

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”

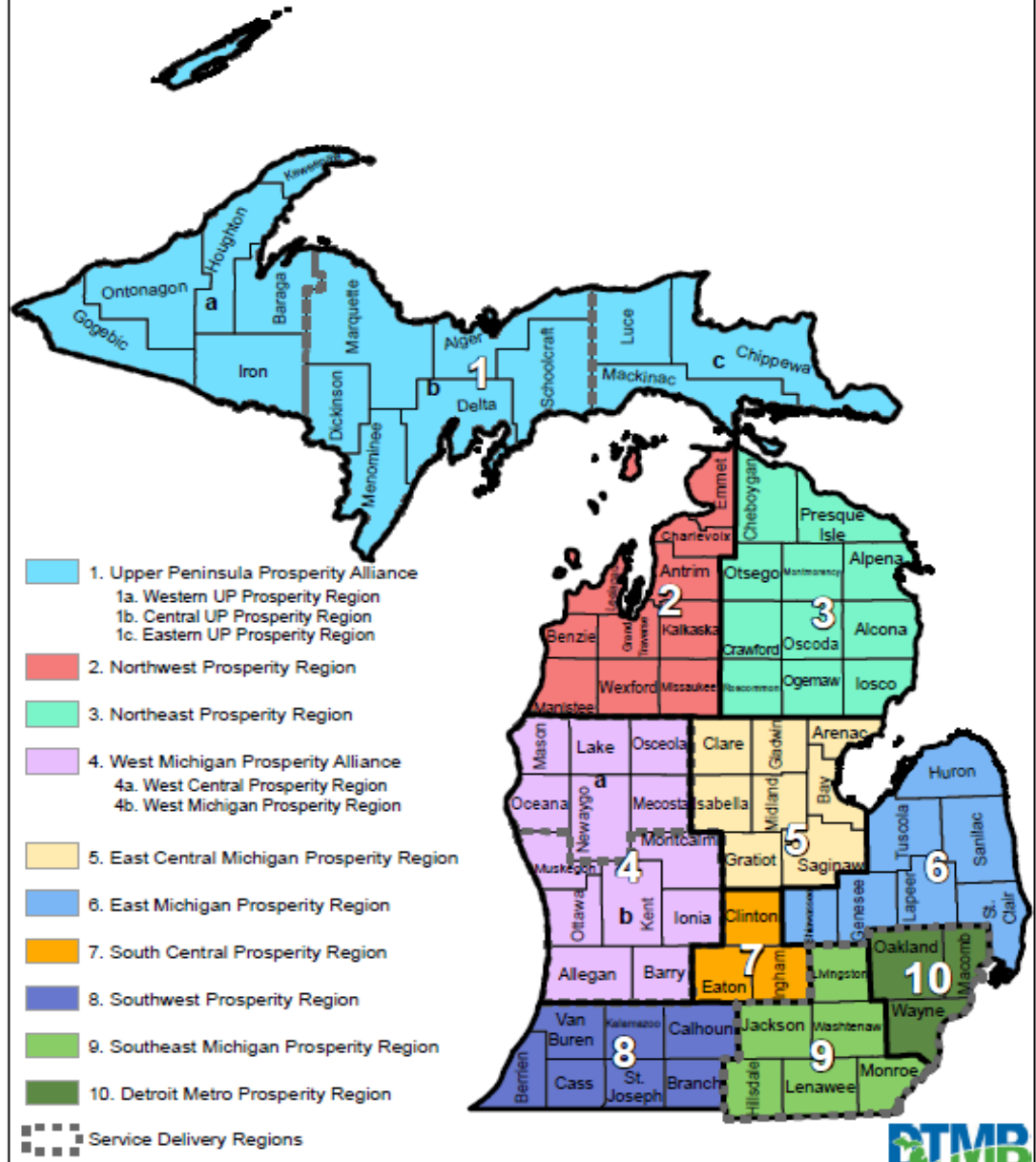
- For the first time, planning budgets and outcomes are connected:
- Title II – Adult Education and Literacy - Community Colleges, Career Pathways
- Title III - Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 - One Stops, Unemployment
- Title IV – Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - Services for persons with disabilities, including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



State of Michigan Prosperity Regions



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



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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

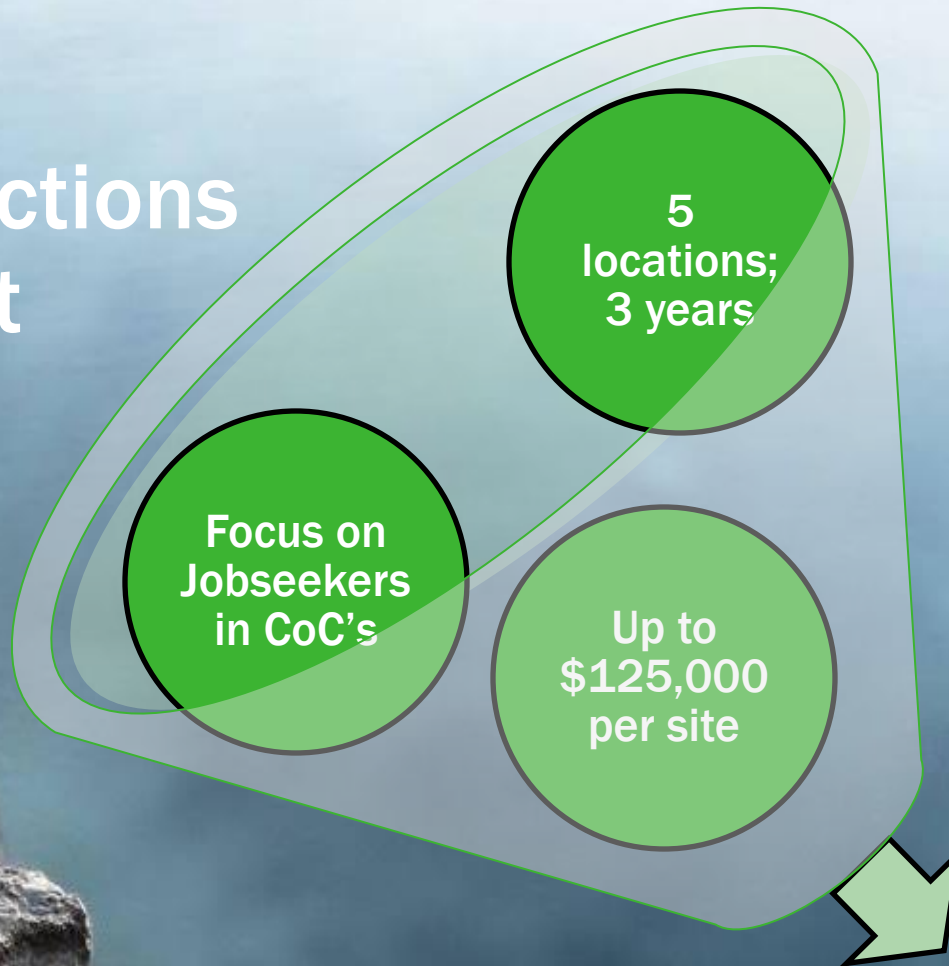
Meeting over 3 years

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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Ref

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

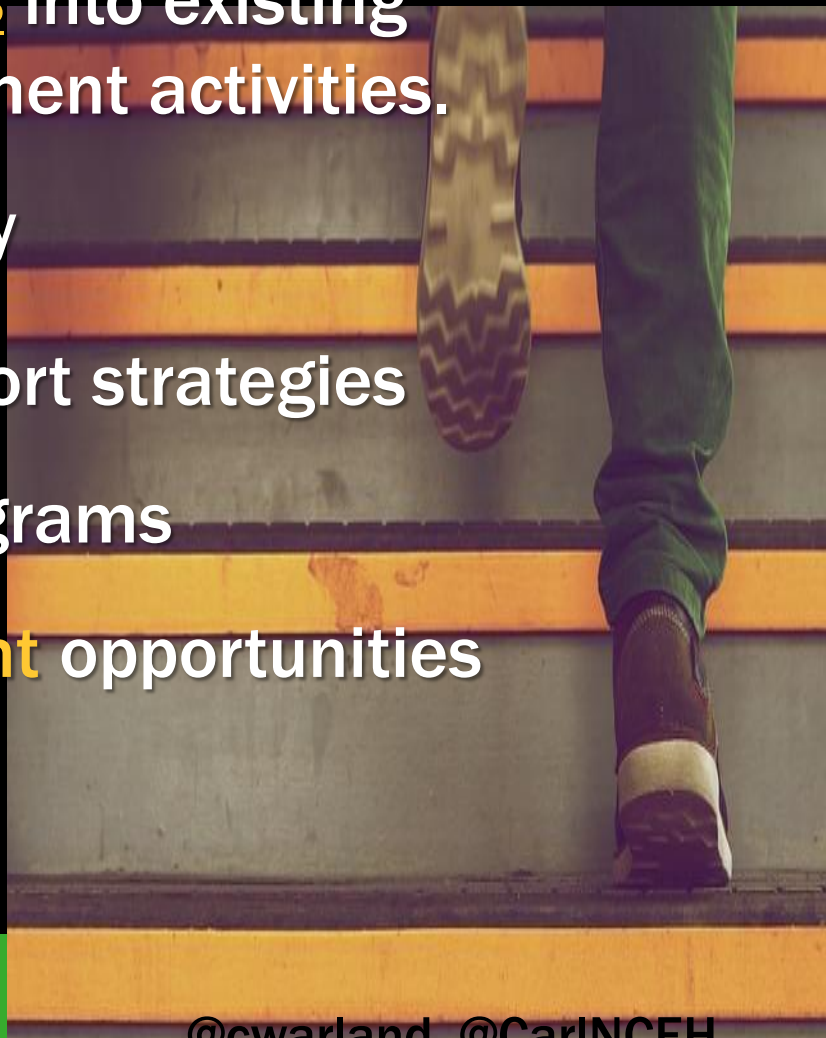


Actions

- 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

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.**

A NATION THAT WORKS

WHAT'S IT GOING TO TAKE?

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENDING
CHRONIC UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY
OCT 25-27, 2016 | CHICAGO, IL

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

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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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