



BENEFITS NAVIGATION PROGRAM: BENEFITS NAVIGATOR AND CAMPUS STRATEGIC PLANS (2SHB 1559)

2025-26 GUIDANCE

Workforce Education Department

Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

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The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges reserves the right to make changes to this document due to, but not limited to, federal, state, or local legislation or policy changes.

Deadlines and Milestones

Milestone	Dates (subject to change)
Allocations for Benefits Navigator Available	July 1, 2025
24-25 Navigation Services Tracking Data due	July 31, 2025
Legislative Report Due	December 1, 2025

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Overview

The Washington State Legislature passed into law [Second Substitute House Bill 1559 \(2023\)](#). Sponsored by Representative Debra Entenman, this legislation requires, by law, all Community and Technical Colleges to implement a Benefits Navigator position at a minimum of .75 FTE not to be divided between two or more staff. The Benefits Navigator creates a single point of contact for students to access resources such as public benefits (working connections childcare, basic food enrollment), emergency assistance grants, housing supports, and Basic Food Employment and Training. Additionally, the legislation requires colleges to develop a Hunger-Free & Basic Needs Strategic Campus Plan by April 2024.

Student basic needs consist of food, water, shelter, clothing, physical health, mental health, childcare, or similar needs that students enrolled at an institution of higher education, tribal college, or community or technical college may face difficulty with, and that hinders their ability to begin or continue their enrollment.

Background

In 2022, students at 39 colleges and 5 universities across Washington state participated in a survey about [basic needs](#) insecurities, including access to food, housing, child care, and more. The survey found that nearly half of all students in all regions of the state experienced some type of basic needs insecurity. One in every three students experienced either food insecurity or housing insecurity. One in every 10 students had also experienced homelessness in the previous 12 months. Some students experienced these insecurities at higher rates than others, and former foster youth had the highest rates of basic needs insecurities with 75 percent experiencing either food or housing insecurity.

Addressing basic needs challenges for students contributes to their ability to remain enrolled and pursue their educational goals as evidenced by data from the two student support programs the legislature previously enacted, the student emergency assistance grant program and the supporting students experiencing homelessness pilot program. When students received this assistance, an average of 88 percent of them were able to persist in their programs. Therefore, the legislature intends to continue to support students and help students meet their basic needs by increasing access to resources and support services.

Student Basic Needs Survey Assessment

As required in 2SHB 1559 (Basic Needs Act) the WA Student Experience Survey (WSES) was administered in fall of 2024-25 academic year by Western Washington University. The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) collected and disseminate results of the student survey developed by the student achievement council, in collaboration with the SBCTC and an organization representing the presidents of the public four-year institutions of higher education, that assessed food security, housing security, and access to basic economic supports. With 46 colleges and universities participating across WA State, the results from the [student survey](#) show that over half of students reported struggling with housing and food instability:

- 44% experienced food insecurity in the prior 30 days.
- 34% experienced housing insecurity in the prior year.

- 11% experienced homelessness in the prior year.

Even higher percentages of basic needs insecurity were reported by students who experienced foster care or homelessness in high school (84%), students with low incomes (70%), parenting students with dependents (68%), students living with a disability (65%), and first-generation students (63%).

This survey is expected to be administered by the SBCTC to the community and technical college system every two years moving forward.

Student Support Programs Canvas Community

The [Student Support Programs Canvas Community](#) is SBCTC's hub for the Benefits Navigation Program and Campus Basic Needs Strategic Plans program resources, system messages, trainings, and other events. It serves the same purpose for other Student Support Programs like BFET WorkFirst, SEAG, Opportunity Grant, and more.

For general Canvas questions or to be added to the Canvas Community, email studentsupport@sbctc.edu. In your email, include which Student Support Programs you work in.

We encourage Benefits Navigators and administrators to request access to the Canvas Community and the Benefits Navigation Cohort, which is a specific group for important program notifications as well as access to supplemental training resources and topical program guides available in the Benefits Navigation Cohort module.

Navigators can create discussion boards based on topics and engage with their community and technical colleagues across the system. If you need help creating a discussion board, please contact studentsupport@sbctc.edu.

Student Support Programs Contact List

The Student Support Programs Contact List is an up-to-date email & phone contact list for WA CTC system employees working within the Student Support Programs. It's available for college staff to review and request updates to at any time in the Canvas Community on the [SSP Contact List Canvas page](#). You'll need to have access to the SSP Canvas Community and be logged into your Canvas account to access the SSP Contact List Canvas page. See the above section with information on the SSP Canvas to learn how to gain access to the SSP Canvas Community.

SBCTC SSP employees use the Role columns in the SSP Contact List to connect with CTC staff based on their role in a program – for example, data required for legislative reporting, or questions about billing.

CTC staff are encouraged to use the contact list to learn which SSP colleagues are in roles similar to theirs across the WA CTC system. You can reference the list to find contact information for your counterparts doing similar work at other WA CTCs, and connect with those staff for networking, best practice sharing, cross-college collaboration, community building, and more. Information regarding how to navigate, use, and update the list is available on the [SSP Contact List Canvas page](#).

Disclaimer

SBCTC reserves the right to refrain from awarding funds to any or all applicants. Additionally, SBCTC reserves the right to add additional award requirements to applicants meeting minimum criteria to

receive funds but that are deemed to be higher risk awardee. Additional requirements may include, but are not limited to, additional reporting requirements or additional monitoring to assess the applicant's ability to adhere to program requirements. Any additional requirements will be outlined for individual applicants prior to applicants accepting any resulting funding.

Funding

In 2024, the Washington State Legislature increased the proviso amount for Benefits Navigator positions to more closely align with the legislative implemented .75 FTE. Beginning in FY25, all community and technical colleges received an increase of \$16,264 to the original allocation.

Funding will be allocated to colleges for each fiscal year as long as the legislature appropriates funding for this specific purpose. FFY26 funding is appropriated to the SBCTC at \$2,211,000 per year for all 34 Community and Technical Colleges.

For FY26, colleges will receive an annual allocation from the SBCTC of \$65,029 for salary and benefits of a single Benefits Navigator position. Colleges may choose to provide additional funding to support moving the position to a full FTE. The SBCTC strongly encourages colleges to partner with their Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) programs to fully support the Benefits Navigator position in alignment with the intended scope of work of the position.

For FY26, funding becomes available on July 1, 2025, and expires June 30, 2026. Colleges are expected to expend all funds by June 30, 2026. Funds do not extend beyond the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2026). Allocated funds must be tracked through ctcLink using the SBCTC assigned appropriate index (24J/1BP) found on the SBCTC allocation schedule. The SBCTC will use year-to-date expenditure reports to determine the college's quarterly and annual expenditure for future allocation and reporting to the legislature.

Indirect costs are not an allowable expenditure.

Leveraging Basic Needs Act Funding for BFET Reimbursement

The Basic Needs Act allocation that supports the Benefit Navigator position may be used as leverage for BFET Reimbursement at 50% of what was expended. Since the Benefit Navigator position is strategically connected to food security, SNAP, and the BFET program, the entire .75% is eligible for BFET reimbursement.

To leverage these funds for BFET Reimbursement, the college must have the Benefits Navigator position listed in their FFY26 BFET Budget Workbook, the BFET program code must be assigned to the allocation chartstring and include the leveraged amount of funds in the BFET quarterly billing and invoicing workbook on the local certification form.

Example: Benefits Navigator Julie Funny is paid \$65,029 from the Basic Needs Act allocation for .75% of her time. Julie provides intake and assessments for all students helping to connect them to resources such as SNAP benefits, on campus food pantry, housing supports, and programs like BFET, Opportunity Grant and others that can support the student staying enrolled in their classes. The college BFET program can claim reimbursement for the Benefits Navigator at \$32,515 per year, broken out by salary and benefits each quarter in the college's BFET billing and invoicing to the

SBCTC. In alignment with BFET policy, the reimbursed funds can be used to support the other .25% of Julie's salary and benefits or used to support the BFET program.

If the college participates in claiming indirect, these funds may also be used to claim indirect as per the BFET de minimis policy or the colleges federally approved indirect rate, if they have one.

Colleges are encouraged to connect with their BFET program administrator and fiscal staff to set up leveraging capability.

Responsibilities of the College

The responsibilities of the college include, but are not limited to:

- Establish contact between the college's Benefits Navigator and the Student Support Programs Policy Associate at the State Board
- Maintain accurate contact information with the State Board
- Work in alignment with the intentions of the legislation to support food access
- Connect their navigation program to other Student Support programs on campus to provide targeted outreach to students
- Ensure that the allocation received supports at minimum a .75 FTE of a single Benefits Navigator position
- Develop and maintain a Student Hunger-Free and Basic Needs Campus Strategic Plan
- Attend SBCTC facilitated meetings related to Benefits Navigation

Benefits Navigator Design Model

- .75 FTE for a single position available for each college (state legislative funds)
- Statewide Benefits Navigator Cohort
- Support Development of Hunger-Free & Basic Needs Strategic Plan
- Predefined scope of work and position description template
- Opportunities for organizational alignment with BFET to support additional funding
- Increase leveraging opportunities for colleges to holistically support students
- Engagement with other colleagues and programs at the SSP Annual Training Forum

Scope of Work

The Benefits Navigation Program connects students enrolled at Washington's community or technical colleges with basic needs resources. Benefits Navigators are a single point of contact for students to access resources on and off campus such as working connections childcare, basic food enrollment, housing supports, childcare assistance, and more. While each community or technical college establishes the complete role of the Benefits Navigator, the overarching scope of work needs to include the following areas:

Benefits Navigator		
<p style="text-align: center;">Student Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st point of contact • Intake/Assessment • Outreach/Recruitment for programs and supports • Direct Referrals (CBO, college or partner resources) • Supports Access and Completion of Financial Aid, Foundation, Emergency Aid Application • Conduct follow-ups with students 	<p style="text-align: center;">Collaboration Enhancement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Resources (Housing, Utilities, Food Banks, etc.) • Public Assistance Programs (WCCC, SNAP, TANF etc.) • All College Supports (Foundation, BFET, Worker Retraining, Food Pantries, etc.) • Guided Pathways • WIOA 	<p style="text-align: center;">Resource Expansion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional community resources for participants • Apprenticeship Pathways • Leveraging college resources • Non-federal resources for all BFET providers

Benefits Navigator Position Description

The intent of the position description is to support the college’s ability to hire a Benefits Navigator through a predefined scope of work in alignment with legislation requirements that can be applied to a current Navigator position and/or assist in the creation of a new position. In efforts to support the sustainability of a Navigator role, it is encouraged that colleges do not add additional duties to the current position scope if at all possible.

Principle Activities:

Benefits Navigation Design –

- Actively participate as a member of the statewide Benefits Navigator Cohort, including attending trainings and meetings
- Contribute to the development of the statewide and campus specific Hunger-Free and Basic Needs Strategic Plan development and implementation
- Participate in ongoing evaluation and revision efforts to ensure appropriate and effective supports for prioritizing student basic needs
- In collaboration with WSAC and the SBCTC support the implementation of a student survey that assess food and housing security and access to basic economic supports

Supporting Students -

- Provide a low barrier intake process for students that includes appropriate assessment and presentation of the colleges and community resources available
- Support all students’ access to Basic Food assistance and the Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) program, and support the reduction of student food insecurity
- Provide students with referrals for supportive services within the college and with community partners that help meet their basic needs
- Conduct a follow-ups as needed to ensure students needs are met and provide additional referrals if needed

Enhancing Community Collaboration –

- Facilitate local or regional discussions and generate recommendations amongst community stakeholders on the basic needs of their respective colleges' students
- Assist efforts to strengthen transition supports, which may include assistance with FAFSA/WASFA, Opportunity Grant, WA College Grant, etc.
- Participate in the Guided Pathways initiative at the college
- Work with other Benefit Navigators and the SBCTC to enhance community partnerships to support students and increase options for individuals to meet their basic needs

Expanding Resource Availability –

- Conduct outreach and recruitment that targets low-income and food-insecure students
- Ensure a full menu of college and community resources is available and communicated
- Support the development of new community partnerships to increase resources for students
- Support efforts to integrate student support programs at the college and enhance leveraging of college resources to holistically support students

Qualifications:

The successful candidate will have:

- Superior technical skills including proficiency with Microsoft Office and database programs
- Demonstrated experience facilitating meetings
- Availability for in-state travel for trainings and meetings
- Excellent customer service, communication and teamwork skills
- Demonstrated flexibility and ability to accommodate multiple stakeholders with various interests and needs
- Demonstrated problem-solving and analytical abilities
- Strong planning and project management ability
- Excellent written, verbal, presentation and interpersonal communication skills
- Demonstrated experience in interpreting, reviewing and applying program specific policies, procedures and regulations

Compensation:

This is a full-time, exempt position. [College Specific Info]

Supervision/Reporting:

This position is a member of [Insert program/department team] and reports to the [Insert College Admin]. This position has no supervisory responsibilities.

Application Process:

[Insert College Processes]

Benefits Navigator Cohort

The SBCTC in partnership with WSAC and United Way of King County (UWKC) facilitate quarterly Benefits Navigator Cohort meetings. The meetings are focused on benefits navigation and establish a framework that provides technical assistance, facilitates the exchange of effective practices, and streamlines resource navigation. Ultimately, this support structure aims to enhance both equitable access and the overall academic success of students.

The cohort design is comprised of the following elements:

1. **Navigator Onboarding:** This phase involved training for Benefits Navigators. The training topics encompass areas like legislation overview, student basic needs history, intake procedures, motivational interviewing, accessing public benefits, effective outreach, promoting racial equity, forging partnerships, and more. These trainings were recorded and the materials are all available for new Navigators.
2. **Best Practices Dissemination (ongoing):** Through the Canvas Community platform, we plan to foster an ongoing exchange of best practices in navigation, benefits access, centralization, and emerging research.
3. **Material Dissemination (ongoing):** Our intention is to share universal materials such as flyers, brochures, and pertinent information related to SNAP, Medical assistance, Childcare, Financial Aid Deadlines, Tax Information, Open Enrollment Health Care, WA College Grant, Opportunity Grant, Basic Food Employment & Training, and more.
4. **Communications and Connections:** We are committed to sustaining continuous communication, thereby facilitating the distribution of toolkits that support benefits access and outreach. We also aim to fortify collaboration with community resources, college support networks, and resource expansion efforts.
5. **Quarterly Convening/Learning Community:** To nurture a supportive community among Benefits Navigators, we will organize virtual gatherings. These sessions will provide updates, resources, continuous training and technical support, opportunities to discuss challenges, and share successful strategies.
6. **Annual Event (late Spring/Early Summer):** This event will serve as a platform to reflect on the past year, share recommendations, discuss challenges, celebrate achievements, and gear up for the year ahead.

Benefits Navigators are also encouraged to connect with other navigators within their region to support further connectivity, integrated partnerships, and community building.

Legislative Reporting

Outcomes from the Benefits Navigators and findings and activities from each Hunger-Free & Basic Needs Campus Strategic Plan must be reported to the Legislature by December 1, 2025, and every other year thereafter.

The SBCTC, in coordination with colleges, has developed a set of data metrics to be collected on navigational services and strategic plan evaluation. The data metrics include student demographics, navigational services provided, students assisted, and referrals made. The data collection tool can be found in the Basic Needs Benefits Navigator Cohort module in Canvas.

Colleges will work with the SBCTC to coordinate a joint legislative report beginning in Summer of FY25. Colleges will compile collected data and submit to SBCTC **no later than July 31st, 2025**. Data will be submitted to Jennifer Dellinger at jdellinger@sbctc.edu.

Hunger-Free & Basic Needs Campus Strategic Plan

Each campus was responsible for developing a Hunger-Free and Basic Needs Campus Strategic Plan by April 2024.

The intent of a Hunger-Free and Basic Needs Campus Strategic Plan is to formulate a plan of action that has significant impacts on the lives of students. By addressing food insecurity, housing instability, and other basic needs, students are able to stay focused on their education and achieve their full potential. Strategic plans should have a comprehensive and holistic approach, including utilization of a variety of strategies to meet the unique needs of diverse student populations. Additionally, plans should define and support the building of partnerships with community organizations, increased resources and support services, and a campus-wide culture of caring, to ensure college students have access to supports that meet their most basic of needs while they are engaged in classes.

Each strategic plan must:

1. Identify campus food pantry policies that, in practice, create barriers to access and reduce or remove those barriers in the implementation;
2. Review and update methods to identify likely low-income and food-insecure students and conduct communications and outreach methods by the institution to promote opportunities for benefits assistance (such as basic food enrollment, working connections child care enrollment, referrals to the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children, affordable housing assistance) and emergency financial resources;
3. Assess the needs and advantages of the benefits navigators;
4. Identify opportunities for the institution and partnerships with community-based organizations to holistically support students' basic needs, access to benefits and community resources;
5. Facilitate discussions and generate recommendations amongst community stakeholders on the basic needs of the institution's geographic postsecondary student population; and
6. Assess the distribution of state funds for basic needs support provided to institutions of higher education and the tribal college.

Please refer to Appendix A for a strategic plan template. Additionally, colleges have access to a WSAC led [Basic Needs Strategic Planning Google folder](#) that includes materials, templates, and recorded meetings related to developing a campus-wide strategic plan.

Community and technical colleges are encouraged to continuously review their strategic plan and update each year as necessary to reflect current college and community needs, support, and goals.

Resources

The SBCTC, WSAC, and UWKC offer the following resources to Benefits Navigators:

- Google drive training and regional cohort access
 - All training materials provided are housed here
 - Regional cohort folders are a space where institutions can share resources, materials, and documents
 - Strategic Plan Templates and Guidance
- United Way of King County Monthly Newsletter
 - Distributed by UWKC and includes tools, tips, resources, etc.
- WA CTC Canvas Community & Webpages
 - [Student Aid Funding Guide](#)
 - [Support Services and Resource Referral Matrix](#)
 - [WA CTC Student Funding Guide/Financial and Other Supports for Students](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

What's the likelihood of renewal? Is this a more secure position than the ABAWD Navigator?

Yes, this is different than the funding that provided colleges with ABAWD Resource Navigators. That was federal funding that was based on a waiver from DSHS. 2SHB 1559 as passed, implemented a WA state law that required all colleges to hire a benefit navigator and build a hunger-free and student basic need strategic plan. This was not an opt in/out pilot. The legislature, through appropriations, has provided the State Board with funding to allocate to all 34 CTCs for a minimum of a .75 FTE for a benefit navigator role. While we know there are challenges with not being fully funded, we have been working with college leadership to help them understand the options for funding from other programs that can support the additional FTE need to hire a full FTE. Additionally, the State Board is already working with the Post Secondary Basic Needs Coalitions, partners, and advocates across our state to prioritize seeking additional funding for colleges.

Are there any reports that will need to be done for this grant?

Yes, we will have an annual legislative report. We have two deadlines from the legislation.

- April 24, 2024 - Hunger Free and Basic Needs Campus strategic plan – the work of the strategic plan will tie into the legislative reporting requirements.
- December 1st, 2025 - legislative report is due and then annually after that.

Another requirement of the bill is a needs assessment which is tasked to WSAC to work with the State Board and an entity representing the public universities. We are also being intentional in finding ways to not put additional burden(s) on college staff.

In the strategic plan outline, Appendix A, I see that each college needs to have their strategic plan developed by April of 2024. So, this really gives us a lot of headway on that. How wide or how much to expand on this? Is there an expectation to expand on this and a strategic plan that is pages and pages or do we adopt the majority of what's presented to us already and make modifications to fit the program that we're implementing? Where's the expectation in terms of how? How far should we be going with it and how much time would be dedicated to development?

Through the bill, and mandated by law, all colleges are required to have a hunger free and basic needs campus strategic plan in place. Realizing the legislature did not provide a whole lot of time for developing an entire campus plan, we really want to be as helpful as possible and have developed a template to guide colleges. The SBCTC can support and assist colleges with the intent of providing space and time for colleges to commit to the work with the right folks at the table across their campuses to really have the most impact.

In the table inside of the position descriptions compensation piece it says that this would be an exempt position. Can you clarify why it is exempt verses classified?

We know that colleges have both classified and exempt. Depending on what you're planning to do, you may already have a classified position that you are thinking of restructuring to fit this work.

Generally, with appropriations and things like this, these are exempt positions, because they are not always guaranteed funding. However, I think we want to be fully flexible. We also want to be understanding of current campus hiring practices, alignment with like positions and campus structure. We encourage you to work with your college HR to look at the position you have developed compared to similar work on the campus.

With the new law about overtime exempt staff, if it's an exempt position and they're going over, and we have a certain dollar amount will the college be encumbered with the overtime amount?

Possibly. The salary basis test and the duties determine whether or not the position is exempt from civil service (it may also be exempt from overtime if the salary is above the current thresholds). It definitely would, be something you'd want to think about and consult with your HR.

At some point will we need to let you know who the point person is? Will there be a listserv that they can be added to, to receive announcements and other communication?

Yes. The SBCTC has a website as well as a Canvas Cohort module in the Student Support Programs canvas community. Colleges should email StudentSupport@sbctc.edu with Navigator information so they can be added to the Canvas Cohort and access all the training materials available to Navigators.

If the purpose of the funding is to pay only for salary benefits for this position, does that mean there is no funding for student services?

Correct, not at this time. The funding of the 48,762 is for the Benefit Navigator position only. The way the law is written, the position must be funded at least .75, not capped at a .75. The funding that colleges receive is to go towards that one position and is not to be split amongst multiple positions.

SSEH is kind of doing this work. It's also helping us with students applying for SNAP benefits and things like that. I was thinking of taking some of this money to pay a percentage of this position that I already have and then use the rest of the funding for a part time position. Am I allowed to do that, or do I need to use the funding for this new position? 48,762 is including salary and benefits, not salary and then benefits after that?

I understand that colleges would want to be creative and innovative, especially with a really modest amount of funding, but the way the law is written the funding goes towards one position. Colleges in some areas, such as King County, the funding provided does not cover .75 FTE for a navigator, they're paid much higher. Those colleges will have more backfill to do to get that position to that .75 FTE. We've encouraged colleges to be creative with other funding. Because the scope of the work is so aligned with Workforce and Student Support programs, we've encouraged colleges to consider braiding/leveraging funding from those sources. Additionally, if colleges follow the scope of work for the Navigator, the position may be leveraged for reimbursement by their BFET program which could fill the .25 FTE and generate additional funding.

If we're adding money to it, does the .75 need to be allocated for this navigator position and then the .25 to make it up to full time? Does that also need to be 100% allocated to the benefits

navigator or can they be doing something else for that .25?

The predefined scope of work in the guidelines is based on the intent of the legislature. We do understand there is a funding gap to fill. **We caution colleges around adding additional duties to the benefit navigator such as intensive case management.** The scope of work in the position announcement duties laid out for this position is already heavy, so adding additional responsibilities may not create a sustainable position.

If you're going to use other program funding because of the alignment of the scope of work with, for example, the Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) program, you can do so without adding additional duties. This would also increase the overall amount that is reimbursable from this position.

Example:

1 FTE: \$65,000 Salary + \$22,000 Benefits = \$87,000
\$87,000 x .5 = \$44,000 in annual reimbursement to BFET program.

That additional \$44,000 generated can go to another part-time/full-time position to help with this work and can be billed for reimbursement. In doing so, you're building capacity too.

We've heard from some other colleges that they're going to be aligning a portion of the position with their emergency assistance grants work that's already being done, which is fine. We drafted the position description to be such that it could be built into the work of the colleges are already doing if they have structure and foundation to support that kind of need for leveraging of other resources to get to a full FTE.

If the funding doesn't expire after one year, is it a two-year allocation for the salary?

The funding is considered ongoing, as long as the legislature appropriates funds. So that means every biennium the legislature will appropriate the funds for the navigators. Colleges automatically got their allocation July 1, and they will again July 1, 2024, which will continue to happen year over year without application unless the law is changed or stricken. Each year the funding must be used by June 30 or returned to the SBCTC. Funding does not roll over from year to year.

Is the job description that was provided only an example, or does it have to be exactly like that?

It does not have to look exactly like that, but the scope of work that's provided should be the scope of work of the navigator as intended by the legislature.

How much case management would be involved? The word Navigator in the title leads us to believe that case management was part of the position because we have had past programs containing navigational components.

The purpose of this position is to provide a single accessible point of contact for a student to get connected with resources both on and off campus. When we think of case management, we really

think of that intentional relationship building for a specific support service. We do it in WorkFirst, BFET, and SSEH where there's a case management element. The Benefit Navigators will be responsible for having a basic understanding of eligibility for programs and resources on campus and in the community – this is to help students navigate access to multiple resources they may not know exist. A small intake/assessment, and conversation is not case management and may be necessary for the Benefit Navigators to make meaningful referrals to support the student. We are not asking colleges to provide intensive case management or keep files on students.

Would you be opposed to using a different title?

Not necessarily. When we're thinking about a cohort, keeping alignment is good. Changing the title significantly may require the need to alter position duties and unintentionally impact alignment with the scope of work. The bill as passed into law calls these positions Benefits Navigators and scope of work is to help students navigate access to and application for resources/funding.

Because this position would be working with BFET and WorkFirst, can we request access to eJAS?

Yes, possibly, to verify eligibility – however, in BFET you have to actually do an eligibility check, so it may not be as simple as just checking eJAS.

You said that this position needs to be at least 75% FTE, so the funding we receive for this navigator position, from this specific pot of money, doesn't have to be 75% of their salary, correct, since we're supplementing it with other funding? So, if for some reason this pot of money is 50% and then emergency assistance is another 50%. That's OK as long as that position is at minimum 75%. Is that correct?

Correct. I'm glad you're thinking of it that way because the amount of money allocated in certain areas is not 75% of the salary for this type of position, it could be less than.

APPENDIX A

[College Name] Hunger-Free and Basic Needs Campus Strategic Plan Outline

Introduction

Derived from realized need, HB 1559 was passed in 2023 to provide legislative investment to support college specific Hunger-Free and Basic Needs Campus Strategic Plans. This plan is a comprehensive framework designed to assist students in accessing public benefits, existing emergency assistance programs, and other community resources at [College Name]. This plan aims to create a supportive campus environment where every student has access to nutritious food, stable housing, and essential resources needed for their well-being and academic success. By implementing this strategic plan, we demonstrate our commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable campus community.

In recent years, the issue of food insecurity and basic needs insecurity has gained significant attention across college campuses nationwide. Many students face barriers that hinder their ability to access regular meals, secure housing, and meet their essential needs. Recognizing the impact of these challenges on student success, [College Name] has embarked on a mission to proactively address hunger and basic needs insecurity within our community.

The purpose of this strategic plan is to provide a clear vision, mission, and actionable steps that will guide our efforts to create a hunger-free and basic needs secure campus environment. We believe that by prioritizing the well-being of our students and implementing evidence-based strategies, we can significantly reduce the barriers students face and enhance their overall academic experience.

This strategic plan is a collaborative effort involving various stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, administrators, the benefits navigator, community partners, and other relevant entities. By working together, we can leverage our collective resources, expertise, and passion to make a tangible difference in the lives of our students.

Throughout this strategic plan, we will explore the current state of hunger and basic needs insecurity on our campus, identify specific challenges and barriers, and outline goals, objectives, and strategies to address these issues. Moreover, we will emphasize the importance of partnerships, resource allocation, evaluation, and sustained communication to ensure the effectiveness and long-term impact of our initiatives.

The Hunger-Free and Basic Needs Campus Strategic Plan reflects our college's unwavering commitment to the success and well-being of our students. By creating an environment where no student has to worry about their next meal or basic needs, we can foster a supportive and empowering community that nurtures the full potential of every student. Together, we can make a significant difference in the lives of our students and contribute to a more equitable and inclusive campus for all.

Vision and Mission

Clearly state the vision for a hunger-free and basic needs secure campus.

Define the mission of the strategic plan, outlining its objectives and desired outcomes.

Needs Assessment

Conduct a campus-based needs assessment to gather data on hunger and basic needs issues.
Identify the specific challenges and barriers faced by students regarding food security and basic needs.
Analyze existing resources, programs, and services available on campus.

Goals and Objectives

Establish measurable goals that align with the vision and mission of the plan.
Set specific objectives to address hunger, food insecurity, and basic needs challenges.
Ensure that the goals are realistic, achievable, and time bound.

Strategies and Action Steps

Develop strategies to achieve the established goals and objectives.
Outline specific action steps for each strategy, including responsible parties and timelines.
Address areas such as food access, nutrition education, emergency aid, housing support, and more.

Partnerships and Collaboration

Identify potential partners, both internal and external, who can support the plan's implementation.
Speak to established partnerships with local food banks, community organizations, and other relevant entities.
Foster collaboration among campus departments, student organizations, and community stakeholders.

Resource Allocation and Sustainability

Determine the financial and human resources required to implement the plan effectively.
Explore supplemental grant opportunities, fundraising efforts, and budget allocation strategies.
Develop a sustainability plan to ensure the longevity and continued impact of the initiatives.

Evaluation and Monitoring

Establish practical metrics and evaluation methods to assess the effectiveness of the plan.
Regularly monitor progress toward goals and make adjustments as necessary.
Seek feedback from students, staff, and other stakeholders to continuously improve the plan.

Communication and Outreach

Develop a communication strategy to raise awareness about the plan.
Engage with the campus community through workshops, events, and awareness campaigns.
Utilize various communication channels to keep stakeholders informed and engaged.

Conclusion

The implementation of a Hunger-Free and Basic Needs Campus Strategic Plan will have a significant impact on the lives of students at our college. By addressing food insecurity, housing instability, and other basic needs, we can help our students stay focused on their education and achieve their full potential. Our plan takes a comprehensive and holistic approach, utilizing a variety of strategies to meet the unique needs of our diverse student population. Through partnerships with community organizations, increased resources and support services, and a campus-wide culture of caring, we can work together to ensure that no student has to go hungry or without basic necessities while pursuing their academic goals. This plan is a call to action for all members of our campus community, and we look forward to working together to make it a reality. Let us stand together to create a campus where every student can thrive.



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