

# Workforce Services Division



— January 31, 2025 —

Welcome to Workforce Services Division (WSD) newsletter - *The Connection!* This newsletter focuses on sharing information to connect, engage, support and excel. This month's message from Director Maidadi along with updates on our Veterans program and data privacy.

If you have thoughts or suggestions, please send them to the [WSD Virtual Suggestion Box](#); and for newsletter article ideas and comments, you can share those by emailing the WSD Communications [inbox](#), and we'll be in touch with you!

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- [Message from Ismaila Maidadi -- It's a new year](#)
  - [News for those who support Veterans and military families](#)
  - [February Quarterly Training: Navigating USAJOBS.gov](#)
  - [Data Privacy Week: Take control of your data](#)
  - [Management tips: Mentoring and coaching](#)
  - [Focus on 2025!](#)
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## Message from Ismaila Maidadi

Greetings Team,



It's a new year, and I want to start by expressing my deep appreciation for all of you. By focusing on the positive aspects around us, we can unlock our potential and achieve things we never thought possible.

While 2025 does bring some uncertainties, including challenges with our Washington State budget and unpredictability in the world around us, I believe our focus on our customers, resilience and strength will guide us through these times. Together, we can face any challenge and emerge stronger. Here's to a year filled with growth,

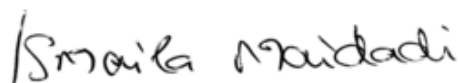
opportunities and unwavering support for one another!

This year heralds the launch of WIT – our new WA Works and WorkSource WA application. I frequently meet with system leaders who are dedicated to this project's success, and I am so glad to say that we are on target for our November launch. We've been eagerly anticipating an improved system, and it's almost here! This is

our division's top priority, and in 2025, WIT development will move from the background to taking center stage as we roll out training and get to launch in November! We will be mindful to ensure we do not overextend ourselves, making sure we have the capacity to give our system launch our full attention.

With other changes on the horizon, I am confident we will face them with a people-first mentality. I truly appreciate the questions I receive from many of you on a regular basis – please keep them coming. I encourage everyone to share your thoughts, ideas, and concerns. Your voices are essential to creating the best future for our teams and our customers.

Please know that your leaders and I are here to support you every step of the way. We are committed to your well-being and success. Let's embrace the opportunities that the new year brings, knowing that we are stronger together.



Ismaila (Ish) Maidadi, Director  
ESD Workforce Services Division

[Top of page](#)

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## Project updates

### News for those who support Veterans

#### **Exciting changes for military-connected customers who want one-on-one services!**

*Submitted by Seth Maier, Veterans & Military Families program operator*



In response to new guidance from Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Services (DOL-VETS [VPL 05-24](#)) and Employment and Training Administration (DOL-ETA [TEGL 03-24](#)) on how our customers touched by military service are screened for referrals to one-on-one services at our WorkSource offices, we are excited to introduce the **new IN-STEP Desk-Aid and Screening Tool**.

While we look forward to the completion of the new WA Works, the IN-STEP Desk-Aid and Screening Tool will serve as an essential temporary solution; and when WA Works launches, it will include all the necessary screening steps for these customers.

In late 2024, the Veterans and Military Families (V&MF) program staff visited 21 offices to introduce these new tools. If your office missed the training or you would like a refresher, you can watch a short video introduction at [Intro to IN-STEP Desk-Aid and Screening Tool](#).

There is a **NEW** 15-minute training on how to use the desk-aid and screening tool and links to these resources available on the [Workforce Professional Center \(WPC\)](#). On the Veterans program page, you will also find an updated 5-minute training on Priority of Service. All of this information has been added to our onboarding guides for new hires. You can locate all these resources by going to [WPC V&MF Programs](#) and scrolling down to the section on "How to Refer a Veteran..."

**V&FM trainings are accessible to all WorkSource staff and our internal and external partners to ensure seamless referrals for customers** requesting one-on-one services. This includes those provided by a Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist. When our new WA Works launches later this year, this new system will incorporate the screening function. We will be sharing additional information with you then.

Thank you for providing the best services to our military-connected customers and helping them achieve their employment goals. Your dedication is truly appreciated!

[Top of page](#)

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## 2024 Veterans & Military Families training series continues.

### February Quarterly Training: Serving Those Touched by Military Service

*Submitted by Monique Martin, Veterans & Military Families program support specialist.*

On Thursday, Feb. 13, the Veterans and Military Families Program will be holding its next quarterly training for all staff and partners who serve those touched by military service.

We are excited to announce this session will be on **Navigating USAJobs and the Federal Application Process**. This 90-minute training starts at 3 p.m., when we will pull back the curtain and reveal how federal employers screen job seekers for openings.



**Join us and learn how to unlock the secrets to securing a federal job!** This session will explore effective strategies for federal employment applications and uncover the nuances of Special Hiring Authorities, Veteran Preference and Pathway Programs. These insights can be leveraged for a successful federal career and are valuable not just for our military-connected customers but for any customers interested in federal employment.

#### Key Points to be Covered:

- Navigating [USAJobs.gov](https://www.usajobs.gov) and the application process
- Understanding what federal employers are looking for
- Special Hiring Authorities (including Veteran Preference): Who qualifies and how to use them
- Pathway Programs: Navigating towards a federal interview

We are thrilled to have special guest speaker, **Chip Kormas**, employment coordinator for the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. Chris has expert knowledge on the federal hiring process and has a lifetime of public service experience -- including nearly two decades in the U.S. Air Force and over a decade in workforce development with the federal Veteran Affairs and our own Employment Security Department.



Don't miss this opportunity to gain invaluable insights and strategies that can help you guide our customers towards successful federal careers. If you haven't registered yet, please download and open the invitation link to save to your calendar. To receive future quarterly notices, please contact [Monique Martin](#).

**February 13, 3 to 4:30 p.m.**

[Teams meeting invitation: USAJOBS](#)

We look forward to your participation!

[Top of page](#)

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## National Data Privacy Week

### Take control of your data.

*Submitted by Victoria Pruett, WSD communications consultant*

This week is national Data Privacy Week (Jan. 27 – Jan. 31) and the theme is “Take Control of Your Data.” Here at Employment Security Department privacy is a priority. It is a fundamental part of our roles as we serve customers and protect their Personally Identifiable Information (PII). Our agency and other state agencies, like WaTech, help us understand how we can manage our work and our customers’ data keeping privacy in mind.



#### About Data Privacy Week

The goal this week is to create awareness about digital privacy and to be informed, vigilant and proactive about data usage and shared data. Information is collected daily from our computers, our smartphones and pretty much every other internet-connected device, which may include your wristwatch or your vehicle. Knowledge is our first and best line of defense to keeping data secure.

#### What you can do to ensure data privacy

There are several resources available from ESD and WaTech to help you know what steps to take to share and protect your data. WaTech manages Washington state agencies’ central network and data centers. They are hosting webinars and interviews this week. Check out the [full list of activities on WaTech’s website](#). Some will be recorded and available later, with resources like: [Privacy Minute: Privacy Requires Work](#) and [Privacy Basics for Washington State Agency Employees](#).



*Image courtesy of ESD Office of Privacy, Records and Data Sharing.*

ESD's Office of Privacy, Records and Data Sharing ensures the right amount of data gets to the right people. Chief Data Privacy Officer Emily Kok encourages us all to be Data Privacy Champions and to:

- Use the [Phish Alert Report button](#) for suspicious emails
- [Avoid PII in email subject lines](#)
- Double-check recipient and email addresses
- Be cautious with public Wi-Fi
- Use complex, unique passwords and a password manager
- Use Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) wherever possible.

For more privacy and policy information, see ESD's Office of Data Privacy, Records and Data Sharing on [InsideESD](#).

**Questions?** Email any questions or concerns about this topic to [DataSharing@esd.wa.gov](mailto:DataSharing@esd.wa.gov) or [AskRecords@esd.wa.gov](mailto:AskRecords@esd.wa.gov).

[Top of page](#)

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## Management tips

### Recognizing National Mentoring Month

*Submitted by Victoria Pruett, WSD communications consultant*

#### **Resources for mentees, mentors and being your own personal life coach.**



Whether you see yourself as a mentee, mentor or life-long learner, we want to share some mentoring and coaching resources that may be of value to you in your professional career and personal life.

[Employment Security's Mentorship Program](#) and Harvard Business Review offer resources to empower you in mentoring and coaching as well as being your own personal life coach.



This is [National Mentoring Month](#), which gives us an opportunity to focus on how mentoring changes lives for different generations and demographics as they experience meaningful connection. It is also an opportunity to recognize the dedicated mentors whose wisdom and guidance help others succeed in work and life. To understand the profound impacts that are possible, see the Mentoring.org 2024 study on [Who Mentored You](#).

**ESD Mentorship Program just started its sixth cohort**, which runs through June of this year. Several ESD colleagues have participated and gained from shared experiences and knowledge — as mentees and mentors. It's a wonderful way to build relationships and expand your view of our work and public service. For more information, go to [InsideESD](#) and you can always email the [Mentorship Program Team](#).

**Here are a few top articles to check out:**

- [Leveraging Mentoring and Coaching to Create more Effective Leaders](#)
- [A guide to Mentors, Sponsors and Coaches](#)
- [A Better Approach to Mentorship](#) and [The Leader as Coach](#)
- [Five ways to supercharge your career in 2025](#)

[Top of Page](#)

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## ***Focus on 2025!***

***Olympia is the seat of state government and the focus of energy and change as the 2025 Legislative Session starts.***

***If you want to be involved, there are resources available from [WA Legislative Session 2025](#) and [ESD Government Relations](#).***

[ESDGPECComms@esd.wa.gov](mailto:ESDGPECComms@esd.wa.gov)



*Image courtesy of ScenicWA.com*

[Top of page](#)

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