and periodic receipts from estates or trusts.
- Net gambling or lottery winnings.
- L&I paid monthly.

Excludable Income:

- Public assistance payments (including TANF, SSI, RCA, GA, emergency assistance money payments, and general relief money payments).
- Foster childcare payments.
- Financial assistance under Title IV of the Higher Education Act, i.e. Pell grants, federal supplemental educational opportunity grants and federal work study (Stafford and Perkins loans, like any other kind of loans, are debt and not income).
- Needs-based scholarship assistance.
- Allowances, earnings, and payments (except On-the-Job Training income) to individuals participating in WIOA.
- Capital gains.
- Any assets drawn down as withdrawals from a bank, the sale of property, a house, or a car.
- Tax refund, gifts, loans, lump-sum inheritance, one-time insurance payments, or compensation for injury (lump sum).
- Non-cash benefits such as employer fringe benefits, food or housing received in lieu of wages, Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, school meals, and housing assistance.
- Income earned while on active military duty and other benefits specified at 38 U.S.C. 4213 items (1) and (3) section 4213 requires WIOA to disregard pay or allowances received by any person while serving on active duty. Note: This should be ex-service personnel who did not receive veteran 1 status, i.e., discharged other than honorable status. Section 4213 says to disregard benefits received by ex-service personnel who have veteran status. These benefits can only be received if the person has not been discharged under honorable, general, unsuitable, etc. The six specific benefits are:
  - CH 11 - compensation for service connected with disability or death.
  - CH 13 - dependency and indemnity compensation for service-connected death.
  - CH 31 - vocational rehabilitation.
  - CH 34 - veteran's education assistance.
  - CH 35 - war orphans and widows education assistance; and
  - CH 36 - administration of education.

If payment is a one-time lump sum, it is generally excludable. If it is in monthly installments, then it is includable.

- Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA).
- Workforce Training Assistance.
- Job Corp.