I. Introduction

This chapter provides Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) employees with rules and procedures governing the development of skills needed in an employee's current work assignment, preparing employees for career opportunities and developing leaders to deliver needed products and services. This is accomplished in part through an effective training program with responsibilities shared by management, supervisors and employees.

The Office of Human Resources, Talent Development Office, supports the agency in its efforts to develop and maintain a capable and competent workforce. Training and organization development activities are based on identified needs that support the department's vision, mission and goals. Talent Development provides a variety of educational and training experiences as part of its in-service training program including formal classroom training, programmed text, self-study, on-the-job programs, computer and browser-based training.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to provide information related to the department's training programs, direction and guidance on training roles and procedures and to assist with the general responsibilities for the administration and management of department training.

III. References

- Chapter 41.06 RCW
- Chapter 357-34 WAC *Employee training and development*
- Reference/Guide – *Learning Management System (LMS) Help*
- SkillPort Learning Guide
- Talent Development Website (Training)

IV. Talent Development Office

Services provided by the office:

Agency Training Support

- Learning Management System (LMS) administration
- SkillPort administration
- Agency training program assistance
  (Organizational trainer development and coaching)

Employee Development

- Individual Development Plan creation
- Training needs assessment

Leadership Development
- Supervisor/Manager Development Program
- Leadership Development Plan creation
- Coaching Services

Organizational Development
- Conflict resolution/mediation services
- Facilitation services
- Team building services

V. Definitions

The following definitions are unique to the department's training.

A. **Learning Management System (LMS)** – This system is a new browser-based enterprise system that supports the management of the department's discipline-specific training programs. Talent Development staff are the Agency Administrators of this system. The primary functions of the system are:

1. Make training accessible anytime, anywhere with an internet connection

2. Make available training viewable, within all agencies throughout the State of Washington

3. Maintain courses and schedule training classes

4. Allow employees to self-register for classes with supervisor approval

5. Enable registration of employees into training classes across the state

6. Provide training reports

7. Provide training confirmation, registration and change notices

8. View, print and export Learning Transcripts

B. **SkillSoft** – SkillSoft is a provider of online learning content including over 5,000 different courses and 30,000+ digitized books that can be accessed anytime/anywhere with an internet connection. The SkillSoft Learning Management System is called SkillPort. The primary functions of this system are:

1. Provide online learning content anytime, anywhere with an internet connection

2. Provide employees the opportunity to learn at their own pace

3. Provide access to top-selling leadership and management books, as well as other training and development resources such as Leadership

Advantage 2.0 curricula, digitized books, interactive courseware, hands-on simulations and job-aids

4. Track employee learning progress and completions and provide reports on same

5. Reduce per-diem/ training/travel costs across the state

C. **Eligibility** – Training is primarily intended for permanent employees and career seasonal employees. Non-permanent employees are also eligible for training that is required to perform current job functions. Eligibility for training should be based on the need to perform current duties and/or career development within the department.

D. **Mandatory and Elective Training** – In general, the purpose for establishing mandatory training is to provide a safe work environment, protect employee health, minimize legal liability for both the employee and the department, and to develop abilities, skills, and knowledge needed to accomplish specific organizational tasks and goals. Elective training meets the same criteria; however, attendance is optional. Normally, mandatory training is to be completed during the employee's regular scheduled work hours. For clarification the following categories of mandatory and elective training are defined:

1. **Mandatory Training**
   - Training is mandatory when required by WAC, RCW and/or federal, state or agency policy or executive decision. Mandatory Learning Plans will be setup in the LMS and assigned to each employee. The LMS will also notify employees via email when they are due or overdue for any course that requires a refresher.
   - Required for Promotion – Training may be required for promotion in some job classifications. Classification specifications adopted by the Washington State Personnel Resources Board establishes this training requirement. Supervisors are expected to take all necessary measures to ensure employees attend training required for promotion when that is appropriate. The supervisor will approve automatic promotion based on assessment.
   - Directed Training – Supervisors may direct an employee to attend specific training where there is a recognized need to build applicable competencies. Supervisors may approve the use of overtime for directed training, but may avoid overtime through changes to an employee's work schedule. Example: Oral Presentation Skills – to improve employee skills and abilities necessary to deliver work-related oral presentations.

2. **Elective Training** – Individual supervisors approve training in consultation with their employees and/or as recommended by others.

Approval should be based on a work related need or career development within the department. When attendance at elective training places an employee in an overtime situation, the supervisor must approve the use of overtime. Work schedules may be adjusted to avoid overtime. Elective training is identified by three basic sources:

- **Employee** – It is intended that employees work with their supervisor to identify needed and/or desired training. The employee may request and attend training with supervisory approval. SkillPort training may be taken outside of work hours; this includes before/after work or on weekends. Prior approval during these hours is not required, and employees will not be compensated for any time spent on training outside of scheduled work hours.

- **Supervisor** – It is intended that supervisors work with their employee(s) to identify all training needs and to create an Individual Development Plan which consists of all Learning Plans to which the employee has been assigned as well as any training needed to meet an identified developmental need. Supervisors must approve any training request that is not listed on an Individual Development Plan. SkillPort training during normal business/work hours must be approved by the supervisor. For example, times between 8 a.m.-5 p.m. or normal shift hours.

- **Discipline Specific Program Manager** – The discipline specific organizations will provide a recommended curriculum for specific job classifications and disciplines that will enhance employee skills, knowledge, abilities, and career development. Each recommended curriculum, or Learning Plan, will be tailored specifically to each of the technical job classifications.

- **Other** – Recommendations for training may be made by other sources that respond to individual situations, such as disciplinary problems, cross training, and similar situations.

E. **Learning Plans**

1. **Individual Development Plans** – Individual Development Plans (IDPs) are the result of employee/supervisor collaboration and are unique to each employee. Supervisors and employees work together to identify priority training needs. IDPs consist of all Learning Plans an employee has been assigned plus all other training that has been identified to meet developmental needs.

2. **Technical Learning Plans** – A Technical Learning Plan is a curriculum that is considered foundational by subject matter experts for discipline specific job classifications and/or positions and is related to the employee's duties or career within the department. These plans are maintained and assigned by divisional Training Managers.

3. **New Employee Learning Plans**

4. **Mandatory Training Learning Plans**
   - Sexual Harassment Awareness and Prevention for Employees
   - Sexual Harassment Awareness and Prevention for supervisors/managers
   - Discrimination Awareness and Prevention
   - Violence in the Workplace
   - Disability Awareness
   - Ethics
   - IT Security Awareness

F. **SkillSoft/eLearning** – ELearning includes all training delivered by electronic means. As an agency we value the culture of learning and eLearning is a training methodology we support. While several distinct media are included, e-learning usually refers to web-based training accomplished on a personal computer. The training may originate from within WSDOT or from external sources.

Any SkillSoft training taken during normal business/work hours must be approved in advance by the supervisor. SkillSoft training may be taken before/after work or on weekends without supervisor approval, however, employees will not be compensated for any time spent on training outside of scheduled work hours.

G. **Ownership of Training** – The Talent Development office currently does not support the functions of the Training Matrix Committees. This will be changing throughout 2014-15. For the time being, the responsibility to manage the scope, sequence and content of discipline specific training has been returned to the discipline specific programs. Until further notice, it is the responsibility of each Program to support their major categories of department job classifications.

H. **Waived Training** – Supervisors may waive training listed on the employee's Learning Plan when the employee has satisfied the course behavioral objectives through other training, education, or experience. The Talent Development Manager will decide whether to approve the waiver request. Normally, mandatory training may not be waived.

VI. Employee Training Procedures

Training Needs Identification – The supervisor and employee jointly identify training needs and create the employee's Individual Development Plan (IDP) using the recommended development tools as a guide.

Training Registration – After training needs are identified, eligible employees are registered, or can self-register in scheduled classes in the LMS per supervisor approval. Training designated/approved by the supervisor can be completed

during normal business or work hours.

Training Notices – After employees are registered for a WSDOT class in LMS, a series of notices are automatically generated to registered employees and their supervisors. These notices may include registration or enrollment, confirmation, change or dropped notices. The LMS does not send out No-Show notices. Non-WSDOT organizations may or may not provide training notices.

Training Attendance – When employees are registered to attend training classes, they are expected to attend the training and actively participate in the learning process. Attendance is recorded for WSDOT training courses on the employee's Learning Transcript after successful completion of the class. It is the responsibility of the owner of the training to ensure that rosters are put into the system following the training.

Training Testing and Certification – Some training may involve testing and/or certification. Tests and certification requirements are normally noted in the course description in the LMS.

Training Evaluation – Employees are encouraged to participate in training evaluations to assist in the continuous improvement of training courses and programs. Training evaluation forms are available on the Talent Development website. The primary purposes of training evaluations are to determine if training needs have been met and to improve the quality of the training offered.

VII. Tuition Reimbursement Policy

Tuition Reimbursement is intended to reimburse employees who successfully complete classes or training conducted outside of work hours directly related to their current job or department career ladder. Reimbursement is limited to tuition.   The cost of books, supplies, parking and other expenses are not reimbursable. Employees may be reimbursed up to a maximum of $4,000 per fiscal year.

A. **Eligibility:**
   1. An employee shall be in permanent or permanent project status at the time payment is made.
   2. An employee may not receive reimbursement funds that exceed the total tuition for any course.

B. **Qualifications:**
   1. Employees must satisfactorily complete the course in order to receive tuition reimbursement.   Satisfactory completion is defined as a "C" grade or better.   For non-graded courses, the employee must receive a certificate of completion, a passing grade in a pass/fail course, or credit for the course.   A course must be graded if that option is available.

2. Reimbursement is limited to courses that are directly related to the employee's current job or career development within the department. Degree requirements that do not meet this criterion do not qualify for reimbursement.

3. Courses must be offered by an accredited college, university, vocational school, or technical college. The Training and Development Office may approve courses offered by other professional training organizations.

C. **Application:**

1. Application must be approved by the Appointing Authority <u>before</u> the course begins, and the funding must be identified by the organization. Application forms are available as an electronic form (DOT Form 740-003 version 7/03).

2. Upon satisfactory completion of the course, the employee must submit DOT Form 134-139, Invoice Voucher, in duplicate, to the applicable accounting office with a copy of the approved application form, evidence of registration tuition fee payment, and proof of satisfactory completion.

3. The local accounting office makes payment to the employee.

D. **Funding:**

Funding is the responsibility of the employee's organization. If the employee's organization lacks the full amount of funds required for reimbursement, the Training and Development office may be petitioned for possible assistance with the balance.

E. **Special Provisions:**

An Appointing Authority may authorize an employee to attend a training course during regularly scheduled work hours in lieu of tuition reimbursement, provided the course is offered only during the employee scheduled work period, the employee's absence would not create an adverse impact on the department, and the course is no longer than five quarter or three semester credit hours.

F. **Tuition Reimbursement for Professional Certification and Licensing Refresher Courses:**

1. Refresher courses are intended as preparation for Department of Licensing administered professional licensing and certification examinations. Examples include Engineer in Training, Profes-

sional Engineer, Licensed Landscape Architect and Licensed Land Surveyor.

2. For tuition reimbursement employees must follow the tuition reimbursement application process outlined herein. The employee must take the licensing examination within a year after completion of a refresher course in order to qualify for tuition reimbursement. Evidence that this has been accomplished must accompany the request for reimbursement.

3. The employee may be authorized to receive reimbursement for more than one refresher course if approved by the Appointing Authority. Subsequent requests for approval of attendance should include:

   1. Name of institution,
   2. Title and inclusive dates of the previous course,
   3. Amount of previous reimbursement,
   4. Statement agreeing to take the licensing examination at the first offering after completion of the refresher course, and
   5. Justification for requesting reimbursement for a subsequent refresher course.

VIII. Training Responsibilities

A. **Executives**
- Provide management overview of the departments training programs.
- Identify and prioritize organization training needs.
- Assure employees are provided an opportunity to attend needed and obligatory training.

B. **Supervisors**
- Promote development using available training resources.
- Plan employee training:
  – Employee development is an ongoing process. The evaluation of employee performance and training needs is accomplished jointly on an annual or as needed basis. This includes the development on an Individual Development Plan (IDP) for each of their employees.
  – In conjunction with the employee, assess and identify training needs and schedule appropriate training. Use LMS and SkillPort as the first option to reduce training dollars spent outside of the agency.
  – Review the employee's Individual Learning Plan regularly to monitor progress and/or make mid-course corrections.
- Assure employees are provided an opportunity to attend training.

- Identify, prioritize and communicate work unit training needs.
- Provide feedback and coaching to employee following training events; ensure transfer of knowledge from the classroom to the workplace.
- Assist in achieving department strategic objectives by ensuring that employees attend applicable mandatory training and other needed training.
- Provide employees with a scheduled time during work hours to complete any online/eLearning training. Examples: 30 minutes per day; 2 hours per week, etc.

C. **Employees**

1. Identify training needs and create Individual Development Plan in conjunction with their supervisor.

2. Attend, participate in scheduled training, and apply acquired knowledge, skills and abilities to assigned duties and tasks.

3. Participate in the evaluation of training.

D. **Organizational Trainers, including Regions, Washington State Ferries, and Headquarters**

1. Develop, schedule, and deliver training. This training primarily focuses on technical and professional needs unique and pertinent to their functional area of expertise.

2. Organizational trainers provide other training to meet the needs of their specific organization.

3. Develop and prioritize training curriculum for designated job classifications and disciplines.

4. Review and update assigned Learning Plans as needed and at least annually.

5. Coordinate updated Learning Plan course lists with the Talent Development Office for constructive review and input into the Learning Management System (LMS).

6. Perform additional Learning Plan related duties when requested by management.

X. Training Funding

A. **Funding** – Most training scheduled by other organizations within the department will be funded by their respective centralized budget.

B. **Salaries and Per Diem** – The payment of salaries and per diem while attending authorized training is the responsibility of the employee's organization.