

Supporting Job-Seekers Experiencing Homelessness

Best Practices for CoC & Workforce Board Engagement

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CHICAGO
JOBS
COUNCIL

Welcome!

Who is in the room?

- Homeless Service Providers?
- Government agencies?
- Persons of Lived Experience?
- Researchers?
- Policy and Advocates?
- Employment Services?
- Panelists

Who is familiar with WIOA?

Slides, Resources, Format

Time for discussion

Poverty & Work Relationship

- **20%** of those entering poverty had a head of household **lose a job**
- **50%** of poverty spells begin when the household experiences a **decline in earnings**
- **25%** of the workforce in the United States earns **poverty level wages**
- Every 1 percentage point **rise in the unemployment rate** causes a 0.5 percentage point increase in the poverty rate

Scale of the Problem

- Last year, over **620,000** people were released from **prisons**
- On a single night in 2013, over **610,000** Americans were **experiencing homelessness**
- An estimated **6.7 million youth** ages 16 to 24 are **neither enrolled in school nor working**
- Approximately **1/4 of low-income single mothers** have **little or no earnings** and do not receive government cash assistance



Evidence for the Value of Employment For People Experiencing Homelessness – Top 4

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Most **people** experiencing homelessness want to **work**.



People experiencing homelessness consistently rank paid **employment** alongside healthcare and housing as a **primary need**.*

People experiencing homelessness often attribute their homelessness to **unemployment and insufficient income**.**

*Burt, M.R., Aron, L.Y., & Lee, E. (1999). *Homelessness: Programs and the people they serve*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

**Mojtabai, R. (2005). Perceived reasons for loss of housing and continued homelessness among homeless persons with mental illness. *Psychiatric Services*, 56:172-178

Employment is an important factor in preventing and ending homelessness.

Research proves:

- Increased income is a strong predictor of a person exiting homelessness.*
- Earned income and employment are shorten the duration of homelessness.**
- Employment is a Social Determinant of Health (SDOH).

*Zlotnick, C., Robertson, M.J., & Lahiff, M. (1999). Getting off the streets: Economic resources and residential exits from homelessness. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 27(2), 209-224.

**Caton, C.L., et. al. (2005). Risk factors for long-term homelessness: findings from a longitudinal study of first-time homeless single adults. *American Journal of Public Health*, 95(10), 1753-9.

Employment impacts wellbeing, health and quality of life.

Employment and income improve quality of life among people experiencing homelessness.*

Income from work increases access to food, clothing, housing, and healthcare-increasing personal, family, and community wellbeing.*

Employment (even part-time) supports recovery from mental illness and addiction[†], reducing recidivism, and reducing reliance on public benefits.^{††}

*Lam, J.A. & Rosenheck, R.A. (2000). Correlates of improvement in quality of life among homeless persons with serious mental illness. *Psychiatric Services*, 51:116-118.

†Schumacher, J.E. et. al. (2002). Costs and effectiveness of substance abuse treatments for homeless persons. *Journal of Mental Health Policy Economics*, 5, 33-42.

††Redcross, C., Bloom, D., Azurdia, G., Zweig, J., & Pindus, N. (2009). *Transitional Jobs for ex-prisoners: Implementation, two-year impacts, and costs of the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) Prisoner Reentry Program*. New York, NY: MDRC.



Employment improves health, family functioning, **builds self worth** and instills purpose*

Employment services for people experiencing homelessness are **cost-effective**, reducing dependence on benefits. **

*[Hergenrather, K. C., Zeglin, R. J., McGuire-Kuletz, M., & Rhodes, S. D. (2015). Employment as a Social Determinant of Health: A Systematic Review of Longitudinal Studies Exploring the Relationship Between Employment Status and Physical Health. *Rehabilitation Research, Policy, and Education*, 29(1), 2-26.]

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Two tools to determine the impact of earnings on benefits:

- ❑ U.S. Social Security tool to determine how income affects SSDI

<https://www.ssa.gov/planners/benefitcalculators.html>

- ❑ Net Income Change Calculator created by Urban Institute; tool to determine how income affects SNAP, TANF, WIC benefits, and housing vouchers

<http://nicc.urban.org/netincomecalculator/methodology.php>

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)



WIOA

- Strengthens **priority** of service for people with barriers
- Requires plans to demonstrate how to better serve people with barriers
- Supports Integrated Employment and Training models that support **career pathways** for low-skilled adults
- Promotes 'Earn and Learn' strategies



WIOA **Title I**: Workforce Services

- Largest single workforce funding source, administered by U.S. Dept. of Labor
- Funds Career Services and Training Services
- Serves low-income Adults; Youth with barriers to employment and education; & Dislocated workers

WIOA – “The Other Titles”

- For the first time, planning budgets and outcomes are connected:
- Title II – Adult Education and Literacy - Community Colleges, Career Pathways
- Title III - Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 - One Stops, Unemployment
- Title IV – Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - Services for persons with disabilities, including employment, education and training (possibilities with IPS, etc.)

Michigan Works! System

- The **Michigan Works! System** is demand driven, locally responsive, and ready to meet the needs of each community.
- The guiding principles for the **Michigan Works! System** are:
 - Universal access for employers and job seekers
 - Easy customer access
 - Service delivery
 - Integration of services
 - Accountability



1. Upper Peninsula Prosperity Alliance
 1a. Western UP Prosperity Region
 1b. Central UP Prosperity Region
 1c. Eastern UP Prosperity Region

2. Northwest Prosperity Region

3. Northeast Prosperity Region

4. West Michigan Prosperity Alliance
 4a. West Central Prosperity Region
 4b. West Michigan Prosperity Region

5. East Central Michigan Prosperity Region

6. East Michigan Prosperity Region

7. South Central Prosperity Region

8. Southwest Prosperity Region

9. Southeast Michigan Prosperity Region

10. Detroit Metro Prosperity Region

Service Delivery Regions

8/6/2013

DTMB
 Michigan Department of Transportation

WIOA Plans

■ State Plan

- Unified Plan with goals for achieving the state's strategic vision for its workforce development system;
- based on the state's economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities and
- includes goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and **individuals with barriers to employment** and other populations.

■ Regional Plan

■ Local Plan



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Local Best Practices

- Representation on Local Workforce Development Board
- Coordinated Access
- Housing Hour
- General referrals



Chicago Continuum of Care – Employment Task Force

Employment Service providers, Homeless Service Providers,
Workforce Board, Employment Funders, City, County, Persons of
Lived Experience, Policy/Advocates

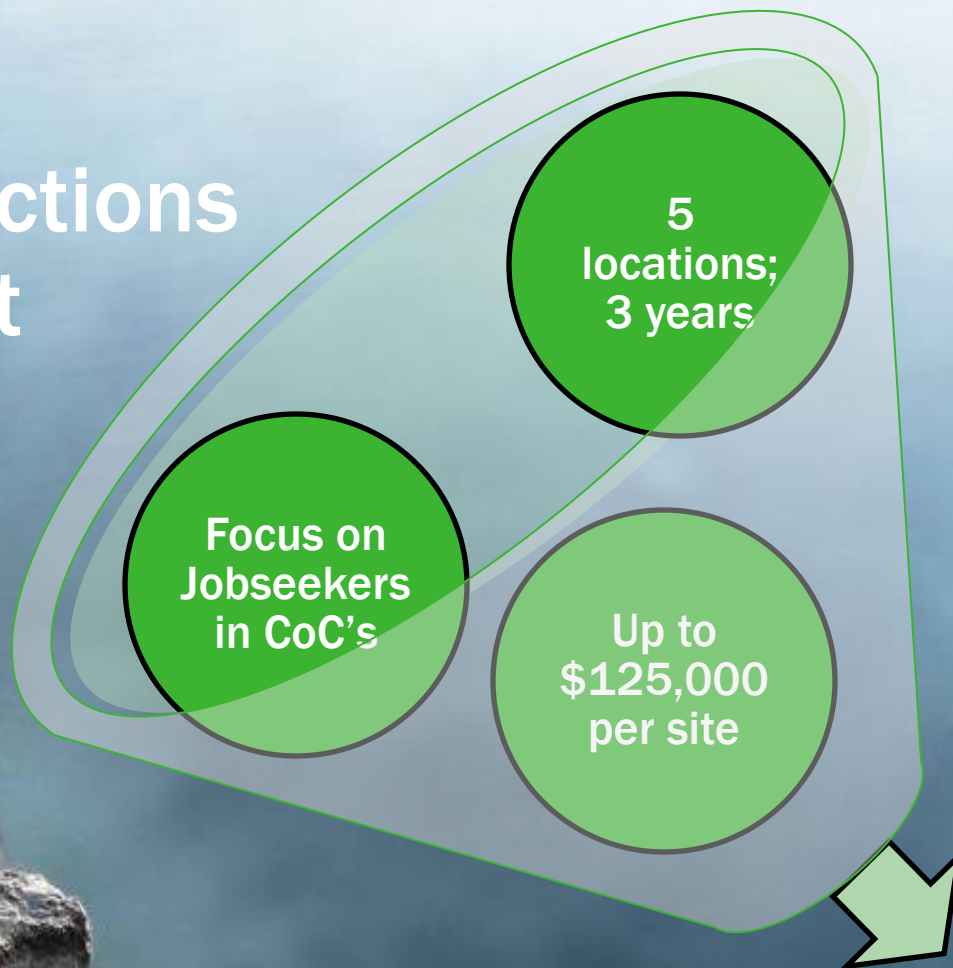
Meeting over 3 years

Goal: Double % of individuals exiting the homeless service system with increased income from employment to **18% by 2018**. In Chicago, only 9% of individuals exit with increased income from employment in 2012.

Chicago Continuum of Care Local WIOA Recommendations

- **Actually prioritize jobseekers experiencing homelessness (extend timelines, etc.)**
- **Data sharing across workforce and HMIS – measure need and success**
- **Strategies that work for homeless jobseekers**
 - **Pilot Employment Navigator Model – Helping Jobseekers Navigate Existing Employment Services**
 - **Transitional Jobs**

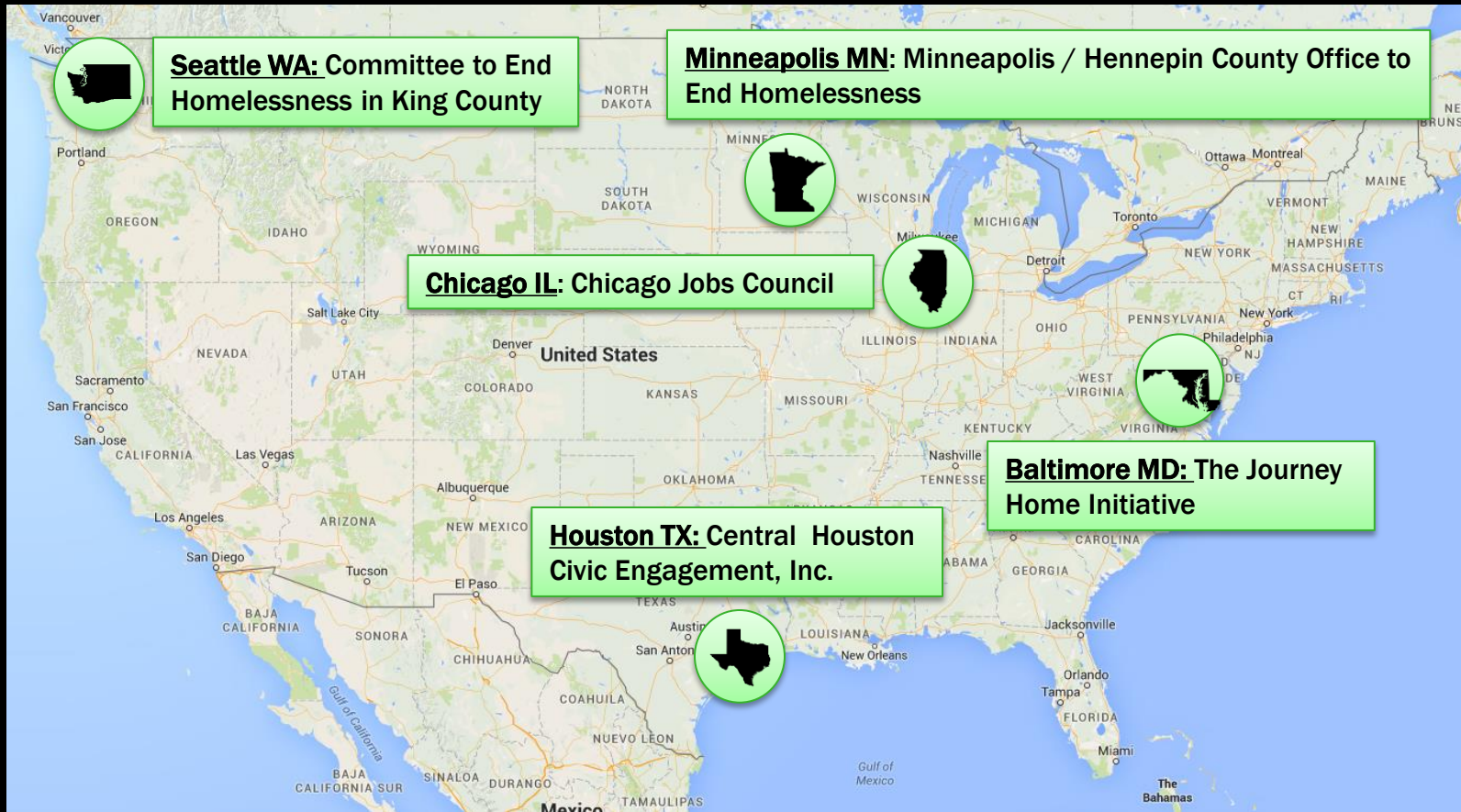
The Connections Project



**Policy & Systems
Innovation**



Connections Project Sites



Chicago's Destination: Jobs Project

Who: Chicago Jobs Council & CoC Employment Task Force

**Aligning Workforce Services with CoC and Coordinated
Access to benefit Jobseekers Experiencing Homelessness**

- **Asset mapping**
- **Universal employment assessment to understand need**
- **Influence workforce funding and policies– increase
dedicated resources, optimize strategies for high-quality
services**

Lessons Learned – Do Try This at Home.

Connections Project - Year 1

- **Integrating employment with coordinated entry** is a key strategy
- **Asset mapping** - What existing employment services are available to homeless jobseekers?
- **“Culture change”** is possible—we have new data to support this
- **“Mainstream” employment services** can be made to work for some homeless jobseekers, but workforce boards need the will to make it happen, and expert CBOs need to partner
- **Systems change** takes time, communication, trust, and shared responsibility
- **There is still much to be done = Opportunity!**

Engaging the WIOA system – Where to start

- **Build relationships with WIOA providers**
 - Understand services and programs; Strengthen referrals
- **Participate on local workforce board committees; influence local, regional and state plans**
- **Regular meetings between Continuum of Care and local workforce board**
- **Share ideas on strategies to better connect homeless services clients with WIOA services**

More Program Models and Funding to Connect People to Work

Connected **1800** people to work last year.



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Key Principles and Promising Practices Across Models

- Rapid attachment to work—“employment first”
- Applied change theory—“meet people where they are”
- Employment-focused motivational interviewing
- Supportive peer and staff relationships
- Multiple employment options and chances to try again

Chicago FarmWorks

- 30 transitional jobs per year
persons overcoming
homelessness, other barriers
- 75%+ completers employed;
- 100 persons placed since 2013
- Warehousing; Wright College
- \$150k performance based
CDBG (Chicago DFSS)
- \$50k Anti-Hunger, private
- \$20k – other combined
- 30,000 servings grown,
sold wholesale and
distributed in food
pantries at no cost



Social Enterprises or Earned Income Models for Transitional or Permanent Jobs

for example:

- Inspiration Corporation
- CARA Program, Clean Slate
- Sweet Beginnings
- Bright Endeavors
- REDF's portfolio

Individualized Placement & Support

- Evidence-based & successful!
- Serves persons with mental health issues
- Co-enroll in employment services and clinical services - coordinate
- Mainstream, competitive full or part-time jobs
- **Michigan** Department of Housing and Human Services –Southwest Counseling Solutions and Community Network Service
- Dartmouth – IPS Center



Adult Education and Family Literacy (WIOA Title II)

- “**Bridge**” programs combine industry-specific training and adult ed to prepare for career pathways.
- Heartland Alliance offers **Hospitality and Food Service**. Average wage \$17/hour + tips for refugee hospitality.



Employment Preparation and Placement

- TANF WorkFirst (state)
- SNAP Employment & Training (fed/state)
- CDBG/CDGA – Municipal
- Supportive Services for Veterans and their Families (SSVF - VA)



Youth – existing and new sources

Summer Youth Employment Programs – (City)
Piloted with Youth Experiencing Homelessness

WIOA - funding for out-of-school and out-of-work youth



Actions

- 1: Find partners providing high-quality employment services and connect with them to improve referrals and outcomes for jobseekers. Don't do it all yourself!
- 2: Funding usually follows populations (youth, adults, veterans, re-entry, etc). So: approach youth employment providers; let them know they are serving your population already and partner with them to expand current resources.
- 3: Participate in state and regional planning to prioritize jobseekers experiencing homelessness and promising models.

Steps you can take now

- Incorporate employment **goals** into existing counseling and case management activities.
- **Vocationalize** service delivery
- **Job clubs** and other peer support strategies
- **Partner** with Employment Programs
- Create **transitional employment** opportunities
- in-house



National Initiatives Toolkits

WIOA Planning & Implementation Toolkit



Opportunity Youth Employment Toolkit



Employer Engagement Toolkit



Working To End Homelessness Toolkit



Transitional Jobs Programs Toolkit



TANF and Transitional Jobs Toolkit



www.heartlandalliance.org/nationalinitiatives

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Join Us in Chicago This Fall!

- Lifting up solutions to **end chronic unemployment.**
- Supporting the adoption of **best and promising employment practices.**
- Advancing local, state, and **federal policy and systems change.**



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researching the causes and consequences
of unemployment, experimenting with innovative ways
to help the unemployed, and disseminating research

upjohn.org



cjc.net

■ Resources include:

- CJC's WIRE wire.cjc.net
- Frontline Focus Training Institute cjc.net/frontline-focus
- Tools for frontline staff: Workers' Right Curriculum, Pathways to Careers Network

Let's Discuss! Q+A

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