



READY TO WORK

The Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA) believes successful integration starts with learning English and acquiring a living wage job. That's why OIRA helped design the Ready to Work (RTW) program, an innovative combination of English as a Second Language classes, computer literacy curriculum, job training, and case management to successfully connect immigrants and refugees who need the most assistance with an education and a stable job.

Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

About Us

Our mission is to improve the lives of Seattle's immigrant and refugee families.

We work to strengthen immigrant and refugee communities by engaging them in decisions about the City of Seattle's future, and improving the City's programs and services to meet the needs of all constituents.

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Genesis

Mayor Ed Murray, Seattle City Council, three City agencies – the Human Services Department, Office of Economic Development, and the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs – along with a group of engaged stakeholders took action to create RTW, a prototype model of English language and employment acquisition.

Program Design

Based in the Communities and Neighborhoods

- Resources for student supports, such as transportation and food vouchers.
- Case management is an essential component.
- Small classes allow for more personalized instruction.

Appropriate Student Supports

- Case managers speak multiple languages, focus on intercultural competence, and are involved in documenting personal and family challenges.
- Students receive information about language rights.
- Languages other than English are used to facilitate learning.

Intensive Case Management and Advocacy

- Close interactions between case managers, program coordinators, and instructors.
- Integration of digital literacy for in-class and out-of-class learning.

Pro-Active Advising and Job Development

- Strong relationship with selected employers.
- Reality-based career exploration including employers and local work site visits.

Active Engagement of Quality Employers

- Employers engaged in identifying opportunities for job seekers with limited English outlining industry specific soft skills and occupation related technical skills.
- Mock interviews and job fairs.

English Plus 3

- Workshops led by a caseworker or other specialist on such topics as problem solving using the internet, navigating banking issues, and increasing employability.
- Workshops are linked to ESL classes and re-enforced by site visits.

Personalized Instruction

- Learning through multi-lingual resources, such as video, visuals, and storyboards.
- Development of career skills through project-based learning.
- Problem-solving tasks mirroring college and career readiness standards for adult English language learners.