



## Partnerships for opening doors

A summit on integrating employment and housing strategies to prevent and end homelessness

# Practice Guides for Employment and Training

## Introduction

The following resources describe how to structure employment and training programs for people who are at-risk of or experiencing homelessness. The content includes:

- Best Practices identified by the National Transitional Jobs Network and HUD
- Career Pathways Approach
- Pairing Employment with Rapid Re-Housing
- Providing Employment to Permanent Supportive Housing tenants
- Employment Navigators

### **Working to End Homelessness Best Practice Series by the National Transitional Jobs Network**

The Working to End Homelessness Best Practice Series highlights lessons learned from these efforts and what we know from research. The series is intended for employment and homeless service providers, program staff, and policymakers who want to learn more about helping individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness become successful in employment. We hope these tools and resources can support current and future implementation of employment services while spurring attention and investment in these services; best practice and model research; and system integration to support the employment needs and aspirations of these populations.

#### Service Delivery Principles and Techniques: Helping People Experiencing Homelessness Engage in Services and Succeed in Employment

Individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness are motivated to engage in services, employment and other life changes at different times and in different ways. Understanding how to meet people where they are and help foster the process of change can bolster program successes with people experiencing homelessness.

[http://transitionaljobs.issuelab.org/resource/service\\_delivery\\_principles\\_and\\_techniques\\_helping\\_people\\_experiencing\\_homelessness\\_engage\\_in\\_services\\_and\\_succeed\\_in\\_employment](http://transitionaljobs.issuelab.org/resource/service_delivery_principles_and_techniques_helping_people_experiencing_homelessness_engage_in_services_and_succeed_in_employment)



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### Populations Experiencing Homelessness: Diverse Barriers to Employment and How to Address Them

People experience homelessness for many reasons including financial insecurity, a lack of affordable housing, and difficulty accessing services such as medical care. The risk for homelessness is especially high among certain groups including low-income families, disadvantaged youth, older adults not yet eligible for Social Security, military veterans, individuals with criminal backgrounds, and individuals with disabling conditions. There can be significant overlap between these groups and an individual can face multiple barriers to employment and housing. Effective employment programs take special care when serving individuals facing these barriers and often draw on a number of population-specific strategies in providing individualized service. There are many ways in which programs address population-specific needs.

[http://transitionaljobs.issuelab.org/resource/populations\\_experiencing\\_homelessness\\_diverse\\_barriers\\_to\\_employment\\_and\\_how\\_to\\_address\\_them](http://transitionaljobs.issuelab.org/resource/populations_experiencing_homelessness_diverse_barriers_to_employment_and_how_to_address_them)

### Employment Program Components - Considerations for modifying programming for people experiencing homelessness

Employment programs typically include assessment, job search assistance, work readiness training, occupational training, job placement, and retention services. Research and experience suggest that programs can best meet individual needs, strengths, and interests by modifying these elements to ensure flexible services that support each individual's personal and developmental needs as they transition to employment. This best practice brief highlights a menu of enhancements and examples that programs may consider in providing supportive, flexible services for individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

[http://transitionaljobs.issuelab.org/resource/employment\\_program\\_components\\_considerations\\_for\\_modifying\\_programming\\_for\\_people\\_experiencing\\_homelessness](http://transitionaljobs.issuelab.org/resource/employment_program_components_considerations_for_modifying_programming_for_people_experiencing_homelessness)

### Employment Program Models for People Experiencing Homelessness - Different approaches to program structure

Most individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness want to work and a growing number of service providers and policymakers have taken notice. Although choosing the right employment program model can seem like a daunting task, research and wisdom from the field shows that multiple models have proven effective or promising in attaching the most disadvantaged jobseekers to work and helping them advance to employment options that meet their long-term needs and interests. Additionally, these models can be helpful in building upon existing skills or



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developing new skills necessary to enter and succeed in employment today. This brief highlights what is known about these employment approaches to attachment and advancement, covering each model's purpose, elements, principles, funding, and research evidence, with examples from the field.

[http://transitionaljobs.issuelab.org/resource/employment\\_program\\_models\\_for\\_people\\_experiencing\\_homelessness\\_different\\_approaches\\_to\\_program\\_structure](http://transitionaljobs.issuelab.org/resource/employment_program_models_for_people_experiencing_homelessness_different_approaches_to_program_structure)

### Tips for Transitional Jobs Programs Serving People Experiencing Homelessness

Transitional Jobs (TJ) is an employment strategy that seeks to overcome employment barriers and transition people with labor market barriers into work using wage-paid, short-term employment that combines real work, skill development and supportive services. The TJ model, among several employment models that serve those facing homelessness, is a promising strategy to help people at risk or experiencing homelessness attach to the labor market through rapid placement in a job that pays real wages coupled with support services like life skills training that together can help facilitate the transition to unsubsidized employment. TJ programs offer people experiencing homelessness an opportunity to re-enter the workforce and help them achieve stable housing through earned income.

[http://transitionaljobs.issuelab.org/resource/tips\\_for\\_transitional\\_jobs\\_programs\\_serving\\_people\\_experiencing\\_homelessness](http://transitionaljobs.issuelab.org/resource/tips_for_transitional_jobs_programs_serving_people_experiencing_homelessness)

### Work Matters: Employment as a Tool for Preventing Homelessness and Improving Health

People experiencing or at risk of homelessness regularly cite employment as a need and goal. Employment is a social determinant of health that health care providers can address using a culturally sensitive lens and through a variety of programmatic options. The intention of this brief is to stimulate and support current and future implementation of employment solutions aimed at individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness, to spur investment and collaboration between systems, and to foster best practices. Health care providers serving people experiencing homelessness can play an important role in connecting individuals with employment opportunities and may wish to implement the service models and strategies that are most effective in serving this population.

[http://transitionaljobs.issuelab.org/resource/work\\_matters\\_employment\\_as\\_a\\_tool\\_for\\_preventing\\_homelessness\\_and\\_improving\\_health](http://transitionaljobs.issuelab.org/resource/work_matters_employment_as_a_tool_for_preventing_homelessness_and_improving_health)

### Employer Engagement Toolkit



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Effective employer engagement is essential to the success of transitional jobs (TJ) and subsidized employment programs. The Employer Engagement Toolkit offers a wide range of resources that workforce development stakeholders can use to show employers the business value of partnering with a TJ or subsidized employment program, plan and implement effective job development strategies, build lasting relationships with employers, and promote positive employment outcomes for job seekers with barriers to employment.

<http://www.heartlandalliance.org/ntjn/resources/employer-engagement-toolkit.html>

## HUD Best Practices on Providing Employment to Persons Experiencing Homelessness

### Employment Retention Supports

Employment retention supports such as check-ins, one-on-one coaching, and financial incentives promote staying in unsubsidized employment. Longitudinal studies show that retention support is essential to improving long-term employment and earnings outcomes for disadvantaged jobseekers including individuals experiencing homelessness. Retention services should begin at program intake with supportive staff members who help the participant learn life skills and work readiness skills, and/or plan strategies to manage barriers in advance of employment.

[https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/AudioLecture7\\_Pamphlet.pdf](https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/AudioLecture7_Pamphlet.pdf)

### Case Managers

Case managers play a special role in supporting participants and in linking them to services such as housing or child care. Case managers are integral resources in building referral relationships with supportive service providers, public systems, and other resources in the continuum of care, in addition to helping participants navigate services and working with other service providers to provide integrated resources that holistically meet individual needs.

[https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HPRP\\_CaseManagement.pdf](https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HPRP_CaseManagement.pdf)

### Work-Readiness Model

Programs following the traditional work-readiness model rely on extensive pre-employment training and education as well as personal preparation to address emotional and logistical issues that might impact future employment before a participant is expected to begin working. Pre-employment activities might include adult education or GED classes, training or credentialing for specific jobs, and training in “soft skills” that allow individuals to succeed in the workplace, such as elements of a strong work ethic, an ability to work in teams, self-discipline, self-confidence, punctuality, and courtesy.



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<http://www.workreadiness.com/about.html>

### Resources on Career Pathways

#### Career Pathways Programs

Career Pathways Programs (CP) have developed over the past decade as a comprehensive framework of adult developmental and vocational education and supportive services designed to address the challenge of providing post-secondary skills training to low-income and educationally disadvantaged populations. CP programs provide training that is designed to overcome educational deficits and expedite employer-recognized credentialing and placement in a specific industrial sector.

[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/cp\\_lit\\_review\\_final\\_62613\\_edits.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/cp_lit_review_final_62613_edits.pdf)

#### Alliance for Quality Career Pathways

The Alliance for Quality Career Pathways is a partner-driven, CLASP-led initiative funded by the Joyce Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, and the Greater Twin Cities United Way. The purpose of Phase I from July 2012 through May 2014 was to invite and work with ten leading career pathway states to develop a consensus framework that includes: (1) definitions and a conceptual model of career pathway systems, pathways, and programs; (2) criteria and quality indicators for career pathway systems; and (3) a set of interim and outcome metrics for measuring and managing career pathway participant progress and success.

<http://www.clasp.org/issues/postsecondary/pages/alliance-for-quality-career-pathways>

#### Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative

The Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) provides a comprehensive set of academic and support services designed to enable low-income, low-skill individuals to acquire the degrees and/or credentials required to obtain and hold jobs in selected high-demand, high-wage industries. CPI is funded with federal TANF dollars but is not limited to recipients of TANF cash assistance.

<http://www.clasp.org/resources-and-publications/files/Arkansas-Career-Pathways.pdf>

#### Career Pathway Bridges Toolkit

Career Pathway Bridges Toolkit is designed to help interagency state teams identify and use federal resources to support career pathways and career pathway bridges for adults and out-of-school youth. Specifically, the toolkit aims to help states understand possible key components



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and tasks involved in developing, implementing, and maintaining career pathways and career pathway bridges. In addition, the toolkit helps them identify how federal resources can support these key components and tasks, and pinpoint state policy changes or other state actions needed to fully realize federal funding opportunities for pathways and bridges that connect to them.

[http://www.clasp.org/resources-and-publications/publication-1/CPToolkit2012\\_V1R4.pdf](http://www.clasp.org/resources-and-publications/publication-1/CPToolkit2012_V1R4.pdf)

### **Pairing Rapid Re-Housing and Employment**

#### Secure Jobs Initiative

The Secure Jobs Initiative, a demonstration project funded by The Fireman Foundation, is designed to link homeless families participating in Massachusetts' HomeBASE program to the resources and services they need to enter and sustain employment. Starting in January 2013, this Initiative has made possible the creation of an innovative service delivery approach and test of its success in the pilot year of funding.

[iasp.brandeis.edu/pdfs/2013/Fireman.pdf](http://iasp.brandeis.edu/pdfs/2013/Fireman.pdf)

### **Employment in Supportive Housing**

#### Toolkit for Connecting Supportive Housing Tenants to Employment

The purpose of this Toolkit is to provide access to tools, case studies, evaluations, sample documents, and other useful resources for connecting supportive housing tenants to employment. In creating this resource, our goal is to help supportive housing organizations, workforce partners, and employers address key challenges in the planning, implementation, and ongoing maintenance of employment-related services and programs.

<http://www.csh.org/resources/toolkit-for-connecting-supportive-housing-tenants-to-employment/>

### **Employment Navigators**

Report provides background on the Employment Navigator model, a team case management approach that helps homeless families through connections to homeless assistance and housing, workforce systems, and DSHS/TANF and offers a detailed overview of the new, emerging model under way in four Washington state counties—Pierce, Whatcom, Skagit and Yakima—starting in 2013.

<http://www.buildingchanges.org/library-type/best-practice-reports/item/608-employment-navigator-connecting-homeless-families-to-workforce-systems>