



## Employment and Homelessness Taskforce Recommendations Overview

The recommendations below are categorized by the key issue areas that were identified throughout the Employment and Homelessness Taskforce process. The development of these recommendations was shaped, in part by input from partners and stakeholders, and in part by current experience in implementing homeless employment programs; we recognize that this is an iterative process and recommendations will continue to evolve as we proceed with their design and implementation.

### **1. COORDINATION AND ALIGNMENT**

- A. Make AJCC employment services accessible to individuals experiencing homelessness through system partner co-location and remote services.**
- To enhance interagency collaboration, develop a program that runs out of a mobile unit, offering AJCC employment services onsite at various locations such as: homeless service provider sites; interim, transitional and permanent housing developments; navigation centers; safe parking sites; DPSS GAIN and GROW offices, job club sites; trade and adult schools, and community colleges.
  - Hire and embed coordinators/navigators to facilitate employment support for justice-involved participants. This must be coupled with appropriate staff training (see “Increased Capacity”).
- B. Add and integrate a set of common employment-related questions into existing assessment tools across systems (i.e., workforce, social services, homeless services, education/training, etc.), and match participants with appropriate income and employment supports and interventions.** A set of universal income and employment questions that captures participant choice, income history, goals and barriers would be used across systems. These employment questions will help to establish a clear referral process to programs and opportunities, allowing for an individualized approach directing participants to various income paths.
- C. Identify a set of evidence-based employment strategies/models that have been shown to effectively support people experiencing homelessness and facilitate adoption of these strategies/models across system partners.** Recognize distinct barriers, supports, and needs of various populations and remain flexible in practice. Clearly define roles and responsibilities for each system partner in implementing the strategies/models and determine appropriate referral pathways.
- D. Utilize matches between data systems for the homeless, workforce, and social services systems to better target and refine service delivery.** Data drawn from multiple systems can be matched and analyzed to identify patterns of how programs are accessed, inform service improvements, and enhance prioritization of income and employment services for participants experiencing homelessness.

- E. Strengthen coordination among the seven Workforce Development Areas and the homeless services system by establishing a planning committee that will improve employment outcomes for homeless families and individuals.** The committee should specifically address: identifying common issues related to meeting employment needs of participants experiencing homelessness, developing integrated policies to support AJCC staff and contractors to connect participants with support services, and increasing accessibility of public workforce resources to meet local, regional, and state goals.
  
- F. Embed standards for supporting access to income and employment services into the development of the Coordinated Entry System's (CES) Practice Standards for all housing and program interventions.** Access to employment opportunities must be included in the development of minimum requirements for operations for the Los Angeles County CES provider network.
  
- G. Evaluate benefits of increasing CalJOBS database access as a means to increase employment-related co-case management and data-sharing across system partners.** Similar to increasing HMIS visibility amongst homeless service providers, access to CalJOBS database may create opportunities for more effective coordination by enabling providers to view participant enrollment, training and employment activities, and associated contact persons. System partner staff utilizing the CalJOBS database must attend CalJOBS basic case management trainings.
  
- H. Develop and implement ongoing performance metrics assessing system alignment, program outcomes and increased access to meaningful employment for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.** Framework for goal-setting can draw on existing County Workforce Alignment Plans, WDBs Local & Regional Plans, Economic Development Scorecard, etc. Clarify accountability of each system partner for these metrics.

## **2. INCREASED CAPACITY**

- A. Provide evidence-based trainings to appropriate system partner staff to reduce barriers and strengthen understanding and connections across housing/homeless services, social services and workforce efforts.**
  - i. For some existing and newly hired AJCC, and DPSS GAIN, GROW and job club staff, needed training topics include, but are not limited to: Coordinated Entry System (CES) services and navigation, trauma-informed care, cultural competency, housing first, harm reduction, motivational interviewing, critical time intervention, mental health first aid, and nonviolent crisis intervention. Trainings should be ongoing, standardized, coordinated between system partners, use a train-the-trainer approach and be offered via in-person, teleconference and web-based options.
  - ii. For appropriate homeless services case management and support staff, trainings should highlight the relevance of employment strategies within a housing first service delivery model. Convene monthly trainings with homeless services case managers covering topics such as relationships between housing and income, population-specific employment models (e.g., reentry, youth, veterans, and persons with intellectual/developmental disabilities, etc.), job retention support, local job market, and work and benefits incentives. These trainings will help homeless services providers effectively refer into the public workforce system. Engage AJCC staff to participate in homeless coalition meetings and/or care coordination to share resources and services offered through public workforce system and build relationships.

- B. Hire peer employees and people with lived experience across systems to provide employment supports to clients experiencing homelessness.**
  - i. Create peer navigator/advocate positions across systems to provide employment supports, serve as liaisons between program staff and participants, and facilitate warm introductions. Peer employees should be mobile, moving between sites to engage participants at AJCCs; DPSS GAIN, GROW and job club sites; and interim and permanent housing sites. Consider replicating/utilizing DHS's Community Health Worker as job classification to reduce barriers to obtain navigator/advocate position within the County.
  - ii. Hire people with lived experience in positions across systems, and ensure that adequate supports are in place to foster career growth. System partners should recognize the special skill sets that people with lived experience bring to the positions, and following national best practices, build employee supports to ensure employee job retention.
  
- C. Enhance coordination between homeless services system, AJCCs, and DPSS GROW and job club to streamline referrals and access to Homeless Initiative Strategy C7, Subsidized Employment for Homeless Adults.** Develop a meaningful collaboration between homeless services provider and AJCC staff with GROW and job club partners early on in a participant's transitional work experience. Linkages to C7 from homeless services and GROW partners will yield quicker connections to Individual Employment Plans, education and short-term training opportunities, job placement and supportive services and decrease the number of GR re-enrollments for homeless GROW participants.
  
- D. Expand flexible cash or in kind assistance to participants, independent of training program enrollment.** For participants needing minimal supports to employment, provide flexible assistance such as transportation, interview attire or uniforms, and other materials that would assist in obtaining and retaining employment without requiring referral or enrollment into training programs.

### **3. BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT**

- A. Enhance interagency coordination to strengthen networks of employers hiring homeless jobseekers.** Hold regional quarterly meetings for cross-system job development staff and employers/employer groups (chambers of commerce, sector councils, etc.) to facilitate cooperation and resource sharing. Use these employer groups as a platform to discuss employer incentives to employ homeless jobseekers and provide trainings on targeted strategies. Create and maintain an active job repository to complement these efforts and manage business engagement and relationships across multiple partners, which will identify the qualities of ideal candidates and offer support for creating successful work environments, lowering barriers to employment.
  
- B. Create direct partnerships with large scale employers and leverage career pathways infrastructure.** Build off of Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority's WIN-LA program model, the City and County of Los Angeles's targeted local hire initiatives and the County's strategic plan for workforce development to prepare homeless jobseekers for specific available positions with expedited training, job readiness, and job applications which prioritize candidates enrolled in specific work readiness programs. Develop partnerships to connect participants to building trades/construction and apprenticeship program opportunities.
  
- C. Develop or identify tailored training programs based on business demand, and engage in training partnerships to create a pipeline of trained employees for those positions.** Determine high growth sectors with potential to hire homeless jobseekers and partner with educational institutions to train participants for available, high quality positions. Encourage a hiring pledge for a variety of positions, allowing opportunities for education/training to enhance job proficiency. Build off of Worker Education and Resource Center's (WERC) PLACE Program model, and consider partnering with the region's Center for a Competitive Workforce and LAEDC.

#### **4. LEVERAGED FUNDING**

- A. **Review opportunities for homeless services providers to connect Rapid Rehousing participants who are also enrolled in an employment program to the shallow subsidy program.** Examine prioritization for LAHSA's shallow subsidy program to determine whether Rapid Rehousing (RRH) participants enrolled in employment programs should be prioritized for the limited subsidy.
  
- B. **Maximize CalFresh Employment & Training resources for use in innovative system partner collaborations to support homeless jobseekers.** Areas of additional support through this funding stream include cash assistance, child care, rental assistance and employment services.
  
- C. **Create an aggregate inventory of homeless income and employment funding sources.** Coordinate funding and procurement processes, identify appropriate programs and partnerships to increase system alignment, and maximize resources, such as SB 678 Community Corrections Performance Incentive (CCPI) funds for adult felony probationers, California Community College's Strong Workforce Program, Career and Technical Education (CTE) and short-term vocational trainings funded by AJCCs and DPSS.