



At the Department of Social and Health Services, we work tirelessly to help nearly 2 million people in Washington state navigate deeply complex systems in order to access essential human services. The strategic goals outlined here are bold, forward-thinking and aimed at dismantling barriers that stand between our clients and the tools we all need to build a strong foundation. I am excited to be with you on this journey toward equity, access and well-being for all Washingtonians.

Jilma Meneses, *Secretary,*
Department of Social and Health Services



At DVR, we strive to be a data-driven, learning organization that partners with individuals with disabilities and community stakeholders wanting to expand career possibilities for our customers. There are great opportunities in VR, and we will continue to be leaders, as well as advocates, in this noble work.

Terry Redmon, *Director,*
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation



We Are DSHS

A spotlight on the staff of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

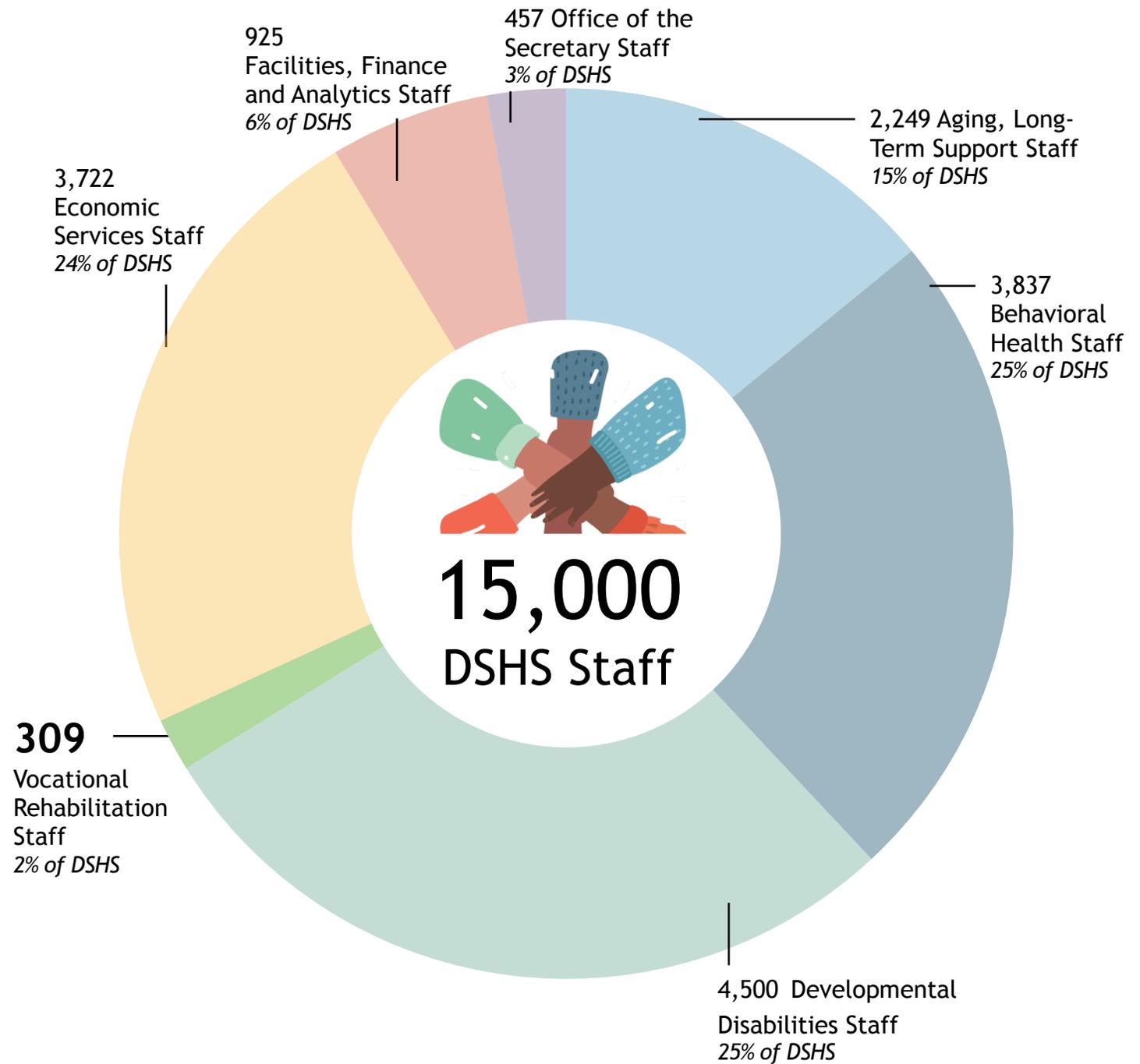
Over 300 dedicated DVR staff serve individuals with meaningful employment supports.

Staff include:

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors

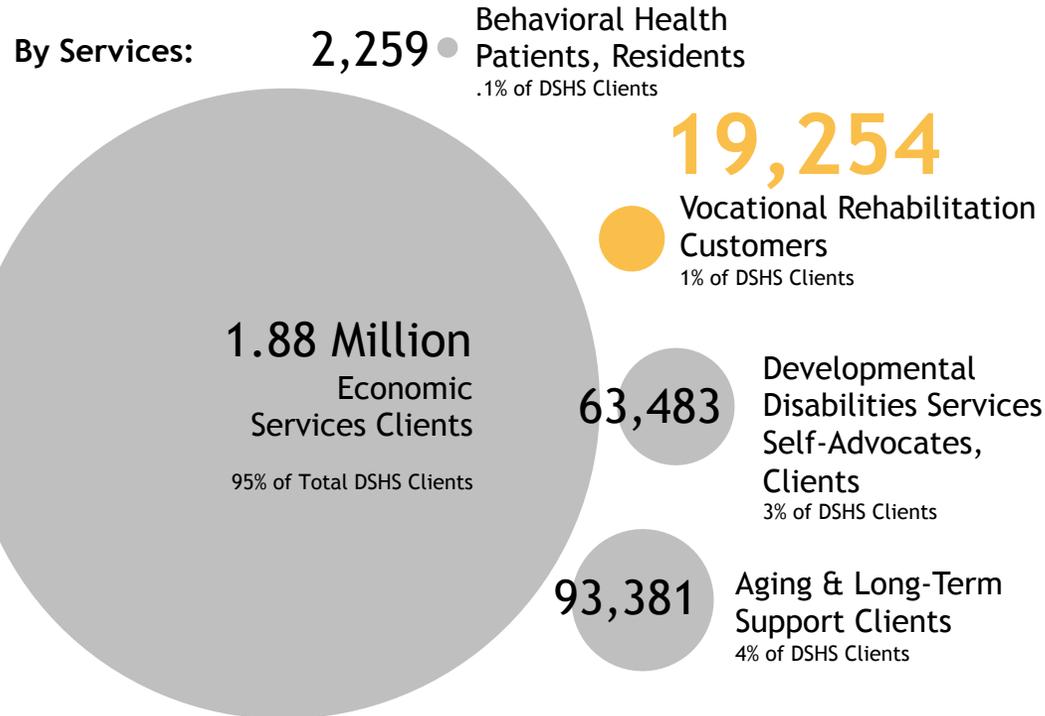
Rehabilitation Technicians

And many more!



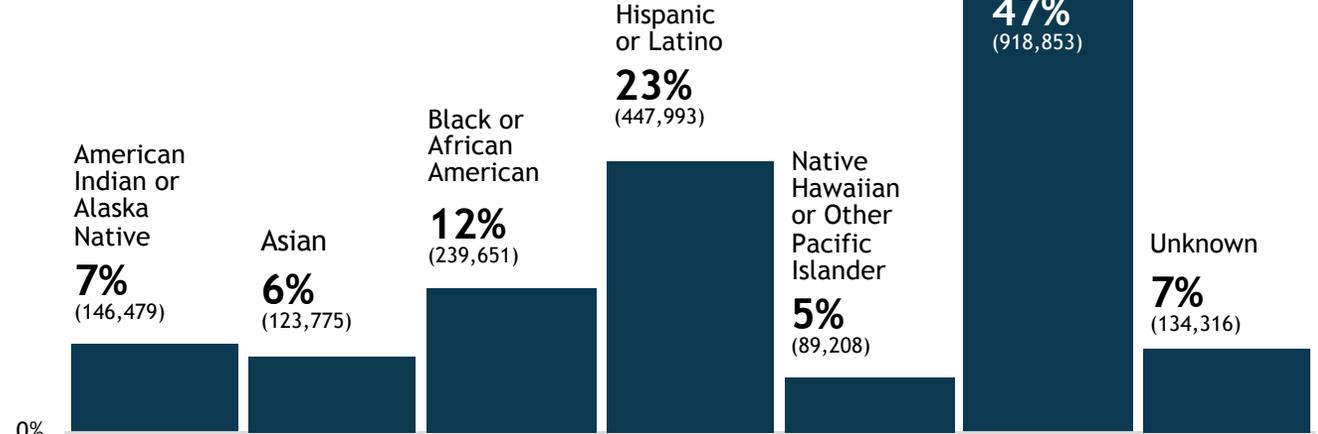
A Look at Washingtonians Engaging in Social and Health Services

In 2020, **1.97 million** people engaged with DSHS services to support their well-being, independence and ability to fully participate in their communities.



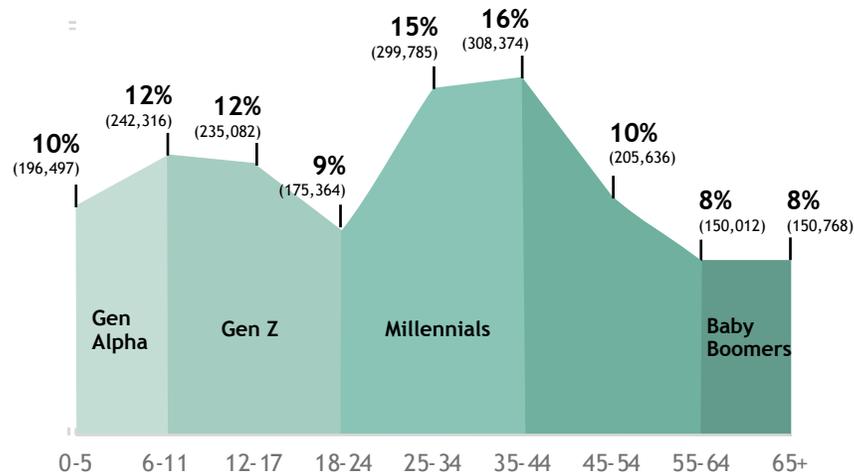
Note: Many clients receive more than one DSHS service. Total sum exceeds total number of DSHS clients.

Race/Ethnicity



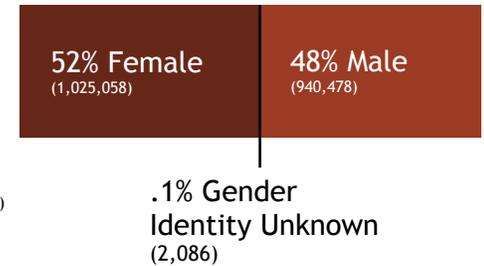
Note: Race/ethnicity groups are not mutually exclusive, with the exception of White, Non-Hispanic and Unknown. Therefore, the sum of counts across all groups will exceed the total population of clients served. We also do not currently have a way to visualize intersectional demographics, for example, reflecting transgender women of color.

Age



Note: Generation ranges are approximate and follow age ranges based on the Pew Research Center.

Gender Identity



Note: We recognize that people who identify as gender nonbinary, transgender and gender queer are not visibly reflected in this data set.

We are advancing equity and access

Our future is becoming an anti-racist agency without barriers to employment, services and access for our colleagues, customers and clients.

With central efforts in the DSHS Office of Equity, Diversity, Access and Inclusion, EDAI administrators, communities of practice, staff and executive leaders are working to make that vision a reality.



DVR's work is most effective when trust, respect, inclusion and belonging are the foundation of our interactions with customers, staff, and the community.

Our goals include:

Creating a consistent hiring process that mitigates bias.

Develop relationships with career centers at historically black colleges and universities and other diverse institutions with VR counseling programs.

Center staff voices on EDAI conversations and encourage learning about racism, oppression, power, and how these are embedded in DSHS programs.



Achieving successful employment outcomes

60% of DVR participants will achieve successful employment outcomes by June 2025.

DVR helps people with disabilities chart a career pathway and engage in services to overcome employment barriers and attain a job.

DVR prioritizes services to individuals with most significant disabilities, believes that everyone has the ability to work with the right supports, and that employment helps a person live independently and enjoy an improved quality of life.



Connecting students to the world of work

70% of students with disabilities who are DVR customers will enter postsecondary or employment within one year of exiting secondary education.

Through Pre-Employment Transition Services, students gain knowledge about work and what is possible for them, and learn self-advocacy skills. DVR expands the scope of Pre-ETS in coordination with school-based programs to ensure availability statewide.

Reducing poverty through living-wage careers

OUR GOAL:

25% of DVR participants will exit DVR services with incomes at or above 200% of the federal poverty line by June 2025.

Individuals in the disability community are adversely affected by poverty at rates nearly double that of individuals without disabilities. Customers pursue workforce education and training to prepare for successful careers with a living-wage.

DVR draws upon its labor market expertise to guide its customers and facilitate placement in well-paying jobs that include benefits and advancement potential.





Service excellence through collaborative partnerships

Quality delivery of services to customers and successful employment are supported and made possible in large part by strong community partnerships.

Acting with integrity in its community partner relationships and being receptive and responsive to customer and stakeholder input is key to maintaining DVR's public trust.

Key community partners:

- Businesses
- Centers for Independent Living
- Client Assistance Program
- Community Rehabilitation Programs
- Developmental Disabilities Administration
- Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery
- Economic Services Administration
- Independent Living providers
- Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Secondary and Postsecondary Schools
- Tribal Schools
- Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation
- Washington State Department of Services for the Blind
- Washington State Independent Living Council
- Washington State Rehabilitation Council
- Washington Workforce Board
- Workforce partners
- And many, many more...



A diverse and inclusive workforce is at the heart of DVR's mission

DVR aims to be a model employer for people with disabilities. We recognize a diverse workforce inspires innovative ideas and improves outcomes. People with disabilities will comprise 22% of DVR's staff by June 2025.

An organization centering belonging, respect, and empowerment leads to greater staff retention, engagement, and psychological safety. Listening sessions and other activities will help increase staff's positive responses to Employee Survey EDAI questions from 70% to 75% by June 2025.

Strong partnerships with Tribes

Tribal VR Programs lead to service improvements

DVR will increase referrals of applicants and customers who identify as Native American or Alaska Native to Tribal VR programs by 25% by 2025.

To ensure staff understand the importance of tribal sovereignty and government-to-government relationships, all new DVR staff will complete 7.01 training within six months of hire date and will receive an onboarding orientation to the DVR/DSB/TVR Cooperative Agreement.





CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT:

Andrew Torres

Andrew Torres, a welder/fabricator at Tri-Van in Ferndale, earns a living-wage doing what he loves and is now saving to buy a house he can call his own.



When DVR put me through school, I had to tell myself that this was my job...that I have to be focused...that this was going to be my main priority.

- Andrew Torres



Read more about Andrew and other DVR Customers in the [2021 DVR Annual Report](#)



I could not have imagined the blessing DVR would be to my life.

- Darnell Ford, past DVR customer



See more: [VR100 video clip](#)





Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services

Transforming lives

Our journey continues...

Learn more:

Read the full [DVR 2023-2025 Strategic Plan here](#).

See all [DSHS Strategic eBooks here](#).

