

# Financial Empowerment

## Pathways to Self-Sufficiency



### FAQ'S - Workshop #3

---

#### **What does it mean to be self-sufficient?**

The Self Sufficiency Calculator for Washington State site is sponsored by the Workforce Development Councils of Washington State and developed by the WDC of Seattle-King County.

The Calculator includes a variety of resources, including the Self Sufficiency Standard. The Self Sufficiency Standard measures how much income is needed for a family of a given composition - ranging from a one person household to a large family - in a given place, to adequately meet its basic needs without any public or private assistance. To start using the calculator go to <http://www.thecalculator.org/>.

#### **How can my clients find out more information or apply for short-term safety net benefits?**

Clients in the City of Seattle can apply for all City of Seattle benefits by completing the new City Consolidated Benefits Application. Washington Connections – an online application portal –will include both State and City benefits for pre-screening and application by early summer 2011. Application assistance is available countywide and some City utility benefits are available to people living in King County outside Seattle (Seattle City Light customers). Clients in other King County municipalities can apply for Washington State benefits using Washington Connection. To learn more go to <https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home/home.go>.

#### **What is the framework for a household's financial security?**

CFED in their January 2011 publication, *Building Economic Security in America's Cities*, defines the Household Financial Security Framework as, "the cycle of asset building and financial empowerment. Individuals must first learn the knowledge and skills that enable them to earn an income. They then use that income to take care of basic living expenses and debt payments, and then – if income has exceeded expenses they can save for future purposes. When they have accumulated enough liquid savings they can leverage those savings and invest in assets that will appreciate over time and generate increasing levels of income, equity and net worth." To read more go to <http://cfed.org/assets/pdfs/BuildingEconomicSecurityInAmericasCities.pdf>

**Where can I find information on free tax preparation sites?** United Way of King County provides free tax preparation services across King County during the tax season from mid-January to mid-April. Free tax preparation is available for taxpayers who make less than \$50,000 and who need basic individual tax returns. They also do taxes for self-employed individuals. Tax site locations and hours of operation and frequently asked questions can be found at <http://www.uwkc.org/our-focus/homelessness/free-tax/>

**How can my client estimate the amount they would receive from the Earned Income Tax Credit?** The 2010 EITC Assistant can help your client determine if they can claim the EITC. Go to <http://apps.irs.gov/app/eitc2010/SetLanguage.do?lang=en>.

**Where do I find more information about Tax Time US Savings Bonds?** Learn more at <http://bondsmakeiteasy.org/>. You can also go to Savings Bond Training at <http://bondsmakeiteasy.org/taxpreparers/training>.

**What is an Individual Development Account (IDA) and how can I find more information?** An IDA is a matched savings account that assists low-income individuals save and build assets. IDA's supplement the savings with matching funds drawn from a variety of private and public sources. To learn more about IDA's go to <http://cfed.org/programs/idas/> or <http://www.idaresources.org/>.

### Where can I learn more about programs to assist clients in increasing their marketable skills?

- **CheckOutACollege.com** – Washington’s two-year public colleges offer a wide range of choices and a lot of flexibility. Classes help students prepare to transfer to a university, get job training, gain basic skills, learn English, and pursue continuing education.
- **Washington Connection** is another great resource. Under the tab “Explore Options” you will find a section on Career Development. To learn more go to <https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home/exploreeoptions.go> .

### Where can I learn more about small business management and start-up?

- **Washington C.A.S.H.** - their goal is to help people become financially successful through small business ownership. Most of their members come from low-income situations and are looking to start a new business or develop an existing business into a profitable enterprise. For more information go to <http://washingtoncash.org/>
- **StartZone** – their goal is to provide reality-based, individualized services to put members on the path to owning a profitable business. StartZone's multi-cultural and multi-lingual staff reflects the diversity of the communities they serve. They provide a range of workshops, consulting and other business support services to nearly a hundred members each month. To learn more go to <https://startzone.highline.edu/index.php>

### Where can I learn more about resources for clients with disabilities?

- **CARES of Washington** specializes in providing individualized, long-term support for people in the Puget Sound Region with disabilities or those experiencing adversity due to low income.
- **Parkview Services** is a non-profit organization serving King and Snohomish Counties that supports people with developmental disabilities and their families.
- **Washington Access Fund** provides low-interest loans and other financing services to help individuals with disabilities obtain the technologies and business equipment needed to live independently and to succeed at school, at work, at play and in the community.

### How can I learn more?

- Monthly Financial Education Provider Network Meetings; free workshops and opportunity to share best practices.
  - ✓ Meetings 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of every month from 1:35 p.m. – 3:35 p.m. at the Urban League, 105 14th Ave, Seattle.
- Your Money Helpline Resource Guide – a resource manual to keep you informed (online version available at [www.skcab.org](http://www.skcab.org) )
- SKC ABC quarterly meetings
- SKC ABC email distribution list
- Facebook
- Online resources
  - ✓ [www.SKCABC.org](http://www.SKCABC.org)
  - ✓ [www.everyoneiswelcome.org](http://www.everyoneiswelcome.org)
  - ✓ [www.bankrate.com](http://www.bankrate.com)
- SKC ABC has developed a **series of three workshops** for case managers to learn about resources to help your clients understand, manage, and improve their financial situation.
  - 1) Introducing Pathways to Financial Fitness
  - 2) Credit and Debt Pathways
  - 3) Pathways to Self-Sufficiency

### How can I become a member of SKC ABC?

Everyone is Welcome! As an attendee of the first in the series of three SKC ABC Financial Empowerment Workshops, you will start receiving information on meetings and workshops that are available to you and your colleagues. For additional information you can also contact Diana Stone or Alice Coday.

**Diana Stone**  
Director of Initiatives  
206-275-1811  
[dstone@skcab.org](mailto:dstone@skcab.org)

**Alice Coday**  
Project Manager  
206-251-7705  
[acoday@skcab.org](mailto:acoday@skcab.org)

Don't forget to visit [www.skcab.org](http://www.skcab.org) and [www.everyoneiswelcome.org](http://www.everyoneiswelcome.org) to access locator tools, calendars, resource guides, updated news and much more!