



AGING AND LONG-TERM SUPPORT ADMINISTRATION

Strategic Plan

2021-2023

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Table of Contents

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN DSHS..... 3

DSHS PRIORITIES AND GOALS 4

AGING & LONG-TERM SUPPORT ADMINISTRATION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 5

OBJECTIVES 6

 DSHS STRATEGIC PRIORITY: PREPARE FOR AGING WASHINGTONIANS 6

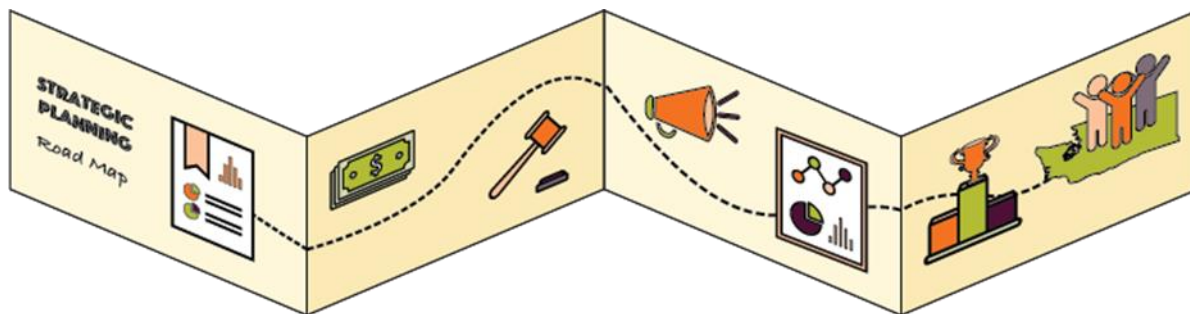
 DSHS STRATEGIC PRIORITY: SERVE PEOPLE IN THEIR HOME COMMUNITY 9

 DSHS STRATEGIC PRIORITY: INCREASE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCY, PERFORMANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS 19



STRATEGIC PLANNING IN DSHS

DSHS' goal and commitment is to be a national leader in every aspect of client service. The DSHS strategic plans are a roadmap to the future. They identify where we currently are with our performance, where we want to be and how we are going to get there. The plans are used to guide our day-to-day efforts and focus our resources. They are integral to the work we do every day.



To that end, a strategic plan is crucial for making informed budget decisions. The Legislature requires each agency's budget recommendations be directly linked to the agency's strategic plan. Our plan articulates our mission, programs, goals, and objectives. The strategic plan itself links budget requests to specific efforts in order to achieve statewide goals.

While the primary purpose of a strategic plan is to guide the agency's activities, it also provides a helpful means to communicate with clients, partners, and stakeholders outside the agency. In addition, state law (RCW 43.88.090) directs each state agency to define its mission and to establish measurable goals to achieve desirable results for customers, and to develop clear strategies and time lines for achieving these goals.

Given the historic times we are living in with the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021-2023 biennium will be a dramatically different strategic planning and budget season. DSHS does not know yet what our new normal will be. However, we will take this opportunity to think about the fundamental changes to how we serve people and focus on the strategic priorities that support our core mission of transforming lives.

For the 2021-23 Strategic Plan, DSHS has an overarching executive summary that encompasses the many services and administrations within DSHS. Additionally, each administration has a more specific strategic plan, with objectives and action plans related to their vast and diverse programs. Lastly, the plans have metrics that are monitored quarterly to ensure we are meeting our goals and objectives. The DSHS strategic plans are developed on a two-year cycle and are annually updated.



DSHS PRIORITIES AND GOALS

This agency-wide strategic plan addresses the priorities for all of DSHS and sets measurable objectives and goals. Using data, we monitor our progress in order to ensure DSHS serves our clients in a meaningful way and to the best of our ability within our funding. Every DSHS employee contributes to the mission of Transforming Lives by addressing the priorities and accomplishing the objectives within our agency-wide strategic plan.



DSHS has articulated broad over-arching priorities for the agency based on discussions with clients, stakeholders, the Governor’s Office, legislators, staff, and others. These priorities directly address current needs and anticipate future needs. By working together across administrations, stakeholders, vendors, community partners, agencies, and others, DSHS will be able to deliver a range of quality of services to Washington residents, work efficiently and effectively, and be an employer of choice for our staff.

In addition, each strategic objective within the DSHS Strategic Plan supports the five broad goals for DSHS.

These DSHS goals align with the Governor’s goals of:

- Healthy and Safe Communities.
- Efficient, Effective and Accountable Government.

<p>PUBLIC TRUST</p>	<p>HEALTH</p>	<p>PROTECTION</p>	<p>QUALITY OF LIFE</p>	<p>SAFETY</p>
<p>Strong management practices will ensure quality and efficiency.</p>	<p>Each individual and each community will be healthy.</p>	<p>Each individual who is vulnerable will be protected.</p>	<p>Each individual in need will be supported to attain the highest possible quality of life.</p>	<p>Each individual and each community will be safe.</p>



“Our Aging and Long-Term Support Administration shows it is leading the way in delivering person-centered care to Washingtonians through its several innovative strategic outcomes and measures. I am especially thrilled to support ALTSA’s role in implementing the state’s first Long-Term Care Trust Act in the coming years.”

Jilma Meneses, Secretary
Department of Social and Health Services



“Thanks to the continued effort and focus of dedicated ALTSA staff, our administration has been able to protect and serve thousands of vulnerable Washingtonians during the pandemic. We will continue to develop innovative and modern service delivery systems that will help us provide long-term services and supports that positively transform lives now and in the future.”

Bea Rector, Assistant Secretary
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration
[ALTSA Organizational Chart](#)

Every year, more than 2,300 Aging and Long-Term Support Administration employees help transform lives by promoting choice, independence, and safety through innovative services.

The Aging and Long-Term Support Administration (ALTSA) Strategic Plan is our living blueprint. This resource showcases our decisions and actions that help ensure Washingtonians have access to safe and high-quality long-term services and supports in the setting of their choice. The plan shows ALTSA’s assessment of areas in which it excels and where opportunities for progress exist.

Staff at ALTSA have an unyielding commitment to innovation and process and system delivery improvement because behind each of our programs are Washingtonians who need our help. Our administration staff provide: CARE assessments and person-centered care planning for more than 70,000 individuals each month; licensing and oversight to approximately 4,400 residential facilities/providers; investigations of more than 65,100 reports of abuse and neglect each year; and support to 10,742 individuals who are deaf, deafblind, deaf plus, hard of hearing or late deafened, or who have speech disabilities. None of these services could be delivered without our staff who provide training, program development and oversight, quality assurance, and assistance with contracts, information technology, data analysis, facilities management, budget, finance, and forecasting.

Mission

To transform lives by promoting choice, independence, and safety through innovative services

Vision

Seniors and people with disabilities living with good health, independence, dignity, and control over the decisions that affect their lives

Values

Honesty and Integrity
Pursuit of Excellence
Open Communication
Diversity and Inclusion
Commitment to Service
Collaboration
Respect
Accountability
Compassion



AL TSA is a nationally recognized leader in the delivery of long-term care services. This strategic plan shows the creative and innovative programs that have helped put us in the national spotlight while simultaneously showing how we plan to continue to evolve and grow for the benefit of all Washingtonians.

OBJECTIVES

Below are the details of the Strategic Objectives within the Secretary’s priorities. The narrative for each priority describes why the objective is important, what constitutes success and provides an action plan. Some objectives refer to decision packages. These are funding requests DSHS submits to the Office of Financial Management as part of the state budget process. You will see a decision package number for those objectives. DSHS monitors progress in meeting strategic objectives, reports progress quarterly on the [DSHS website](#) and updates objectives as needed.

DSHS STRATEGIC PRIORITY: PREPARE FOR AGING WASHINGTONIANS

Importance: DSHS must be ready for the extreme growth in the number of older adults who will need some type of assistance from us to live independently in their communities. Estimates from the state Office of Financial Management show the number of Washingtonians aged 65 and older will almost double by 2040 (from 1.2 million to nearly 2 million people) and most will want to live in their own homes and in community-based settings. We must prepare our staff to continue to provide excellent services in response to this influx of clients and assist family members and other providers to safely care for and support these individuals.

AL TSA has established the following strategic objectives to support how we will prepare for Aging Washingtonians:

Strategic Objective 1.1: Serve individuals in their homes or in community-based settings of their choice.

Decision Package: 050 - PL – ER – MCO Personal Care This funding supports the delivery of critical services to individuals living in community settings who have unmet needs associated with their behavioral health diagnoses. The services provided are necessary to support successful state hospital transitions, acute care hospital transitions and diversions from inpatient care for people living with complex behavioral needs.

Decision Package: 050 – PL – EK – NH Rate Methodology This funding provides an annual rebase and application of an inflation factor to the nursing home daily Medicaid rates. While the federal Medicaid program recognizes nursing homes as institutional settings, AL TSA is striving to maintain a viable nursing home provider network that allows individuals to receive care under Medicaid and/or Medicare in the setting of their choice, which includes their own home.

Decision Package: 050 – PL – 4F – In-Home Provider PPE This funding allows AL TSA to purchase and distribute Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to in-home caregivers who provide personal care for clients who are at a greater mortality risk from COVID-19.

Decision Package: 050 – PL – EP – Personal Needs Allowance This funding provides an increase to the residential and institutional Personal Needs Allowance (PNA). The PNA is the amount of income a client



can keep after they have contributed to the cost of their care and room and board. PNA money is used by clients to pay for their personal items and day-to-day incidentals.

Decision Package: 050 – PL – 5T – Rental Subsidies This funding provides rental subsidies to Medicaid nursing home clients, allowing them to expedite their transition to living in their preferred community setting. Without this funding, the transition process may be hindered due to the financial costs associated with relocating.

Decision Package: 050 - PL - EH – Behavioral Health Transitions This funding supports clients transitioning from state and community psychiatric beds by creating additional beds at various community facilities, providing technical assistance and contract monitoring and increasing the number of staff with clinical expertise to provide intensive case management.

Importance: A hallmark of the state’s long-term services and supports (LTSS) system is that most individuals can choose to live and receive services in their own home or in a community setting. Washington has prioritized expanding home and community-based services and ensuring individuals have timely access. This has created a cost-effective way to deliver services and has improved the lives of clients who feel they have control over their lives and living situations.

Success Measure 1.1.1: Maintain the percentage of LTSS clients served in home and community-based settings at or above 89 percent by June 2023.

See Chart AAH.1: Percent of Long-Term Services and Supports Clients Served in Home and Community-based Settings.

Action Plan:

- ALTSA will work with clients and their families to help individuals move into a community setting of their choice with the long-term services and supports they need for their unique needs.
- ALTSA will create new services for specialized populations and individuals with multiple care needs and will inform and educate community providers of these new services.
- ALTSA will work with Tribal governments and regional Area Agency on Aging leadership teams to plan and simplify processes, review, and improve access to services and develop resources that help staff support the changing needs of clients.



Strategic Objective 1.2: Develop and expand approaches to serve older adults and their family caregivers, as well as older adults at risk of Medicaid with or without family caregivers.

Decision Package: 050 - PL - EA - Extend MTD services This funding is requested to continue vital and cost-effective Medicaid Transformation Demonstration programs past December 2021. It is projected that continued funding towards these programs will help the state avoid incurring costs in the future and that will outweigh the current General Fund-State investment.



Importance:

As the number of older adults in Washington continues to increase, so does the demand for long-term services and supports. We must continue to innovate and expand our services and supports to meet this demand. One way to do this is through Medicaid Transformation, a project with the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which provides federal funding to test innovative, sustainable changes to Washington's Medicaid system.

The Medicaid Transformation Project contains five initiatives. Initiative 2 includes two programs, Medicaid Alternative Care (MAC) and Tailored Supports for Older Adults (TSOA). These models focus on meeting an individual's needs while avoiding or delaying their need for traditional – and more costly – Medicaid services. This, in turn, provides supports for both the individuals and their unpaid family caregivers as well as reduces cost for the state.

Success Measure 1.2.1: Increase the annual percent of dyads (versus individuals) enrolled from 32 percent to 35 percent by June 2023.

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will partner with Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) to develop system and policy. enhancements, person-centered planning, staff and provider training and data analysis.
- AL TSA, in collaboration with the AAA, will focus outreach activities on identification, enrollment, and support of dyads.
- AL TSA is actively working with the Health Care Authority to submit a renewal 1115 application on July 15, 2022, that would continue services under the waiver.

Strategic Objective 1.3: WA Cares Fund – Conduct planning and outreach activities for implementation of the Long-Term Services and Supports Trust Act which will deliver benefits to eligible individuals beginning January 2025.

Decision Package: 050 – PL – ES – LTSS Trust Staff/Infrastructure This funding will be allocated for the establishment and launch of the Long-Term Services and Support Trust program. Funding will be used towards policy formation, IT system creation and support, public outreach, network development and LTSS Trust Commission support.

Importance: Long-term care is not covered by Medicare or other health insurance plans, and the few private long-term care insurance plans that exist are unaffordable for most people. More than 90 percent of seniors are uninsured for long-term care.

Approximately 70 percent of individuals who reach age 65 will need long-term care in their lifetimes. Many of those individuals will have to spend down savings to qualify for Medicaid in order to get the care they need. Providing another method for funding long-term care will relieve hardship on families and lower the increasing burden of Medicaid costs on the state budget. AL TSA has a significant role in the planning and implementation of the Trust Act.



Success Measure 1.3.1: Develop policies, define business needs, begin design and development of IT systems, continue public outreach and create staffing and network development plans for implementing the WA Cares Fund by June 2023.

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will develop and implement outreach and community relations strategies.
- AL TSA will define the business needs and begin the design of both the IT and programmatic components for the WA Cares Fund implementation.
- AL TSA will work with the LTSS Trust Commission to draft and finalize annual reports.

DSHS STRATEGIC PRIORITY: SERVE PEOPLE IN THEIR HOME COMMUNITY

Importance: When individuals are asked to choose where they want to live and grow old, they almost always prefer to live in their own homes and communities where they can be close to their families, friends, and pets, as well as participate in daily activities that are meaningful to them. This is further confirmed through local and national research in addition to quality indicators captured within DSHS and is true regardless of the services they are receiving.

AL TSA has established the following strategic objectives to support how we will serve people in their home communities:

Strategic Objective 2.1: Build a long-term care workforce to meet the needs of clients while creating resources to retain current high quality, direct care professionals.

Importance:

To meet the needs of individuals with disabilities and older adults, we must recruit and retain a well-trained workforce of direct care professionals. The long-term services and supports system has a long history of workforce shortages and high turnover rates driven by low wages, limited benefits, poor job quality and a lack of recognition for the value of the work performed and the demonstrated competencies gained in the field. The demand for services provided by direct care professionals is increasing due to the aging of the state's population. A new long-term care public insurance model, the WA Cares Fund, which will begin in January 2025, further increases the demand for services. A high number of long-term care workers will be retirement age within the next 15-20 years. To address these workforce needs, we have developed a strategy to improve recruitment and retention across all settings including Skilled Nursing Facilities, Assisted Living Facilities, Adult Family Homes, and in-home settings.

Success Measure 2.1.1: Increase the number of high schools, skills centers, tribal and compact schools, summer programs, community programs and community colleges delivering home care aide certification training to students by June 2023.

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will provide technical assistance to the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Office of Native Education, DSHS Tribal Initiative Project Manager and Tribes to implement home care aide training in high schools and skills centers.
- AL TSA will recruit summer programs, community programs and community colleges to provide home care aide training to program participants or students.
- AL TSA will develop and deploy recruitment marketing materials intended for various streaming services.



Success Measure 2.1.2: Design and deploy resources that will increase the retention of direct care professionals by June 2023.

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will retain a long-term care workforce by creating a retention toolkit for employees that supports them in recruiting, hiring, training, and retaining long-term care staff.
- AL TSA will develop a process for sharing the toolkit and tracking of participants' access to, and use of, the toolkit.
- AL TSA will evaluate the retention toolkit for accessibility and efficacy in addressing the turnover and make recommendations to leadership on improvements.

Success Measure 2.1.3: Increase the visibility of the direct care workforce by educating workforce boards, career centers and health care providers about the competencies and value of direct care work by June 2023.

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will develop and deploy materials for presentations to state and national workforce boards, workforce development professionals and health care provider organizations to educate and elevate understanding of the value and contributions of the direct care workforce.
- AL TSA will serve as a member of Governor Inslee's Washington Recovery Group to amplify the importance of direct care careers to garner projects that train more direct care workers.
- AL TSA will serve on steering committees and workgroups convened by long-term care and workforce development organizations to create entry into the direct care workforce.

Strategic Objective 2.2: Support people to transition from acute care hospitals to services in their homes or communities.

Decision Package: 050-PL-EV-COVID-19 Infect Ctrl and Client Svcs This funding will add staff to perform the work necessary to support individuals transitioning from acute care hospitals to community-based settings for better outcomes and more successful transitions.

Decision Package: 050-PL-EK- Nursing Home Rate Methodology This funding provides an annual rebase and application of an inflation factor to the nursing home daily Medicaid rates. While the federal Medicaid program recognizes nursing homes as institutional settings, AL TSA is striving to maintain a viable nursing home provider network that allows individuals to receive care under Medicaid and/or Medicare in the setting of their choice which includes their own home.

Importance: About 75 percent of hospital patients who are referred to AL TSA's Home and Community Services Division are new to our system and need functional and/or financial eligibility determinations. Our staff must make these determinations quickly to transition these individuals from acute care settings when they no longer have a medical need to stay there. This effort requires strong collaboration and cross systems partnerships to include providers, staff, hospitals, managed care organizations, the Health Care Authority, and communities, in order to provide appropriate services and community options that honor patient choice, reduce medical costs, and increase an individual's wellbeing and quality of life.

Success Measure 2.2.1: Maintain the quarterly average percentage of clients whose hospital stay is 100 days or more from the date of referral to HCS not to exceed 5 percent through June 2023.



See Chart AAH.22: Percent of clients whose hospital stay is 100 days or more from the date of referral to HCS

Success Measure 2.2.2: Achieve a quarterly percentage of clients transitioned from acute care hospitals in less than 30 days from the date of referral to HCS consistently at 75 percent through June 2023.

See Chart AAH.23: Percent of clients transitioned from acute care hospitals in less than 30 days from the date of referral to HCS

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will hold weekly statewide meetings to review care files on individuals with complex needs to increase care coordination efforts with cross system partners.
- AL TSA will hold weekly statewide acute care hospital meetings with regional staff to collaborate and share problem solving strategies, medical records, policy changes and best practices that improve discharge planning activities.
- AL TSA will carry out quality assurance actions and give reports to staff about acute hospital referrals and discharges to help manage transitions, analyze trends, and identify barriers and use of resources.

Strategic Objective 2.3: Mental Health Transformation – Provide long-term services and supports for individuals transitioning or diverting from state psychiatric hospitals.

Decision Packages: 050 - PL - EH – Behavioral Health

Transitions This funding supports clients transitioning from state and community psychiatric beds by creating additional beds at various community facilities, providing technical assistance and contract monitoring and increasing staff with clinical expertise to provide intensive case management.

Decision Package: 050-PL-ER-MCO This funding supports the delivery of critical services to individuals living in community settings who have unmet needs associated with their behavioral health diagnoses. The services provided are necessary to support successful state hospital transitions, acute care hospital transitions and diversions from inpatient care for people living with complex behavioral needs.

Importance: Individuals with behavioral health challenges and personal care needs, and particularly those ready to transition or divert from state psychiatric hospitals, do not have many community options for receiving long-term care. AL TSA received funding to increase community options and expand contracts with providers who can serve these individuals. Funding has been invested into assisted living facilities, enhanced services facilities and dementia supports around the state. To expand these community supports, AL TSA coordinates closely with other entities, including tribal governments, state hospitals, the Health Care Authority, managed care organizations, behavioral health administrative service organizations, Accountable Communities of Health, and community providers.



Success Measures 2.3.1: Achieve a quarterly average of 63 state psychiatric hospital to community setting transitions from June 2021 through June 2023.



See Chart AAH.13: Number of individuals transitioning from state psychiatric hospitals into community settings

Success Measures 2.3.2: Achieve a quarterly average of 72 clients diverting from psychiatric hospital to community setting by June 2023.

See Chart AAH.20: Number of clients diverting from psychiatric hospitals to community settings

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will work with providers to improve their skills and capacity to serve specialized populations.
- AL TSA will coordinate across systems to successfully transition individuals with complex needs by using an individualized, person-centered approach and care coordination to achieve and maintain community stability.
- AL TSA staff will implement a monitoring plan for specialty contracts.

Strategic Objective 2.4: Support people to transition from nursing homes to care in their homes or communities.

Decision Package: 050 – PL – 5T – Rental Subsidies This funding provides rental subsidies to Medicaid nursing home clients, allowing them to expedite their transition to living in their preferred community setting. Without this funding the transition process is hindered due to the financial costs associated with relocating.

Importance: The majority of individuals who require personal care services choose to receive these supports in their homes or in other community-based settings. Some individuals stay in nursing homes because they are unaware they have other options or because they began receiving services when their care needs were more significant. By providing community resources and education and assisting interested individuals to move from nursing homes into a community setting, we are supporting consumer choice, increasing quality of life, and contributing to the financial health of Washington.

Success Measure 2.4.1: Increase the quarterly average of nursing facility-to-community settings transitions from 800 in June 2021 to 976 by June 2023.

See Chart AAH.2: Number of people assisted to transition to home and community-based settings from nursing homes

Success Measure 2.4.2: Maintain the quarterly percentage of clients without reinstitutionalization within the first 30 days of discharge at or above 94 percent through June 2023.

See Chart AAH.15: Percent of clients without reinstitutionalization within first 30 days of community transition

Success Measure 2.4.3: Maintain the average length of time an individual remains in the community after transition (in months) at or above 10.75 through June 2023.

See Chart AAH.16: Average length of time individual remains in community setting after nursing facility transition

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will support community living by offering temporary or long-term services, providing staff and contracted providers with ongoing technical assistance, education, tools, and resources on at least a quarterly basis to help with the changing needs of clients.



- AL TSA will collaborate with nursing facilities, residents, and families, as well as expand resources, services, and strategies to support residents transitioning to their preferred community setting.
- AL TSA will implement rental subsidies funded by the legislature to support individuals transitioning from nursing facilities to independent housing with the support of long-term community services.

Strategic Objective 2.5: Consumer Directed Employer - Implement an employment structure for in-home care providers that increases case management time available for clients and decreases administrative burden on the Department while maintaining consumer choice and consumer direction.

Decision Package: 050 - ML – D1 - Continue Consumer Directed Employer This funding is necessary due to a change in the applicable Business & Occupation (B&O) tax, a change in when implementation will occur and the shift in the Individual Provider caseload that is a typical part of forecasted caseload adjustments.

Importance: Washington state currently has about 46,000 Individual Providers (IPs) who provide long-term services and supports to clients in their own homes. Managing the IP workforce currently falls to staff at AL TSA, the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) and the AAAs. This work is difficult and has become more challenging due to the growing number of clients, complex administrative requirements and new and changing state and federal requirements. More and more, this work diverts employee time away from working directly with clients. Once implemented, the Consumer Directed Employer (CDE) will take on all administrative functions related to managing IPs, including payroll tasks, performing background checks, overseeing training requirements, conducting tax reporting, facilitating credentialing, and managing electronic visit verification. When the CDE is implemented, case managers at AL TSA and the AAAs will have more time to conduct client assessments, develop and monitor service plans, address health and safety needs and perform other important case management activities.



Success Measure 2.5.1: Transition 100 percent of all individual provider personal care and respite hour authorizations to the CDE by April 2022.

Success Measure 2.5.2: Establish the rate setting board according to timelines in RCW for setting labor and administrative rates that will be used to pay the CDE by July of 2023.

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will shift the Individual Provider workforce to the CDE by completing necessary staff, consumer, and IP readiness activities.
- AL TSA will provide strong project management to ensure the contractor meets key milestone and deliverable dates, with focused attention on analyzing and managing risks, and monitoring overall project progress.



Strategic Objective 2.6: Process financial applications, complete new Comprehensive Assessment Reporting Evaluation (CARE) assessments and re-assessments and develop service plans in a timely way so that individuals can be supported in the setting of their choice.

Importance: To receive long-term services and supports, individuals must be functionally eligible (as determined through an assessment of personal care needs) and financially eligible (their assets and income must be within limits). Determining timely eligibility for Medicaid long-term services and supports ensures that we are providing appropriate services and that we can receive federal funding to help pay for those services.

Success Measure 2.6.1: Maintain the percentage of timely financial eligibility determinations at 96 percent through June 2023.

See Chart AAH.7: Percent of financial eligibility determinations completed within 45 days

Success Measure 2.6.2: Increase the percentage of initial functional assessments completed within 45 days of creation to 80 percent through June 2023.

See Chart AAH.17: Percent of initial assessment and service planning completed within 45 days

Success Measure 2.6.3: Maintain the annual percentage of timely functional re-assessments at 97 percent through June 2023.

See Chart AAH.12: Timely determination of functional re-assessments

Success Measure 2.6.4: Increase the percentage of financial applications processed within 20 days from 30 percent in June 2021 to 35 percent by June 2023.

See Chart AAH.18: Percent of financial applications processed in 20 days

Action Plan:

- AL TSA staff will coordinate training tools and policy for case management and nursing staff.
- AL TSA will continue to hold quarterly statewide and regional performance metrics reviews at statewide meetings to identify best practices, accurate reason coding and barriers to determine action steps for the division.

Strategic Objective 2.7: Provide education and training to DSHS staff and providers to better serve residents and clients who are deaf, deafblind, deaf plus, hard of hearing, late deafened and speech disabled.

Importance: Providing virtual or onsite training and education opportunities to DSHS staff and other service providers about communication resources helps to ensure that we are equipped to meet the communications needs of our clients and the public. This is essential to meeting the needs of individuals who are deaf, deafblind, deaf plus, hard of hearing or late deafened, or who have speech disabilities to support equal access to the benefits we provide.

Success Measure 2.7.1: Maintain the number of service providers receiving education and training in communication access modalities (communication methods for people who are deaf, deafblind, deaf



plus, hard of hearing, late deafened and speech disabled) at 50 through June 2023.
See Chart DH1.8: Number of DSHS staff and service providers with education and training in communication access modalities for the Deaf, Deafblind, Late Deafened, Deaf Plus, Speech Disabled and Hard of Hearing

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will offer virtual or in-person education and training for service providers about communication access resources for the deaf, deafblind, deaf plus, hard of hearing, late deafened, or who have speech disabilities at the DSHS offices and other state agency or local agency offices.
- AL TSA will begin an evaluation system for assessing client use, staff knowledge and proper application of communication modalities.
- AL TSA will continue to do outreach and provide information about available communication access resources.

Strategic Objective 2.8: Expand case management services for specialized populations.

Importance: Individuals who are deaf, deafblind, deaf plus, hard of hearing, late deafened, or who have speech disabilities face barriers that affect access to communication, education, health care, employment, legal resources, housing, transportation, insurance, public assistance, and other benefits. Case managers are available to assist these individuals in obtaining necessary services by coordinating services, translating documents, advocating on their behalf and/or coaching new abilities and skills. These services are provided on-site or through video conferencing by eight contracted, non-profit Regional Service Centers throughout Washington.

Success Measure 2.8.1: Maintain the number of clients served by the Regional Service Centers of the deaf, deafblind, deaf plus, hard of hearing, late deafened and speech disabled at 700 through June 2023.

See Chart DH2.1: Number of clients served by regional service centers for the Deaf, Deafblind, Deaf Plus, Late Deafened, Speech Disabled and Hard of Hearing



Action Plan:

- AL TSA will monitor the caseload and contract performance at the Regional Service Centers and implement corrective actions when necessary.
- AL TSA will increase opportunities for virtual and/or in-person case management services in rural areas and diverse areas.
- AL TSA will increase the number of clients who receive virtual or in-person services by improving outreach and public relations strategies.

Strategic Objective 2.9: Provide assistive communication technology services.

Importance: Many individuals with hearing loss depend on auditory supports. Assistive Communication Technology (ACT), such as listening systems, help people with hearing loss and state employees or



contractors communicate during in-person office visits or virtual meetings. These assistive listening systems help clients access DSHS programs and services and include tools such as hearing induction loops and pocket talkers.

Success Measure 2.9.1: Increase the number of ACT consultation services to meet service objectives involving the public and clients with assistive listening systems from 350 in June 2021 to 500 by June 2023.

See Chart DH1.7: Number of DSHS Assistive Listening Systems Services

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will increase the statewide use of assistive listening technology at the legislature, AAA offices, and HCS and Residential Care Services (RCS) offices.
- AL TSA will offer virtual or in-person training and consultation for staff and Regional Service Centers.
- AL TSA will evaluate the use of assistive communication technology by clients and staff.

Strategic Objective 2.10: Complete abuse and neglect investigations timely and thoroughly.

Importance: Protecting adults who are vulnerable requires consistent and timely investigations while offering protective services, supports and referrals. Any delays in this work increase risk of ongoing harm to the alleged victim. Adult Protective Services (APS) follows state law ([Chapter 74.34 RCW](#)) and has a 90-day standard for investigation completion. APS has continued to perform consistently on this measure, even as reports of abuse, neglect, self-neglect, abandonment, and financial exploitation have increased. To address the increase in reported mistreatments, the legislature has provided funding for new staff.

Success Measure 2.10.1: Increase the percentage of investigations of adult abuse and neglect completed within 90 days, or remaining open for “good cause,” to 98 percent through June 2023.

See Chart AAC.2: Vulnerable adult abuse and neglect investigations completed within 90 days

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will increase staff training on investigation and case closure policy and procedures.
- AL TSA will improve our onboarding process to retain trained and skilled staff.
- AL TSA will monitor the TIVA system enhancements and continue to improve the system through the change request process.

Strategic Objective 2.11: Investigate complaints regarding facilities in a timely manner.

Importance: AL TSA investigates complaints in long-term care facilities to protect residents from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, as well as to ensure that the services being provided meet the health and safety needs of all residents. Investigations also help AL TSA determine whether the provider is meeting regulatory requirements and making quality referrals to entities that help protect victims. The number and complexity of complaints have increased, making it difficult for AL TSA’s investigative staff to meet response times, especially for low- and medium-priority complaints. Staff have worked hard to reduce the backlog, but until DSHS has funding to increase staffing levels, investigating complaints in a timely manner will be a concern.



Success Measure 2.11.1: Maintain the long-term care facility complaint investigation backlog of non-immediate jeopardy complaints to 50 or fewer through June 2023.

See Chart AAR.7: Timely initiation of facility complaint investigations

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will hire staff, increase retention, and reduce turnover by cross-training staff for all facility types. We will monitor complaint investigations for all regions, units, and facility types on a monthly basis. We will appropriately deploy staff to assist with complaint investigations. We will continue to hire on-call staff to respond to changing complaint volumes and improve staff availability.
- AL TSA will conduct investigation trainings to ensure quality and consistency of investigations. We will modernize the RCS investigation, documentation, and record storage systems to optimize efficiency and effectiveness.
- AL TSA will reestablish timely re-inspections. Due to the impacts of COVID-19, RCS anticipates a twelve-month period to reestablish timely re-inspections of Adult Family Homes, Assisted Living Facilities and Nursing Homes.

Strategic Objective 2.12: Conduct timely oversight and compliance activities in facilities and agencies providing residential care and supports.

Importance: AL TSA licensors and surveyors work to ensure that long-term care facilities follow regulations while providing high-quality care and protecting vulnerable adults from abuse. All long-term care facility residents benefit from this work, whether they pay for their care privately or are AL TSA clients.

Success Measure 2.12.1: Resume timely re-inspections for nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and adult family homes to 90% or higher by June 2023.

See Chart AAR.1: Timely licensing Re-inspections of Adult Family Homes, Assisted Living Facilities, and Nursing Homes

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will optimize staffing by cross-training licensors for different settings and improving recruitment and retention strategies. We will develop an RCS workload model for staff by using key metrics such as facility type, workload for all RCS units and functions, and provider growth and regulatory changes.
- AL TSA will modernize the RCS inspection, licensing, documentation, and record storage systems to optimize efficiency and effectiveness.

Success Measure 2.12.2: Maintain timely quality assurance activities at 90 percent for services provided to people with developmental and intellectual disabilities through June 2023.

See Chart AAR.2: Timely quality assurance for ICF/IID (Including Residential Habilitation Centers) and Supported Living Programs



Action Plan:

- AL TSA will expand and retain RCS staffing for Certified Community Residential Services and Supports (CCRSS) to allow for program-specific quality assurance and enforcement.
- AL TSA will modernize the RCS inspection, licensing, documentation, and record storage systems to optimize efficiency and effectiveness.
- AL TSA will reestablish timely quality assurance activities. Due to the impacts of COVID-19, RCS anticipates a twelve-month period to reestablish timely quality assurance activities.

Strategic Objective 2.13: Timely abuse and neglect investigations.

Importance: Adult Protective Services has two primary duties: to investigate allegations of abuse, neglect, exploitation, self-neglect, and abandonment; and to offer protective services to vulnerable adults who are harmed. Timely response is essential in order to protect the health and safety of vulnerable adults. Investigations are categorized by priority: high priority (24-hour response), medium priority (5 working day response) and low priority (10 working day response).

Success Measure 2.13.1: Increase timely initial response to investigations based on priority to 100 percent for high-priority investigations and maintain at 99 percent for medium- and low-priority investigations through June 2023.

See Chart AAP.1: Timely initial response based on APS intake priority

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will continue quality assurance activities to evaluate areas for improvement and ensure consistent intake decisions and timely assignment of investigations.
- AL TSA will assess changing current response times for clarity.
- AL TSA will conduct a root cause analysis on any missed or late responses and evaluate and create action plans for areas of improvement.

Strategic Objective 2.14: Tribal Affairs – Continue to build strong relationships with, and expand contract opportunities for, tribes/tribal organizations to increase access to culturally attuned long-term services and supports for American Indians/Alaska Natives (AI/AN) to age in their homes or community-based settings of their choice.

Importance: AL TSA continues to focus on strengthening government-to-government relationships with tribes, decreasing barriers to accessing services and advancing culturally attuned services, providers, and programs. We will continue to work with tribal organizations to 1) delay or prevent institutional placement for AI/ANs; 2) identify AI/ANs who are living in institutions and assist them to return to their community of choice; and 3) develop culturally attuned service systems and providers to support AI/ANs once they return to their communities. Work will focus on developing service contracts and engaging potential partners at the state, tribal and county levels for improved and culturally attuned service delivery of long-term services and supports.

Success Measure 2.14.1: Facilitate and assist in the development of at least three contracts to benefit AI/AN elders, veterans, and adults with disabilities by June 2023.

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will engage tribes and tribal organizations to expand information and identify opportunities for the delivery of long-term services and supports to AI/ANs.



- AL TSA will build state agency partnerships (Department of Commerce, Health Care Authority, etc.) to identify complementary funding resources and opportunities for tribal contracting that support elders and individuals with disabilities and provide comprehensive, evolving long-term services and supports with mindfulness to the barriers.
- AL TSA will build strong relationships with long-term service providers to assist with increasing statewide capacity to serve AI/AN older adults and individuals with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic and throughout the recovery period.

Success Measure 2.14.2: Identify and implement increased federal financial participation for a minimum of one long-term services and supports contract provided by June 2023.

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will engage tribes to identify long-term services and supports that meet the federal requirements for increased federal financial participation.
- AL TSA will share federal requirements for Indian Health Service contract language updates to help tribal social and health service departments bill for Medicaid-reimbursed long-term services and supports at optimum reimbursement levels.
- AL TSA will develop and implement billing guidelines and systems for Medicaid reimbursed long-term services and supports provided by tribal governments/enterprises in coordination with the Health Care Authority.

DSHS STRATEGIC PRIORITY: INCREASE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCY, PERFORMANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS

At DSHS, we strive every day to get even better at what we do, no matter how each of us contributes to our agency mission. If we are to continue transforming lives, an important piece of that is transforming ourselves. Our most important resource is our professional, caring, compassionate staff. We need to continue our efforts to be an employer of choice – recruiting and retaining individuals committed to a career in public service. We will keep a laser focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion. Those values are foundational to every aspect of our work with clients and in our day-to-day interactions with each other. Data will be used to drive decisions that will ensure our work is effective, efficient, and accurate.

AL TSA has established the following strategic objectives to support how we will increase organizational efficiency, performance, and effectiveness:

Strategic Objective 3.1: Conduct quality assurance (QA) activities and comply with federal, state and program requirements.

Importance: Completing quality assurance activities helps protect the health and safety of clients, secures federal funding, and provides oversight of operations. These activities include completing QA reviews to ensure we are complying with quality measures and identifying gaps in our quality assurance processes. We address all the issues we identify and develop and monitor improvement plans. We use staff feedback in creating solutions. By taking these steps, AL TSA will help to ensure that clients receive timely and responsive services that our provider networks are adequate to meet the needs of our clients and that providers and facilities are qualified to provide services. These steps will also help us ensure that



we comply with federal stipulations so that we can maintain our funding for programs and services.

Success Measure 3.1.1: Maintain 100 percent completion of Home and Community Services Division case management, Adult Protective Services, and financial eligibility compliance records through June 2023.

See Chart AAH.9: Timely quality assurance of home and community services

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will provide consultation and review and approve HCS and AAA office-specific proficiency improvement plans. We will address areas where proficiency standards are not met.
- AL TSA will analyze statewide trends and adopt training, technical assistance, policy revisions or other actions, as necessary.
- AL TSA will gather and evaluate feedback from consumer surveys with emphasis on determining flexibilities provided during the public health emergency that HCS would like to sustain after the emergency ends.

Success Measure 3.1.2: Maintain 100 percent completion of scheduled Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) monitoring visits and timely completion of draft and final monitoring reports through June 2023.

See Chart AAH.10: Timely quality assurance for Area Agencies on Aging (AAA)

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will complete annual risk assessments and build a monitoring schedule to ensure program and fiscal contract compliance.
- AL TSA will create and distribute monitoring tools for AAA use.

Success Measure 3.1.3: Maintain the percentage of Nursing Home Statements of Deficiency sent to the facility within the federal regulatory standard at 90 percent through June 2023.

See Chart AAR.6: Nursing Home statements of deficiencies sent timely

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will use continuous quality improvement internal controls to track timeliness.
- AL TSA will enhance the Enforcement Communications Center software to improve tracking and timeliness of Statement of Deficiency processing.
- AL TSA will reestablish timely Nursing Home Statements of Deficiency processing. Due to the impacts of COVID-19, RCS anticipates a twelve-month period to reestablish timely processing.

Success Measure 3.1.4: Develop two qualitative outcome metrics for RCS facility types to describe for consumers and other stakeholders the impact of the quality assurance activities provided through regulatory oversight functions by June 2023.

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will identify outcome metrics for each of the six facility types licensed, surveyed, and certified by RCS and verify with data experts.
- AL TSA will survey facility providers and residents for priority outcome metrics related to regulatory oversight activities.
- AL TSA will evaluate effectiveness of these metrics on regulatory oversight activities.

Strategic Objective 3.2: Create and foster organizational culture that promotes employee engagement.



Importance: AL TSA recognizes the science behind and importance of employee engagement. Highly engaged staff result in greater employee satisfaction, employee retention, innovation, organizational effectiveness, and positive outcomes for the people we serve. We focus on:

- **Connecting and aligning staff** with the “why” (our mission), the “how” (our values and practices) and the “what” (the Strategic Plan) through a common message and culture.
- **Strengthening and sustaining a diverse and inclusive workforce** through coaching, training, open forums, and focus on values-based leadership.
- **Creating opportunities for innovation and a culture of continuous improvement** by coaching, engaging, and supporting staff who improve our work using Lean tools and principles to eliminate redundancies and rework while maximizing the autonomy, mastery and purpose of our employees.
- **Supporting staff connection with each other and the community**, ensuring staff understand the importance of their own health and well-being, team collaboration, and community partnerships in helping the organization meet the needs of the people we serve.

Success Measure 3.2.1: Improve AL TSA’s overall employee satisfaction rate from 70 percent in June 2020 to 71 percent, per DSHS survey data, by June 2023.

See Chart AAH.19: AL TSA employee satisfaction rate

Success Measure 3.2.2: Improve AL TSA’s employee retention rate from 92 percent in June 2021 to 93 percent, per DSHS Human Resource Division data, by June 2023.

See Chart AAH.21: AL TSA employee retention rate

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will continue collaborating with the AL TSA Communication team on communication efforts, partner with internal and external subject matter experts about the implementation of Communities of Practice, Lean, Change Management, leadership development, onboarding, wellness, Combined Fund Drive, employee satisfaction surveys, and other engagement efforts.
- AL TSA will ensure solidification of organizational changes through consistent messaging and knowledge transfer by expanding AL TSA’s online New Employee Orientation, building use and understanding of the Washington State Learning Center and creating online leadership and staff development programs.

Strategic Objective 3.3: Develop tools to support staff’s core work and the service delivery system, including updates to technology and payment systems and improvements in applications and data analysis.

Decision Package: 050 - PL – D8 - IT – Paper to Electronic Workflows This funding provides IT support in the development and launch of electronic application systems that will help AL TSA transition away from the use of current paper practices.

Importance: Developing tools for staff to do their jobs proficiently and easily, with added value, supports employee engagement. This is consistent with the Governor’s Executive Order, 16-07, Building a Modern Work Environment. When we make continuous improvements to our practices, it results in better outcomes for clients and residents as well as better use of limited state and staff resources. This type of work is primarily the duty of the Management Services Division and other support staff throughout AL TSA.



Success Measure 3.3.1: Implement a paperless documentation system for Residential Care Services regulatory work functions by December 2023.

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will continue to work collaboratively to update STARS (Secure Tracking and Reporting System) with the Facility Management System and the Records Management System.
- AL TSA will improve efficient and effective use of current data and documentation systems.
- AL TSA will participate in the development of an integrated document management system with AL TSA Management Services Division staff.

Strategic Objective 3.4: Address risks and plans for emergencies.

Decision Package: 050 – PL – EU – Transitional Care Center of Seattle This funding is part of the COVID-19 response, which will allow a DSHS-purchased building to be operated by a contracted nursing facility provider to accept and provide care for 150 difficult to place residents from acute care hospitals. This funding request will pay for facility remodel start-up costs, nursing home client service costs, and emergent maintenance needs at this DSHS-owned facility.

Decision Package: 050 – PL – EV – COVID-19 Infect Ctrl & Client Svcs This funding will address costs related to COVID-19, including emergency planning and reporting, Quality Assurance Nurses, addressing the RCS complaint backlog, telemedicine technology, Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) technology and communication access, and continued faster transition of patients from acute care hospitals to AL TSA community settings.

Decision Package: 050 – PL – L7 – Personal Protective Equip COVID-19 This funding will address the costs incurred for the purchase of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) brought on as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Decision Package: 050 – PL – GD – Network Risk Mitigation This funding will support the successful migration of outdated electronic systems that pose a significant risk to enterprise operations to the cloud.

Decision Package: 050 – PL – GJ – Confidential Client Data Protection This funding will allow AL TSA to hire four full-time staff who will implement a central system to integrate data being gathered within DSHS. This will help us monitor, detect, contain, and respond to cyber threats.



Importance: Responding to risks and emergencies in a timely manner is vital for AL TSA to sustain our operations, to continue providing services to clients and residents when they are most in need and to meet legal requirements. Preparing for these risks and emergencies is an essential part of AL TSA’s daily work.

Success Measure 3.4.1: Foster a safe and secure environment by identifying, prioritizing, and addressing the top risks related to IT, facilities, and emergency management by June 2023.



Success Measure 3.4.2: Foster a safe and secure environment by ensuring that ALTSA is prepared to transition into incident management quickly to address emergencies by June 2023.

Action Plan:

- ALTSA will improve IT security to keep client data secure and continue to discover and remove vulnerabilities, which will allow ALTSA staff to carry out the administration of services without work stoppages.
- ALTSA will review and update procedures and training for ALTSA’s Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) annually. We will update key staff and back-ups for primary contact during emergencies at Headquarters and all ALTSA regions, as needed.
- ALTSA will identify six in-house staff that can be activated during an emergency. Identified in-house staff must attend incident management team (IMT) training to understand IMT structure and roles. ALTSA will identify two staff members from Communications to take the basic online courses offered by FEMA on the Public Information Officer role.

Strategic Objective 3.5: Promote equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) practices.

Importance: ALTSA recognizes the relevance of understanding and practicing EDI principles in the delivery of long-term services and supports. Creating and maintaining a work and service delivery environment that recognizes, values, supports, and embraces respect for individual differences is important to supporting the administration’s vision and to providing equal and culturally competent access to populations that may otherwise be left out or not appropriately or fully served. In order to create and maintain such a workplace culture and service delivery system, ALTSA understands the benefits of integrating equity (fairness), diversity (difference) and inclusion (participative voice) in all areas of its business.



To achieve this goal, support for EDI must start with leadership. ALTSA is committed to building an infrastructure of EDI principles that includes a shared understanding throughout the administration of the benefits of a diverse workforce. Having a diverse workforce can help ALTSA better meet the needs of the people we serve every day. By having certified diversity professionals and executives throughout the administration, the principles of fairness, difference and participative voice will be understood in a manner that reinforces that EDI is not something we do, but is, in fact, who we are. ALTSA recognizes the need to address the ongoing effects of systemic racism on staff and clients. In doing so, ALTSA is committed to better education of leadership and staff members about race and how to practice anti-racism. Only by first looking inward and working on ourselves can we truly be committed to providing the highest quality services for the clients we serve.

Success Measure 3.5.1: Provide fundamentals of EDI, to include anti-racism training to ALTSA management and staff by December 2022.

Action Plan:

- ALTSA will continue training staff about EDI principles.
- ALTSA will expand Quality Assurance policies and procedures to measure success.



- AL TSA will continue to expand on Certified Diversity Executive/Certified Diversity Professional (CDE/CDP) learning throughout the administration.

Success Measure 3.5.2: Operationalize EDI principles throughout the organization, as measured by completion of the Action Plan by December 2022.

Action Plan:

- AL TSA will meet or exceed the Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) Standards. We will be proactive in supporting a diverse workforce across the administration. We will create and support programs to help retain staff. We will examine institutional practices and policies and remove any potential biases identified within those policies and procedures.
- AL TSA will provide opportunities for staff and leadership to acquire shared language and practices on equity through diversity workshops (regional), discussion opportunities and resource sharing on EDI topics that engage the entire workforce. AL TSA will build on recognized milestones of equity, diversity, and inclusion with the additional EQUITY TOOLS of truth, social justice, and dismantling racism to advance our progress in removing obsolete structures to create more productive practices and a more inclusive workplace.
- AL TSA will work with tribes and AL TSA EDI to identify barriers and unintended consequences of hidden bias in current practices.

