

# **Developing Community Employment Pathways**

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**For Homeless Job Seekers  
in King County & Washington State**

**A Report of the Taking Health Care Home Initiative**

**February 2007**

# A Report of the Seattle-King County Taking Health Care Home Initiative

The Seattle/King County Taking Health Care Home initiative is a part of a national effort funded by the Corporation for Supportive Housing and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to prevent and end homelessness for people with chronic health problems. It is aimed at changing the way that housing, health, and social support services are financed, organized, and delivered.

Funding for this report was generously provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

This process and report would not have been possible without the contributions of many individuals passionate about ending homelessness and helping people work in King County. The participants in developing the research and ideas for this report are listed in Appendix 3. The statements in the report, while owned in many respects by the stakeholders in this endeavor, remain the responsibility of its primary authors: Mark Putnam, Tina Shamseldin, Bill Rumpf, David Wertheimer and John Rio.

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## Executive Summary

### A Call to Action for Employment Services for Homeless Job Seekers

Washington State is one of eight sites that are part of a national Taking Health Care Home (THCH) Initiative sponsored by the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) and funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Local THCH efforts have strengthened partnerships between local governmental entities that fund housing and services. The impact of this partnership has led to the creation of several hundred housing units serving high-need individuals with long histories of homelessness in Seattle/King County. CSH and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation are supporting this new effort to improve access to employment for homeless individuals and families.

This project, *Developing Community Employment Pathways for Homeless Job Seekers in King County and Washington State*, is in the process of formulating strategies that seek to improve collaboration, enhance homeless assistance and employment services, and promote systems change across the workforce development and homeless assistance systems in King County and Washington State. This report will assess the current landscape of homeless employment initiatives and identify promising opportunities for early action.

Washington State, and particularly the Puget Sound region, is often cited for having innovative models and effective programs for addressing homelessness, with many of these projects located in Seattle/King County. The scale of the homeless housing system here, the involvement of the public housing authorities in addressing homelessness, the significant support from philanthropy, and recent state legislative initiatives are all highly regarded aspects of the effort to end homelessness in our area. Given the breadth of our county's response to homelessness, it is somewhat surprising that improving access to employment has not been a prominent part of our region's Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness.

Employment is a fundamental component of our daily lives. In our country, it is often how we define ourselves and it provides us with the resources to help us become self-sufficient, and ideally, economically independent. It gives us a sense of purpose and allows us to use our talents to contribute to our community. In recent focus groups with individuals who are homeless with mental illness, participants have clearly defined the key elements needed for their recovery: a place to live and a job. On a societal level, increasing the earning power of people overcoming or seeking to avoid homelessness is critical to stretch scarce resources in the effort to end homelessness.

Nearly 60 community stakeholders from employment, housing and homelessness, mental health, and chemical addiction treatment systems participated in THCH's three employment research groups to document and analyze the current landscape of employment services for homeless people living in Washington State, with a focus on King County.

One of the encouraging observations from this initial assessment is that our region has much to build on: capable employment assistance agencies, resourceful service providers, a healthy economy, and venues for countywide leadership and coordination created by the Committee to End

#### **Key Implications**

- More than 20 percent of those counted during the 2005 one-night-count indicated that they were employed.
- Work is a stabilizing factor, contributing to length of housing tenure, contrary to the view held by some that employment can be stressful and a cause for relapse.
- Idleness is not a desired goal for people who leave the streets and shelters to live in permanent housing. We have missed opportunities in planning employment services for homeless individuals and families.
- Improved linkages between drug & alcohol treatment and employment services is a key strategy to increase the employability of homeless persons.
- The Seattle-King County region has several effective programs that are serving homeless people with comprehensive employment services via a range of models—unfortunately the resources fall far short of the need.
- Job opportunities exist in King County, including day labor and permanent jobs.
- Overall, homeless job seekers tend to secure employment in eight primary occupational groupings. Many of the entry-level jobs in these occupational groupings pay less than a self-sufficiency wage but on average pay more than minimum wage.
- Homeless job seekers need varied types and levels of employment services – one size does not fit all. Successful homeless employment programs from other areas offer possible models to consider for King County to serve the varied needs of local homeless job seekers.

Homelessness Governing Board and Interagency Council. Concerted efforts will be needed, however, to improve the employment prospects for homeless people in our community.

## Local and National Findings

The following key findings, identified through local and national research by the Research Work Group, provide a context for developing action steps.

- More than 20 percent of those counted during the King County 2005 one-night-count of homeless persons indicated that they were employed. The fact that these individuals are working (many in less than full- or half-time positions) yet still remain homeless indicates the need for any or all of the following: increased access to supportive housing; access to treatment for substance abuse and/or mental illness; and opportunities for wage advancement.
- Work is a stabilizing factor, contributing to length of housing tenure, contrary to the view held by some that employment can be stressful and a cause for relapse. Unemployment, according to various studies, contributes to poor health and is cited as a cause for homelessness. Homeless individuals with disabilities who succeed at work require the maintenance of or transition from SSI and Medicaid. If people with disabilities are forced to choose between working and receiving SSI or health care, they will choose not to work. It should not be an "either, or" situation. Knowledgeable and skilled staff can help homeless workers and tenants of supportive housing navigate the Social Security Administration's and HUD's work incentives and maintain benefits as needed.
- Idleness is not a desired goal for people who leave the streets and shelters to live in permanent housing. Quite the contrary, whether guests in shelters, residents in transitional housing or as tenants of permanent housing, homeless and formerly homeless individuals want to do something, and, when asked, many are interested in employment. Most providers assert that homeless people and those who move into permanent housing need to be in pursuit of a purpose. Frequently, the pinnacle of that pursuit is working for pay. If employment is important to ending homelessness, then it must be prioritized.
- We have missed opportunities in planning employment services for homeless individuals and families. King County's Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness and other comprehensive housing and services plans include limited references to employment and/or linkages to each other. A flexible combination of housing, supportive services and employment is the preferred and effective intervention for many homeless singles or families on their path to recovery.
- Improved linkages between substance abuse and mental health treatment and employment services is a key strategy to increase the employability of homeless persons. Many of the existing homeless employment programs serve individuals with significant untreated drug and alcohol abuse issues and/or mental health issues. These providers have difficulty addressing these clients' needs adequately due to limited resources and employer expectations. Given limited resources, employment entities generally target services towards addressing the employment needs of high or moderately functioning homeless people who are positioned to address their issues and return to work. Virtually no existing employment programs are oriented toward people who have been homeless long-term and/or are low-functioning. Just 11% of clients served by our county mental health system are employed, below half of the national average, suggesting potential for a significant increase in employment among this population.
- The Seattle-King County region has several effective programs serving homeless people with comprehensive employment services and other entities that provide some employment services within limited resources. This local expertise is a huge asset to our community as we seek to expand and target homeless employment services. For example, the Homeless Intervention Project (HIP), which includes four homeless employment providers and receives McKinney-Vento Act funding, served more than 500 homeless people during the 2004-2005 operating year and reached many of its program goals, including increased housing stability and improved financial stability. Seattle

### **King County Employment Funding**

- Seattle-King County funders allocate more than \$30 million annually for workforce training programs through WDC of Seattle-King County, King County, City of Seattle, United Way of King County and Port of Seattle
- Less than \$2 million or about 7% of these funds are targeted specifically for employment programs for people who are homeless, though some people are served by programs directed to broader low-income populations.

Jobs Initiative (SJI) also successfully serves homeless persons.

- In our recent survey of Seattle/King County housing providers, of the 26 agencies that responded, 18 had staff providing employment services to individuals and families. However, a majority of these staff are case managers with multiple responsibilities, limiting the intensity and duration of employment support. Other than HIP, assisting homeless people to secure employment is not a focus of many programs.
- Job opportunities exist in King County, including day labor and permanent jobs. It is clear that if we target homeless individuals for training in promising industries, people are able to find jobs in those fields. FareStart's food service and SJI's office occupations training and placement programs are prime examples. Current efforts of the Workforce Development Council, Seattle Office of Economic Development (OED), SJI, the Prosperity Partnership and others to establish "sectoral" strategies in key industries in the region could hold promise for homeless job seekers, if services and housing are provided to support their ability to work. Particularly in the Construction and Health Care fields, the current occupational outlook is favorable and entry-level positions are available, offering low rungs on career ladders that can be sought or established with employers. We also learned that for-profit day labor is interested in partnering with homeless employment/service providers, creating the potential to ensure that when homeless people are ready to move to the next level of employment, they can easily connect to a program that can help them.
- Overall, we found that local homeless job seekers tend to secure employment in eight primary occupational groupings:
  - Building, Grounds-keeping, and Maintenance
  - Construction and Extraction
  - Food Preparation and Serving-Related
  - Healthcare Support
  - Office and Administrative Support
  - Production
  - Sales and Related
  - Transportation and Material Moving

Many of the entry-level jobs in these occupational groups pay less than a self-sufficiency—"living"-wage but on average pay more than minimum wage. Homeless job seekers who were placed in employment by HIP or SJI received an average wage of nearly \$11 per hour at placement, much higher than the minimum wage in Washington State (\$7.63). This amount, however, is less than the living wage for a single adult in Seattle/King County (\$11.89). For a household with a single parent and two children, the living wage more than doubles to \$25.35. However, placement of homeless people in employment, even at less than a living wage, is an important step along a pathway toward self-sufficiency. Combining earned income with entitlements and housing subsidies means a beginning for people who have found it difficult to participate in the workforce. It also means, even with limited earned income, rent contributions are likely to increase, allowing housing subsidies to taper down over time.

- Homeless job seekers need varied types and levels of employment services – one size does not fit all. Successful homeless employment programs from other areas offer possible models to consider for King County to serve the varied needs of local homeless job seekers. People exiting the criminal justice system, youth, women with children, veterans, and people with multiple disabilities, for example, all have differing employment-related service needs. Single parents primarily may need childcare and transportation services, while some job seekers have very limited work histories and/or applicable job skills, and therefore require extensive training. For others, a full-time unsubsidized job may not be feasible, requiring an employer and service provider to "job carve" (otherwise known as customized employment).
- A brief survey of best practices from around the country identified several promising examples:
  - Boston has three One-Stop Career Centers which include tailored services to serve homeless people, based on partnerships with the mental health treatment system, housing placements and job support. One of these One-Stop Career Centers partners with two community employment programs in a Federal Food Stamp Employment & Training (FSET) funded jobs program for homeless food stamp recipients.
  - Houston has a homeless service agency, Search, Inc., that has established a comprehensive employment One-Stop Career Center, with programs such as a Job Bank, literacy and GED program, culinary training, and job search, and is co-located with homeless assistance services including a Health Care for the Homeless project.
  - Portland and Tucson have One-Stop Career Centers supported by their Local Workforce Investment Boards that have a history of success with workforce efforts aimed at more chronically homeless people through tailored service, vocational training and job assistance.

## Early Implementation Recommendations

We recommend that the King County Committee to End Homelessness Interagency Council (IAC), local government and others invested in ending homelessness in King County take the following early implementation steps. These steps are preliminary and within reach. When taken, they will signal a local commitment to improve service delivery across the treatment, housing and employment systems for homeless people. These steps could be built upon with action steps following the creation of a cross-systems task force.

### 1. "Mainstream" the Employment Issue

- Incorporate employment for homeless single adults and heads of family households into the IAC priority work plan areas to make a more integrated strategy to help homeless people regain self-sufficiency. Employment outcomes could be significantly increased if early intervention were to include employment assessment and referral to training or job placement services.
- Add an employment services expert to the IAC. Someone familiar with the workforce system and barriers to homeless people would help to meaningfully incorporate workforce issues into the IAC work plan.
- Co-sponsor a cross-systems training series beginning with an employment forum to introduce the training series. THCH envisions that the forum will broaden the understanding among senior managers of funding agencies, providers, and consumers to what is possible in homeless employment: what is working locally, successes from other areas with more challenging populations and steps to increase employment outcomes. Additionally, the training series would offer hands-on assistance for case managers and program staff to find ways to collaborate, make more effective use of current training and placement programs including the WorkSource centers, and skill-building to assess and support client's work goals.

### 2. Create Better Cross-System Linkages

- Support creation of a cross-system homeless employment task force to foster better partnerships among the homeless assistance, supportive housing, treatment, employers, community colleges and workforce assistance systems—staffed by an employment "boundary spanner." While it is not practical to sustain a "homeless only" employment system, this task force approach is a way to bring housing, treatment, and employment resources together, so that the workforce system can successfully serve more homeless people without having to replicate those services.
- Establish a position to serve as "boundary spanner" between the treatment, housing, and employment systems to expand access to employment for homeless individuals and families, similar to the role the THCH staffer has played in facilitating opportunities for permanent supportive housing. AIDS Housing of Washington has begun fundraising efforts to sustain such a position.
- Use pilot projects, and the analysis of their outcomes, as a way to improve system integration across the range of homeless populations. The South King County Housing First pilot for chronically homeless has a part-time employment specialist who is being linked with the WorkSource One-Stop Career Center. In addition, DESC's Connections is a portal for higher-functioning homeless people, and the efforts to meet the employment needs there will generate data and opportunities for innovation.
- Encourage one or more supportive housing projects to incorporate a "vocalized" culture, provide employment services as a core activity within the building, link its services with a WorkSource career center, and establish appropriate employment outcome expectations.
- Consider strategies to integrate substance abuse and mental health treatment services with WorkSource career center services for homeless job seekers and other populations requiring such services to get or keep their jobs. Achieving this integration is a critical part of improving access to training and employment.
- Develop linkages between homeless employment and services systems and education and community colleges with an eye toward career paths for homeless people using promising practices such as supported education services.

### 3. Pursue Available Resources

Federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds have been cut over the past several years, but federal FSET funds or discretionary state or local funds for homeless have potential to increase the level of employment services for homeless people. Several sources have potential to provide more support in the employment services area:

- **Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET) program.** FSET includes a 100% federal grant program and an uncapped federal/state (50/50) match funding to assist Food Stamp or Basic Food recipients—who are not receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)—to achieve self-sufficiency through employment and training activities. The state of Massachusetts and San Francisco County have both used FSET to generate significant federal investments to target employment services for some of their communities most disadvantaged and poorest citizens.. Washington State receives about \$2 million, making it one of the smaller FSET programs in the country. The Governor’s Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board recently recommended seeking more FSET funds in a report to Governor Gregoire on strengthening Washington’s workforce. Like the Career Center in Houston, FSET resources have potential to fund employment and training services for homeless people and tenants of supportive housing throughout the county, with concerted program planning among state DSHS, the community colleges, and local workforce providers. The first Washington FSET pilot project was implemented in King County and began on October 1, 2005, with a partnership of South Seattle Community College, Goodwill, Port JOBS, Seattle Jobs Initiative, YWCA, ESD, and DSHS Region 4. This pilot was expanded to include SJI services at the Downtown Emergency Services Center (DESC) Connections site this year.
- **WIA flexibility:** Another recommendation of the Governor’s Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board is: “The Governor should consider applying to DOL for a waiver that would allow WDCs to use some of their WIA adult formula funds in order to contract for customized training for low-wage incumbent workers in selected sectors.” Such a DOL waiver would enable WIA funds to be used for customized training for low-wage formerly homeless workers to increase wage levels. In addition, U.S. DOL advises that a state can re-negotiate its performance measures when a state initiates a special initiative to use its WIA resources for a hard-to-serve population that impacts established performance measures.
- **WorkFirst and Supportive Housing Linkages.** WorkFirst is Washington State’s welfare reform program that helps financially struggling families find jobs, keep their jobs, get better jobs and build a better life for their children. WorkFirst includes childcare and some employment supports, but the services and outcomes could be improved for homeless families. Washington Families Fund and the Sound Families Initiative help finance housing with wrap-around services for homeless families. These initiatives are well-positioned to disseminate best practices to a number of supportive housing and services providers. Additionally, partnerships with foundations or community colleges may be a catalyst for creating more supported employment services within these settings.
- **Veterans and Human Services Levy.** The Vets/Human Services Levy will provide at least \$13.3 million annually for six years for housing, health and human services for veterans, their families, and other low income residents of King County. The approved Service Improvement Plan will allocate \$4.5 million to link vocational and employment opportunities and supports to housing. The levy plan suggests that investments could be made in support of recommendations from this report, including expansion of existing employment programs and efforts targeting homeless people; expansion of child care services for families to make work possible; and provision of dental care vouchers for persons seeking employment.
- **King County Criminal Justice Workforce Development Initiative.** This initiative reallocates \$1.4 million in existing resources to provide job readiness preparation, skills assessment, training and job placement services to improve ex-offender reentry. This effort is likely to assist some people who have experienced homelessness, and the system integration lessons should be valuable to a task force that would focus more specifically on removing barriers to homeless employment.

### Opportunities for Action

From the lessons learned in our research, as well as from what we have learned from communities across the country, a number of steps might be taken to improve the efforts of the workforce, housing and treatment systems that will result in positive employment and housing outcomes for homeless individuals and families. We have a vision that homeless people deserve access to employment services, whether they are homeless or housed, mentally ill or chemically dependent, youth or senior, formerly incarcerated or living with chronic health challenges. Yet in order to do so, access to existing programs by the most challenging clients will need to be improved, and new employment pathways need to be created.

## Section 1: Overview of Purpose

For homeless job seekers, the pathway to steady employment is frequently marked by detours, winding though a combination of personal, program, and system challenges. Facing barriers like lack of transportation, limited education or limited occupational skills is not unusual for homeless job seekers. It is a wonder that in the 2005 one-night homeless count for King County, one-fifth of homeless persons indicated that they were working at some employment activity, while trying to manage their lives on the streets or in shelters. Whether family households or single men and women, as much as employment may be desired, it is hard to get a job and keep it.

The three primary goals of the Taking Health Care Home Community Employment Pathways initiative include:

- Increasing the number of homeless and formerly homeless individuals in the workforce
- Expanding access to existing employment services and expanding investment of dollars from multiple systems to address education and training needs of homeless job seekers
- Improving cross-systems (housing, treatment services, and employment services) linkages so that homeless job seekers have the housing, support, and training to be successful

The legs of the proverbial three-legged stool must be balanced by investment and coordination across these services in order to offer a stable platform for people to launch and maintain their attachment to the labor market. Developing collaborations in local communities and states between the mainstream workforce investment system and the homeless assistance system, including permanent supportive housing, is timely. Certain opportunities and threats present conditions that inspire an exploration of cross-system partnerships. These opportunities and threats include:



- The federal policy directive that homeless individuals should access mainstream programs and resources to not only end their homelessness but also to maintain their health and to pursue self-sufficiency.
- The Seattle-King County Continuum of Care, the local entity that plans the spending of HUD's McKinney-Vento dollars to end homelessness, are challenged by a funding process that encourages and rewards them to use these funds for permanent housing and to seek service resources elsewhere.
- Best practices have altered our service approach to ending homelessness, from the traditional developmental or linear model in which homeless individuals, especially those with disabling conditions, were expected to incrementally develop their readiness for permanent housing and for work, to a Housing First/Work First strategy.
- The scarcity of housing subsidies means that some homeless sub-populations need to maximize their contributions to their housing costs. Earned income is one source of revenue that can potentially help stretch subsidy dollars.

These and other factors propelled the Taking Health Care Home Initiative to consider how the system of services (treatment and case management) and continuum of housing services provide support for the employment needs of homeless singles and families in King County. Acknowledging that efforts within the county cannot take place in a vacuum, this initiative is also seeking to align state systems to support homeless job seekers.

To accomplish the goal and objectives to create community employment pathways, we engaged more than 60 people from more than 30 city-, county- and community-based agencies, and consumers, to conduct reconnaissance in the county to explore current efforts, gaps and needs regarding employment of people who are or have been recently homeless. THCH also convened lead stakeholders in the county to engage them in this process. Participants in that meeting, including city and county government and foundation executives, listened to an overview of employment best practices and engaged in a discussion about the importance of responding to the employment needs of the different homeless sub-populations.

With representation from the housing, treatment, and employment services sectors, a research workgroup was initiated to gather information and helped to produce this report. The research group broke up into sub-workgroups:

- Supply Side (researching homeless populations, homeless job seekers, types of jobs that interest homeless people, the jobs they get)
- Support Services System and Funding (first, researching the extent to which the interacting systems support or inhibit programs from serving the target population; and second, gathering information about how existing streams of funding coming into the community already support homeless job seekers and what additional resources may be re-directed or secured for this purpose)
- Demand Side (researching placement of homeless job seekers through existing employment programs, occupational outlook for certain jobs/sectors, and labor market growth)

The participants in the leadership group and in the research work groups are listed at the beginning of this document. We reiterate our gratitude for the thoughtful input we have received. We have tried to incorporate most of the suggestions, We have not gone through a formal consensus process, so the views expressed in the paper represent only those of the authors.

## Section 2: Survey of Best Practices in Homelessness and Employment

Although homeless people have multiple barriers to work, studies have found homeless people with disabilities want to work (Williams 2001, Camardese 1996), benefit from employment services (Hursh 2001), and actually do work (Mayberg 2003, NSHAPC 2000, Theodore 2000). Findings of the Department of Labor's Job Training for the Homeless Demonstration Program (JTHDP) show that job training programs for homeless people must include comprehensive services in order to be effective (Turko 1997). Findings from one of the only supportive housing employment initiatives, Next Step: Jobs, sponsored by the Corporation for Supportive Housing, showed that combining employment and housing can be successful and cost effective (Long 2003; Rio 1999; Rog 1998). These and related initiatives identified a number of barriers to providing employment services, including;

- Homeless people are often resistant to formalized services and are unaware of or reluctant to use mainstream employment resources.
- Homeless people need help addressing a host of physical and emotional conditions before securing employment and afterwards (McGuire 2004; Draine 2002; Gonzalez 2002; Sullivan 2000; Wright 1998; Calloway 1998).
- Homeless people need interviewing skills and job credentials (Owen 2004).
- Homeless people and tenants of supportive housing do not experience state vocational rehabilitation (VR) services and One-Stop Career Centers as welcoming.
- Employers view homeless people as less than desirable job candidates.
- Career centers and vocational rehabilitation providers are usually unprepared to serve homeless jobseekers (Rivard 1999).

Despite these challenges, there is growing recognition that with linkages to housing, adequate wrap-around services and targeted employment services, people who are homeless or who are in supportive or transitional housing can and want to work. It is in this spirit that we undertook the research reflected in this report.

The Department of Labor publication *Employment and Training for America's Homeless: Best Practices Guide* (1997) conducted an extensive survey of local employment programs and found some consistent program elements and themes that effectively helped homeless people secure jobs. These included:

- Establish Linkages with Homeless-serving Agencies.
- Stabilize Homeless Individuals Prior to Enrollment.
- Provide Thorough Assessment and Ongoing Case Management—participant assessment and case management are critical to tailoring services to meet the needs of each individual. Barriers to employment are not always evident at the time of intake; as a result, both assessment and case management should be ongoing activities.
- Arrange for Short-term Job Search Assistance—Homeless individuals are often primarily interested in obtaining employment and improving their housing situation in the shortest time possible. Hence, employment and training programs need to provide, either through in-house capabilities or linkages, job search assistance for those who are primarily interested in obtaining employment in the shortest time possible.
- Provide Basic Skills and Work Readiness Skills Training. Some homeless individuals need basic and/or work readiness skills training prior to entry into training and employment. This training can be conducted in conjunction with other training or job search assistance.
- Provide Follow-Up and Support. The problems that led to homelessness do not suddenly disappear upon entering a training program, finding a job or securing permanent housing. Ongoing assessment, case management and follow-up support are important ingredients for assisting homeless individuals in retaining employment.
- Provide Staff Training on Serving Homeless Persons. Employment and training agencies may need to provide training for their staff and service providers on the needs of and misperceptions about homeless people, the variety of referral agencies locally to meet those needs, and the best practices for serving homeless participants.

The primary way in which these practices have been updated by more recent practitioners is that the idea of “stabilizing” or achieving some threshold of “readiness” prior to enrollment in employment training has been questioned, similar to the way in which “Housing First” has questioned the traditional continuum of shelter-transitional-permanent housing. In recognition of the motivation and stability that employment can provide, programs in some parts of the country have shifted to helping homeless people find work, concurrently with treatment and other stabilization efforts. The current US Departments of Labor and Housing and Urban Development Ending Chronic Homelessness Through Employment and Housing initiative is showing that chronically homeless individuals can move into permanent housing directly from streets and shelters with 51% entering employment. This work takes the form of training, day labor, supported employment or other traditional employment, and suggests, that given the opportunity and support homeless people, including chronically homeless, can be engaged in employment-related purposes from initial intake. (See [www.csh.org/cheta](http://www.csh.org/cheta) for more information.)

The following are selected “best practice” programs in employment that feature elements or approaches that are not common in King County, and which may be useful in expanding the employment options for homeless people here.

## **1. Homeless-Oriented One-Stop Career Centers in Tucson, Portland and Houston Have Had Success in Serving High-Need, Chronically Homeless Individuals**

Some local Workforce Investment Boards (the counterparts of our Workforce Development Council) developed One-Stop Career Centers to be very accessible and likely to serve people who are chronically homeless. The Jackson Employment Center Tucson, Arizona, is located a block away from the largest soup kitchen in Pima County; the West Portland One-Stop Career Center funded by WorkSystems Inc. in Portland, OR is adjacent to the treatment services of its parent organization, Central City Concern; the Houston-Galveston Area Council recently funded SEARCH, a homeless assistance agency, to become its Mid-town WorkSource Center.

The Pima County Jackson Employment Center (JEC) located in Tucson, Arizona is one of three One-Stop Career Centers in the Pima County Community and Economic Development Department providing a full array of employment services to Pima County’s homeless population seeking to enter the workforce. JEC enrolls work-ready men, women, families, and youth in an intensive 2-week employability workshop, a highly structured, full-time soft skills training that simulates workplace expectations. An integrated Individual Service Strategy (ISS) is a core activity that results in a case plan and an employability development plan for each client. The ISS approach involves identification of client goals and steps to be taken by both the participant and the Center to ensure goal attainment. Components of the ISS include intake assessment; self-directed job search; case management; vocational assessment and training; and job retention/aftercare strategies. While enrolled, participants and their families are provided needed services such as transportation, day care, referrals to transitional housing, laundry money and hygiene items, medical referrals, and work-related equipment and uniforms.

The Jackson Employment Center has a prominent role in the City of Tucson/Pima County’s HUD-funded Continuum of Care planning process. As a result, JEC has both formal and informal collaborative relationships with the forty-member agencies of the Tucson Planning Council for the Homeless. These groups have developed a process of shared planning and resources, allowing JEC to stay engaged with enrolled homeless participants over a longer period of time (up to 2 years). Last year, a total of 356 participants enrolled in the employment program at JEC and in the HUD Supportive Housing Program in a collaboration with faith-based and community-based organizations. A total of seventy-five (75) percent secured full-time employment at an average wage of \$8.38/hour at time of placement. A total of 74% had retained both employment and housing at the six-month follow-up period. The JEC services are supported by HUD, DOL (HVRP and WIA Youth), US HHS (SSBG), CDBG, United Way and Pima County general funds.

## **2. Day Labor and Intermittent Employment is an Entry Point to Build a Work Record and Motivation for Homeless Job Seekers. Ongoing Job Supports Improve Success Rates.**

Primavera Works is a local nonprofit staffing agency dedicated to providing employment opportunities to unemployed and under-employed individuals in Tucson and surrounding areas. It connects motivated homeless workers with employers in the community. Case managers help with job search planning, referrals for housing, health needs, food

and more. Primavera assumes responsibility for employment eligibility verification and for adhering to fair and equal employment practices.

The employment programs provide assistance that includes telephone message service, mailing address, job postings, classified ads, classes on application and interview techniques, and free bus passes. Case managers help with job search planning, referrals for housing, health needs, food, and more.

The agency provided day labor service to over 50 area businesses including: janitorial, assembly, light manufacturing, construction, general labor, housekeeping, receptionist, data entry, restaurant work, and Groundskeeping.

Primavera workers are fully supported for the length of any job assignment with such services as free lunches, bus passes, appropriate clothing for the job, safety equipment, job readiness training classes, housing and much more. Employees are fully screened before being sent to an employer, allowing the agency to match employee with employer needs.

### **3. Boston uses State and Local Partnerships that Combine Treatment with Specialized Employment and Housing Assistance to Serve Disabled, Homeless Persons.**

The Boston Private Industry Council, Inc. (BPIC) under Boston's Workforce Investment Board chartered three One-Stop Career Centers—Boston Career Link, JobNet and The Work Place. Building on a history of strong partnerships, including collaboration with the MA Department of Mental Health, the BPIC has developed three innovative programs to serve people who are homeless. These include:

Employment Connections: A partnership between the Massachusetts Department of Career Services, the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health and JobNet Career Center – Serving persons w/ psychiatric disabilities who are homeless or recently housed. Project TEAM: A partnership between the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance, the Boston Mayor's Office of Jobs and Community Services, Community Work Services, Project Impact and The Work Place Career Center serves homeless individuals who are receiving food stamps using Food Stamp Employment and Training funds. HomeWork: A demonstration project supported by the U.S. Departments of Labor, and Housing and Urban Development. A partnership led by the Boston Private Industry Council with fifteen partners from state agencies, city departments and community based organizations to house and employ chronically homeless individuals with a disabling condition.

The JobNet One-Stop Career Center hosts the HomeWork and Employment Connection projects where it developed a set of "enhanced services" such as one-on-one case management, benefits counseling, individualized job referrals, post-placement support and navigator services for homeless individuals through its own WIA funding or other funds secured through grants. The HomeWork project went a step further to help end chronic homelessness by combing employment services with HUD's Shelter Plus Care housing subsidies that seek stable housing and jobs for participants. HomeWork enrolled 41 people, housed 20, placed 27 in employment, placed 9 in supported employment, and 18 in competitive jobs. All are enrolled in WIA. The average wage for those employed is \$9.31, and the range is \$6.75/hour through \$20.00/hour.

Partnership services integration is a hallmark of the BPIC's homeless projects and is the key to their success.

### **4. Portland's Central City Concern and Workforce Investment Board Have a Significant Employment Program for Chronically Homeless—with Work as a Core Part of Recovery Plan.**

Work Systems, Inc., the administrative arm of the Local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) for Oregon Region 2, and its partner, Central City Concern established the Community Engagement Program (CEP IV) in Portland, Oregon under a grant award from the DOL and HUD initiative to end chronic homelessness through employment and housing. CEP IV is serving the long-term homeless population by pairing permanent housing with customized employment services for up to 89 individuals. The team stresses the benefits of employment to each individual's rehabilitation and recovery process.

It is expected that the philosophy that employment promotes recovery will have a powerful influence on tenant self-expectations.

The target population for CEP IV is individual adults in Multnomah County, Oregon (which includes Portland) who have been homeless for at least one year or who have had four or more episodes of homelessness over the last three years, experience a severe disability, and who express an interest in employment. Working with this population, the program has three main goals:

- Placement of up to 89 chronic homeless individuals into self-selected employment that provides earnings, benefits, and career advancement.
- Movement of the same individuals into permanent housing under a tenant-based Shelter Plus Care subsidy.
- Developing systems-change strategies that bring the workforce development system and organizations serving homeless populations into closer alignment.

## **5. Houston Braids Federal WIA funds with More Flexible Homeless Services Funds that Enables a Long-Time Homeless Provider to Offer a Full-Range of Employment Help.**

Since 1989, the Service of the Emergency Aid Resource Center for the Homeless, Inc. (SEARCH) in Houston, Texas has served homeless individuals and families. Founded by a coalition of ecumenical congregations representing diverse ethnic, social, and spiritual backgrounds, the nonprofit agency is an active member of the local Continuum of Care. Its programs include permanent and transitional housing, daily lunch for 250, a food pantry, mobile outreach, day care, medical assistance and psychological evaluations, and a One-Stop Career Center for the homeless that offers a comprehensive set of programs to meet a variety of needs.

SEARCH's mid-town location is convenient to transportation and accessible services on the ground floor of its main facility where employment services are adjacent to showers, laundry room, dining room, and a clothing room. The agency developed collaborations with a variety of partners across the region without whom homeless people would not be effectively served.

The 13-county workforce system in Southeast Texas is overseen by The WorkSource - Gulf Coast Workforce Board, a 63-person board of directors with a majority of members from the private business sector. The Board's staff, housed at the Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC), manages contractors that provide a full range of job services through 36 regional career offices. This year SEARCH began building on their innovations and success in programs like the Job Bank, Literacy Program, GED Program, Culinary Training Program and WIA Workforce Re-entry Program by becoming a One-Stop Career Center for the Gulf Coast Workforce Board. It offers a range of WIA core services are organized in a seamless, accessible service delivery setting. Through its partnerships, SEARCH can offer on-site food service skills training as well as link customers to a variety of training services through the HGAC's WorkSource system.

SEARCH received Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and now additional WIA funding to support its commitment to providing employment assistance for the homeless (and other customers) by significantly expanding its employment services in 2005. To adhere to their mission of providing flexible and individualized services, the agency could not rely on one single source of funding to meet the needs of homeless people. By braiding together a variety of funding sources, the agency can effectively and comprehensively serve the employment needs of homeless job seekers through the provision of One-Stop Career Center services as well as outreach and wrap-around supportive services.

## Section 3: Job Seeker Interests, Capacity and Experience in the Workforce

### Key Findings

Key findings from our research into the interests, capacities, and work experience of homeless job seekers included:

- More than 20 percent of those counted during the 2005 one-night-count indicated that they were employed. The fact that these individuals are working and still remain homeless indicates the need for any or all of the following: Increased access to supportive housing, access to treatment for substance abuse and/or mental illness, and opportunities for wage advancement.
- Work is a stabilizing factor, contributing to length of housing tenure, contrary to the view held by some that employment can be stressful and a cause for relapse.
- Idleness is not a desired goal for people who leave the streets and shelters to live in permanent housing.
- Although not all of the estimated 24,000 people who experience homelessness in King County in a given year are actively seeking work, each of these individuals should be considered as potentially interested in and/or capable of some level of meaningful work-related activity.
- Individuals who are homeless and potentially ready for work reside in all parts of King County. The one-night count data suggests that a majority of these individuals are located in Seattle. The second largest group is in South King County.
- Approximately half of the individuals who are homeless and current or future job seekers are struggling with substance use disorders. Approximately one-quarter of the individuals who are homeless are struggling with a major mental illness. Many are also dealing with the co-occurrence of multiple disorders or illnesses.
- Although definitive data is limited, our rough estimate is that 20% of the people who are homeless will require a high level of supportive services and case management in order to obtain and sustain employment, 20% will require a moderate level of supportive services and case management and 60% will require a lower level of supportive services and case management.
- Different types and levels of employment must be available in order to best meet the needs and readiness of job seekers who are homeless. These include: Occasional part-time employment at the (irregular) times people are ready and want to work, regular part-time work on a regular schedule at known locations, and full-time employment. Employment placements may include both competitive-market jobs as well as supported employment jobs structured for people specifically overcoming barriers to work.
- The wage needs of people who are homeless may vary, depending on skills and levels of readiness for work. Some individuals may be seeking part-time employment that provides a modest supplement to sources of income related to disability, such as SSI. Others may be seeking jobs with opportunities for advancement that lead towards job advancement and livable wage work. Others may be ready for and seeking living wage work from their first point of contact with the employment system.
- The group suggested guidelines for successful employment, which include: Access to shelter or housing that is safe and stable; provision of case management and treatment services that can help promote housing and employment stability; an interest by the person in employment and a willingness to participate in a treatment and/or housing plan that incorporates work-related goals; and training for staff conducting outreach and engagement services to assist people who are homeless in accessing the supportive services needed to secure employment services and jobs.

## Estimates of Homeless Job Seeker Population

This is a challenging question, due in part to the absence of reliable regional demographic data on the nature and extent of homelessness. Until a functional Homeless Management Information System is operational, planning efforts continue to rely largely on a survey undertaken as part of the annual One Night Count that has been conducted for more than a decade by the Seattle/King County Coalition for the Homeless.

In King County, the One Night Count combines the count of people sleeping outside with the number of people in emergency and transitional housing on the given night. In mid-2007, it is expected that the Safe Harbors system will start providing comprehensive data on the number of people entering, receiving services, and leaving the homeless services and housing system. The Seattle/King County Committee to End Homelessness, in its Ten-Year Plan, estimates that, to achieve an annualized depiction of homelessness in King County, the point-in-time data must be multiplied by a factor of three. The following table provides estimates of the demographic characteristics of people who are homeless in King County who are or may potentially be among the population of homeless job seekers. The assumptions made to create this table were based on:

- The 3.0 multiplier figure used by the Committee to End Homelessness to derive an annual estimate of the number of people who are homeless in King County from the point-in-time count data
- Data from a variety of sources on the prevalence of disabilities and special needs that require additional treatment and/or supportive services if stable employment is to be achieved by individuals in that group
- Data on the geographic distribution of homeless individuals based on information collected during the 2005 point-in-time count

It is recognized that the data contained in this chart represent gross estimates of homelessness and the sub-types of need among homeless persons. Nevertheless, this point-in-time count data is at the present time the best local source of data available, and is being used by the CEH and other planning entities as the foundation on which planning efforts related to homelessness are rooted. Accordingly, we have aligned our data assumptions with these efforts.

**Table 1:  
Demographic Data on Homeless in Seattle/King County**

Total number of homeless adults in King County (2006 One Night Count Data)	7,940
Annualized figure (utilizing a multiplying factor of 3.0)	23,820
<b>Percentages of those with no employment</b> who have one or more disabilities/special needs that require additional treatment and/or supportive services in order to achieve stable employment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alcohol and Drug Abuse Issues (50%)</li> <li>• Serious and Persistent Mental Illness (23%)</li> <li>• Developmental Disabilities (1%)</li> <li>• Physical Disability as primary problem (2%)</li> <li>• HIV/AIDS (3%)</li> </ul>	11,910 5,479 238 476 714
<b>Geographic Distribution/Last Permanent Address</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seattle (56%)</li> <li>• North King County (3%)</li> <li>• East King County (8%)</li> <li>• South King County (11%)</li> <li>• Other Washington State (9%)</li> <li>• Out of State (13%)</li> </ul>	13,339 715 1,906 2,620 2,144 3,097

Some of the data contained in this table requires additional explanation:

- Although not all of the adults who are homeless in King County are ready, able or interested in work, this report includes all adults who are homeless in the pool of individuals who might eventually be ready for and/or interested in some level of employment activities. Some of these individuals experience extensive disabilities and circumstances that make readiness for work a long-range goal.
- Although a total of 22% of the individuals identified in the King County point-in-time count reported that they are already employed, these adults have also been included in the table. This decision reflects an assumption that these individuals are, for the most part, not likely to be employed on an ongoing basis in regular work, and so are likely in need of assistance and support in moving towards more stable or higher-paying jobs situations. At the very least, despite the fact that they are employed, they are still homeless, and will need assistance in finding and securing housing.

The data related to the prevalence of various disabilities listed in this table has been derived from a variety of sources at the local, state and national levels. Where feasible, we have used local estimates for the incidence of specific conditions. Data on the prevalence of substance use disorders (50%), comes from local studies of homeless populations. The prevalence of serious and persistent mental illness used here (23%), is derived from a study conducted by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, which included data from Seattle. The figures on the incidence of HIV/AIDS were developed in consultation with the King County Ryan White Program Manager.

Discussion of employment of persons who are homeless also requires identifying the nature, intensity and duration of supports an individual who is homeless will require in order to secure and sustain work. Again, this is a complex task, as it requires both identifying and quantifying subsets of the population as well as different levels of work activity that each subset may consider desirable and/or attainable.

## Homeless Job Seeker Typology

The paradigm described in the following table was utilized to identify three distinct groups of individuals who are homeless and at some stage of preparation or readiness for employment. The table provides examples of the types of individuals and families that might fall into each category, as well as a rough estimate of the percentage of individuals in each group based on the prevalence estimates contained in Table 1, on the previous page.

For example, the relatively large number of individuals in groups one and two—those needing higher amounts of assistance to gain and maintain employment—is related to the extent of substance abuse and mental illness that are present among homeless populations. Although not all of the individuals struggling with addiction and mental illness are among the chronic or long-term homeless populations, these two conditions, in particular, make sustaining stable, living-wage employment over time an enormous challenge. As a result, individuals in these categories will be most successful in their work-related endeavors when they receive more intensive employment assistance and case management services.

Many of those in Group 1 (the highest support needs) will be experiencing co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders. Many of those in Group 2 (medium-level need) will be experiencing only one of these two conditions, but at a level of severity that creates the need for fairly extensive ongoing treatment and/or supports. Individuals in both of these groups also require varying levels of housing-related supports in order to maintain housing tenure over time in the face of conditions that include relapse as a component of the cycle of the illnesses.

**Table 2:  
Potential Job Seekers Who Are Homeless by Typology**

Potential Homeless Job Seeker Features (Typology)	Example of Individual and Family	Estimated Homeless Job Seekers (Annual)	Percent of Homeless Job Seekers
<p><b>Group 1: Very High Amount</b> of Employment Assistance and Case Management Anticipated Job Seekers lacking a vocational goal; limited or no work history; may or may not have supportive housing; work inexperienced; not likely to pass Work Readiness Credential; needs case management to meet demands of living in supportive housing or shelter; self-care skills lacking</p>	<p><b>Individual:</b> Person with schizophrenia and co-occurring substance use disorder with history of long-term homelessness. Would likely be interested in intermittent, part-time work. <b>Family:</b> Mother with two young children who has left a 10-year marriage with a physically and emotionally abusive spouse. Experiencing severe PTSD, homelessness, a lack of job experience and limited skill managing economic resources. Has recently tested positive for HIV.</p>	4,800	20%
<p><b>Group 2: Medium-Level Amount</b> of Employment Assistance and Case Management Anticipated Job Seekers with ambition for employment; may have low basic skills and few workplace skills; uncertain or unsuccessful in locating a job; does not know how to present well for interview; could benefit from customized employment and/or supported employment; may lack child care</p>	<p><b>Individual:</b> Single male with history of poly-substance abuse and homelessness. Has completed 90 days of sobriety and is engaged in chemical dependency treatment under the auspices of the King County Drug Court. Actively seeking full-time work but has poor work history due to substance abuse and has criminal history due to drug possession. <b>Family:</b> Young couple with an infant child. Couch surfing with family members. Neither has completed high school. Husband has problems with alcohol and has recently completed chemical dependency treatment. Wife has anger management issues secondary to childhood sexual abuse. He has criminal record for an old vehicular assault (DWI) charge; she has been expelled from Job Corps for behavior problems. Both are unemployed, but want to be working.</p>	4,800	20%

Potential Homeless Job Seeker Features (Typology)	Example of Individual and Family	Estimated Homeless Job Seekers (Annual)	Percent of Homeless Job Seekers
<p><b>Group 3: Lower Amount</b> of Employment Assistance and Case Management Anticipated Job Seekers with a job goal or expressed interest; has some occupational skills necessary for preferred job; need minimal case management; lacks child care or has dependents; has one time-limited benefits; may have language challenges; can negotiate with systems to get benefits with minimal assistance</p>	<p><b>Individual:</b> Warehouse worker recently laid off during a period of downsizing in his company. He has been evicted from his housing, and is experiencing his first episode of homelessness. His wife is seeking a divorce, custody of their children and regular child support. He is motivated to find work, but has been unsuccessful to date in his job search.</p> <p><b>Family:</b> Recent "legal" immigrant family from East Africa: Husband, wife, two children: 3- and 1-year old. Living with relatives on an interim basis, but need their own place due to space limitations. Limited English language skills. Husband would like to work driving a taxi, but has been unable to find work in this area. Wife would like part-time job, has a sister who can provide some childcare to free up her time. Motivated, but not connected to any services, entitlements or supports.</p>	<p>14,400</p>	<p>60%</p>

The utilization of a chart of this nature is a somewhat artificial way to delineate these different groups of homeless job seekers, as the issues and problems that require treatment and support for people who are homeless change with time and circumstances. A person may need high levels of support at one point in time, (i.e., during periods of relapse or psychiatric de-compensation) and lower levels of support during times of sobriety and more stable functioning. Ideally, individuals would be able to receive variable levels of support and service that is matched to their given level of need at any point in time.

### Employment Levels Appropriate for Homeless Job Seekers

Individual job seekers in each of these three typologies may be seeking different types and levels of employment. The Supply Side Sub-workgroup identified a continuum of employment opportunities that would, ideally, be available to people who are homeless and have a variety of different skill levels and degrees of readiness for work. These are:

- **Occasional part-time employment**, at the (irregular) times that people are ready and want to work. Existing opportunities for this type of work include Labor Ready (day labor), Casa Latina (which includes some ESL training) and the Millionair Club (which includes some hygiene and meal services). Not many employers will hire individuals who only want to work "when they feel like it," but this is an important category or level of work for many individuals, especially those entering the work force for the first time, or for after a long delay related to absence or disability. At present, case management services from other systems are not linked to these services, but could be integrated with Labor Ready, Casa Latina and Millionaire Club in some fashion.

- **Part-time work that is on a regular schedule** at known locations and specific work activities. Part-time work of this nature offers a pathway into the established work force, and can lead to full-time employment over time. These part-time workers can be for temporary placement agencies, but are more likely to result from the efforts of employment program staff and others going into the field to recruit employers and negotiate the terms on a placement-by-placement basis. This work can include seasonal work at sports arenas and Seattle Center, janitorial/cleaning crew work, etc.
- **Full-time employment.** This type of work may be an immediate goal for the higher-functioning population of people who are homeless, or a longer-term goal for some of the individuals who enter the work force initially through occasional or regular part-time work.
- **Job help for chronically homeless** Most of the current employment services available in King County target individuals that tend to fall into Group 3 who still require a combination of support services and specialized employment assistance to get successful outcomes. Based on successful employment programs such as Primavera Works in Tucson and JobNet HomeWork in Boston which are described in more detail in Section 1, we believe that success can be attained by individuals needing medium-level or high levels of support.

## Services Needed by Homeless Job Seekers

Our Supply Side Sub-workgroup discussed in detail the specific nature of the employment assistance needs of the population of people who are long-term homeless who have the most significant disabilities and impairments that make finding and retaining employment a challenge. The group identified the following employment assistance needs to achieve success for this group:

- Access to a continuum of employment options and opportunities, including social enterprise, affirmative business models, paid work training, part-time and full-time employment, all provided in a fashion that allows clients to build momentum towards more stable and higher-paying work. The model must incorporate an understanding of relapse, self-sabotage, self-defeating behaviors, etc. The continuum of work options must be non-linear and flexible so that clients can find the types and levels of work and support best suited to their current situation.
- Careful matching of the individual client with the right job for him/her.
- A supported employment model that doesn't end when the individual finds work but continues to provide needed services to keep the person employed.
- Assessment and linkage to services that can address basic needs in addition to work-related goals, e.g.: mental health treatment, chemical dependency services, treatment of co-occurring disorders. It is critical that these multiple needs be met in an integrated fashion that includes the employment component.
- Ongoing support for recently attained sobriety that includes replacing drinking behaviors with more adaptive activities without placing too much pressure on the individual that can create pressure or stress to relapse.
- Rapid intervention at critical moments to prevent relapse, de-compensation, crisis "meltdowns" that can lead to job loss.
- Regular contact between employers and the individuals involved in providing supportive services to people who are working, as appropriate, for programs that include overt communication with employers regarding the client's homeless status.
- Benefit planning to help those on General Assistance Unemployable (GAU) and SSI manage their eligibility for and participation in entitlement and other insurance programs.
- Employment-focused case management that helps clients overcome barriers, such as loss of housing or outstanding legal issues, both at job placement and throughout a client's employment tenure.
- Access to culturally competent services that includes the recruitment and training of program staff on topics related to race, ethnicity, age, language, work environments, etc.

Although the THCH employment research group included representation both from the consumer/advocate perspective and from the viewpoint of individuals who have been working with people who are homeless and seeking employment, it

would be valuable to gather further information on this topic from currently and formerly homeless persons. One way to gather this additional data from people who are homeless would be through conducting a series of focus groups with the target population on how individuals would define and achieve success in employment for themselves.

## **Employment “Readiness”**

Employment “readiness” is a challenging concept to define. Many homeless people do not meet traditional definitions of work readiness for competitive, full-time jobs. High outcome targets for federally funded employment assistance creates a tendency to select participants most likely to be successful. This creates a significant barrier for any persons whose circumstances include a pattern of instability or substance use; unless this barrier is addressed, many homeless will be excluded from workforce services and not secure jobs. The Housing First philosophy has challenged the concept of a sequential progression from shelter to transitional to permanent housing, employment best practices are now looking at ways to include forms of employment from initial points of recovery and stability rather than as a distant goal after other challenges are overcome.

The Supply Side Sub-workgroup agreed on a set of guidelines for describing the relationship between job seekers who are homeless and the housing and supportive services required to make successful employment possible. In the course of their discussion, the Sub-workgroup underscored that not everyone who is homeless is able to work, particularly those with multiple, chronic disabilities.

The guidelines for successful employment developed by the Supply Side Sub-workgroup are as follows:

- People must be sheltered or housed in a setting they can depend on. This could include a shelter, couch surfing, tent city, transitional or permanent housing, etc., with clear strategies to promote movement towards more stable housing over time.
- For those who are eligible for ongoing treatment services, people should be linked to some form of case management that can help to promote housing stability and support employment over time. This may require determining how multiple case management and support functions in the vocational, housing and treatment systems link their activities to avoid duplication and promote recovery.
- For those not eligible for ongoing services such as case management (those who don’t qualify for mental health services, without other case management supports, are without Criminal Justice system oversight and supervision, etc.), vocational or employment system case managers (e.g., Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, TANF, SJI) must function in an effective supportive capacity for people who are homeless.
- The individual must express an interest in employment and a willingness to participate in the development and implementation of a plan that incorporates work-related goals. Outreach and engagement staff need training to effectively assist people who are homeless in accessing the supportive services they need (but may not yet be eligible for or receiving) to access employment services and jobs.

The Supply Side Sub-workgroup agreed that any description of “level of readiness” for work must start with these guidelines for successful employment. In addition, the group identified a set of additional factors for success to further describe what “level of readiness” for employment means.

The individual who is ready for employment should:

- Be “coachable” – willing to listen and take advice
- Have been tested for skill levels and provided with training to address skills that may be lacking, particularly in relation to: 1) Math skills relevant to their job context; and, 2) Language skills, (reading, writing), that may include English as a Second Language
- Have the time, assistance needed and ability to address outstanding legal issues (e.g., court appearances) without disrupting their employment
- Have access to transportation to and from work
- Have access to clothing and supplies needed for work environment

- Demonstrate movement towards more consistent work habits, (e.g., showing up for work on most days), and has the drive and self-discipline to enhance work habits over time
- Develop the ability to adjust to new environments and learn new skills over time
- Be provided with sufficient opportunities to practice and learn new routines in a fashion that promotes success over time
- Participate in a community that supports their employment goals and activities

## Section 4: Services and Resources Supporting Homeless Job Seekers

### Key Findings

Key findings from our research into the services and resources supporting homeless job seekers included:

- Overall, King County has an array of effective but isolated employment services in Seattle/King County that touch the homeless system and the populations they serve, some with greater depth than others. Unfortunately, the lack of a coordinated system results in duplication of services, confusion for providers, missed opportunities to leverage resources, and no clear path to employment services for people who are homeless.
- Better linkages between treatment (mental health and chemical dependency) and employment services are key strategies to increase the employability of homeless persons.
- The Seattle-King County region has several effective programs that are serving homeless people with comprehensive employment services via a range of models— unfortunately the resources fall far short of the need.
- Some mental health agencies in King County have embraced evidence-based supported employment models that have been shown to be effective in helping persons with disabilities obtain paid employment.
- Overall, the community mental health system does not have sufficient funds invested in employment services; they are well below the national average of employment rates. The local mental health system has just 16 FTE vocational specialists to serve over 16,000 clients of employment age.
- Supported employment services for people in the mental health system are almost exclusively funded by the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) funds. These dollars are a limited and unstable revenue source. Once individuals enter DVR-funded services there is tremendous flexibility on how the dollars are used.
- Recent Medicaid rule changes now allow individuals on the waitlist for vocational services through DVR to receive supported employment services funded by Medicaid dollars. No additional funds have been allocated to cover these services; the mental health system would need to reinvest existing dollars to fund these activities at this time.
- Homeless Employment programs are an excellent resource to move people out of the homeless system toward greater integration into mainstream housing and employment. Some individuals may move towards employment instead of seeking disability benefits.
- Many of the homeless employment programs serve individuals with significant drug and alcohol abuse issues. Many of these programs have limited resources available to support these individuals actively using and to support those in early recovery or needing relapse prevention.
- A significant number of individuals served in homeless employment programs have psychiatric and/or co-occurring disorders. Many of these individuals may not have the severity of psychiatric symptoms to qualify for Medicaid; therefore, they do not have access to public mental health services. Untreated psychiatric disorders may impact the person's ability to obtain/retain employment and housing.
- The Workforce Development Council is an example of an entity that has multiple funding dollars brought together to support co-location of employment services. It must serve a broad array of individuals from those who need limited services to those who need a more intensive package. The more intensive services are held to high outcomes, therefore leading to careful screening of those who would benefit and potentially have success in acquiring competitive paid employment.
- Labor Ready, Millionair Club and other day labor programs provide a valuable service and can act as a bridge back to paid work. These programs have expressed an interest in partnering with others in the community to further assist individuals who are homeless.

## Overview

There are not clearly identified entry points or an integrated system for homeless people seeking employment. Thus, few people are aware of the array of employment resources that exist. The following section will describe many of the components of the workforce system. Due to time constraints, there are a number of important elements that were not examined, including Corrections, youth employment, and veterans' employment assistance.

As the IAC develops a system of coordinated intake, this presents an excellent opportunity to incorporate job referral, training and job placement as part of the early interventions to prevent or shorten homelessness. Strategies may include co-location of services with staff from allied systems for housing, employment and treatment. Resources should be invested in a way that promotes best practices and are flexible so that services can be individualized to meet the needs of each person. But above all, we need to believe that all people seeking our services can work and that with our support they can reach their full potential.

The following is a brief summary of the current landscape of employment and support services:

1. Supported Employment for Persons with Disabilities
2. Homeless Employment Programs
3. Specialized Job Assistance Within Supportive Housing Settings
4. Mainstream (and For-Profit) Employment Services
5. Funders of Services

### 1. Supported Employment for Persons with Disabilities

Within the King County community mental health system, there are eight agencies that have vocational programs and have contracts with DVR. The county mental health agency directly funds Community Psychiatric Clinic to provide vocational services to clients at the six smaller agencies that do not have vocational programs or contracts with DVR. In 2005, 11% of the adults (18-64) served in the mental health system were employed. Unfortunately, King County is well below the national average of employing 20-30%.

These eight agencies providing employment services have varying degrees of fidelity with the national best practice model of supported employment as described by SAMHSA. Harborview Mental Health Services is an example of a project that has high fidelity to the model and has a fully integrated model with a team that includes a vocational specialist, mental health case managers, chemical dependency counselor and housing support staff. The vocational specialist is onsite at Harborview's supportive housing project for early engagement with the residents and to coordinate with the treatment team to ensure that employment, if desired, is an active component of the care plan.

Overall, the agencies providing employment services have less focus on soft skills and more emphasis on job placement. Agencies utilize an array of vocational services, including integrated placement of consumers into community jobs that are not reserved for disabled individuals (using a supported employment approach) and agency-run businesses that act as either assessment sites or permanent employment for consumers. Examples of agency-run businesses included vending machine services, recycling, janitorial, landscaping, catering, a café, food service, and assembly/packaging.

According to the Mental Health and Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services (MHCADS) Division Supported Employment Work Group Report (2005), there are only 16 FTE vocational services staff employed by these agencies to serve over 16,000 consumers of employment age.

#### Six Core Principles of Supported Employment Model

1. Eligibility is based on consumer choice.
2. Supported employment is integrated with treatment.
3. Competitive employment is the goal.
4. Job search starts soon after a consumer expresses interest in working.
5. Follow-along supports are continuous.
6. Consumer preferences are important.

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) evidence-based resource kit.

### **Major Barrier for Homeless Mentally-Ill Seeking Employment: Long DVR Wait List**

The eight mental health agencies providing employment services, with the exception of the McKinney HIP program at Community Psychiatric Clinic, rely solely on DVR funding, which is not a steady, reliable source. At the beginning of 2005, due to the DVR wait list and the need to have DVR funding prior to the placement process, it took mental health consumers three to six months before they could meet with an agency vocational specialist to start the actual process of job development. In January 2006, DVR placed a nine-month moratorium on clients coming off the DVR wait list. DVR is currently considering changes to its criteria for assigning priority for removal from the wait list, which may result in more enrolled consumers having to endure longer waits. Supported employment services provided by DVR in the community mental health system are limited and poorly accessible to all clients, particularly those individuals who are experiencing homelessness.

DVR allocates funds for supported employment in our state. Of the dollars they receive, 79.9% of its funding is from the Federal Rehabilitation Services Administration which is part of the Department of Education. The other portion of their funding is from state dollars. The need for these services greatly exceeds the resources that are available, and DVR uses an "order of selection" process to determine who is the most disabled, therefore served first. A person is determined to be part of the most disabled population based on a review of four areas of functioning: social, mobility, learning skills and psychological factors.

Once a person has entered into DVR-funded supported employment services, there is tremendous flexibility on how those dollars are used. They can be expended on clothing, school, job coaching and even emergency housing. Washington State is the highest paid supported employment service package with approximately \$10,000 per placement. The average person receives services for a two-year period. The overarching assumption for services is that people can work unless proven otherwise. Individuals receive an employment plan and are placed in trial work experiences such as in community-based offices with internal job placements. In King County, there are twenty-five developmental disability (DD) and eight mental health employment vendors that receive DVR dollars.

Outcomes: DVR's outcome is that 60% of individuals that are "in plan" will obtain competitive work (part-time or full-time). The current rate for our state is 40%. The agency's goal is to place more emphasis on obtaining the 60% outcomes.

### **Recent Flexibility in Medicaid-Funded Employment**

Historically, an additional barrier to supportive employment services on demand were the rules that prohibit individuals from receiving Medicaid-funded employment services while on the DVR waitlist. Mental Health Agencies had to use non-Medicaid funding streams to cover the cost of providing employment related services. Fortunately, after strong advocacy from staff at MHCADS, changes have been made to our state plan that allows individuals to receive Medicaid-funded employment services while on the DVR waitlist. No additional dollars exist to expand these services at this time, so agencies would have to reinvest current dollars.

To manage the scope of this project we have not explored supported employment services provided by the Department of Developmental Disability Division (DDD) and its agencies. Clearly, the DDD system has been recognized as one of the strongest leaders in our state to employ persons with disabilities and their programs should be explored as additional best practice models. In regards to the homeless population in Seattle/King County, it is unclear what percentage of people who are homeless are participating or potentially eligible for services within the DDD system.

## **2. Homeless Employment Programs**

**Homeless Intervention Project (HIP)** is one of the best practice supported employment programs serving homeless individuals in King County. The project is a partnership between the Workforce Development Council (WDC) with four community agencies: the YWCA, FareStart, Seattle Conservation Corps, and Community Psychiatric Clinic. These agencies provide case management, direct support and employment training services for homeless adults (single or in families). HIP is funded almost exclusively from locally allocated McKinney funds. Because it is a "services-only" project, this program does not score well under current HUD Continuum of Care ratings, which emphasize permanent housing

and housing-based services, and there is some pressure on the local Continuum of Care to reduce or find alternative sources of funding for the HIP programs. HIP served 533 persons in their last service year at a cost of approximately \$2,500 per person per year. HIP is an excellent mechanism to move people out of the homeless system toward greater integration into mainstream housing and employment. Some individuals may move towards employment instead of seeking disability benefits.

According to annual performance reports, over 34% of participants in HIP have special needs related to mental health; 43% have issues related to alcohol abuse, and 45% have issues related to drug abuse (though many individuals have both drug and alcohol issues—HIP estimates that at least 75% of clients have substance abuse issues). Most (52%) are living on the streets or in emergency or transitional shelters at the time they enter the program. Others come from treatment facilities, prison, or tenuous “couch-surfing” situations. Twenty-three percent are in transitional housing. FareStart takes by far the largest percentage of their referrals from shelters, followed by the YWCA. Seattle Conservation Corps has a strong referral base from individuals coming out of correctional facilities. The four programs have 15 direct staff positions as part of their supported employment package.

The goal of HIP services is to prepare participants for successful employment and steadily increase stability in housing and emergence from homelessness to self-sufficiency. While each HIP program offers a different model of vocational services, all are built around individual, intensive case management. Each participant receives a full assessment of needs, barriers and abilities and develops an Individual Employment and Housing Plan with his or her case manager. The case manager supports the individual throughout the program in tackling issues, actively works to stabilize and upgrade housing, communicates with other agencies and caseworkers serving the individual, and connects the client with specialized services such as mental health and substance abuse treatment. Recent efforts have been made to emphasize the linkage between employment services and housing. All four providers have access to housing resources, some of which include designated units for individuals participating in the program (Compass and FareStart).

Also, all the HIP programs have funds (both HUD and leveraged funding) to alleviate barriers to training and employment. These funds can cover transportation, basic necessities, work clothes and equipment, child care, and fees of various kinds. Finally, all the HIP programs provide job readiness assistance, job search and placement assistance, and retention support after placement.

HIP currently includes four programs:

**Community Psychiatric Clinic:** Serves homeless adults with mental illness. Specialized employment services are provided by the Stepworks Vocational Program at CPC. Following enrollment, clients participate in a 30- to 90-day paid work experience, which focuses on basic transferable work skills that are required in the job market. CPC also offers “life skills” training, focusing on budgeting and other key skills for independent living. CPC HIP staff and the participating client identify marketable job skills, client work preferences, client support needs, and relevant employment goals; CPC/HIP staff provides individualized job placement and retention services to clients, which are based on the supported employment model. Stepworks actively works with employers to develop relevant job opportunities for clients.

**FareStart:** Prepares homeless adults for employment in the food service industry through a rigorous, 16-week, 35-hour-per-week program. As a social enterprise, FareStart operates food service businesses that prepare and distribute 2,500 meals each day. FareStart’s program design includes:

- *Technical Skills* – Classroom and hands-on food-service job skill training, with students learning and developing skills in the FareStart businesses;
- *Job Readiness Component* - Case Management addressing issues surrounding students’ homelessness and other life barriers to employment, including “Life Skills” training (develops attitudes and belief systems that contribute to success in life and work);
- “Life Management” training (to develop skills in money management, budgeting, housing attainment and upgrades); Job Readiness Training (job search, résumé development, interviewing, etc.) in cooperation with the WorkSource Affiliate at Opportunity Place; and
- *Direct Support Services* as described above. In addition, with the Compass Center as its housing partner, FareStart participants are provided with immediate, stable shelter and ongoing housing case management to facilitate housing stability upgrades during the program year and up to a 90-day follow-up.

**The Seattle Conservation Corps (SCC):** SCC serves primarily homeless adults with multiple barriers to employment, particularly ex-offenders and those overcoming substance abuse. The Corps provides a year of paid work experience in a variety of public works projects throughout the City of Seattle Parks and Recreation Department, as well as housing stabilization services and comprehensive support services. SCC’s program also includes a separate component to help new HIP clients who are work-ready to find a job immediately on entrance to the program, followed by six months of case management to help them stay employed and move up. SCC’s special offerings include an in-house substance-abuse counselor and an on-site learning center, where achievement of individual goals (ranging from attaining a GED to gaining computer skills) is tied to wage raises on the job.

**The YWCA HIP program:** YWCA HIP staff work with each participant through one of two tracks: 1) Training-to-Employment; following assessment and enrollment, the participant receives training that is primarily short-term (3-6 months). The YWCA does not provide training in-house as the other HIP providers do but rather pays for tuition, fees and any needed supplies at outside training providers. After training and job placement, the individual is placed on a job, receives up to 3 months of retention/wage progression case management, exits the program employed, and includes a 90-day follow-up after exit. 2) Direct Placement for individuals who are more work-ready: After assessment and enrollment, the participant is placed directly into employment, receives up to six months of retention and wage progression case management, exits the program employed, and includes a 90-day follow-up after exit. Because most YWCA HIP staff are co-located at the WorkSource Affiliate Downtown, which is sited at the YWCA’s housing and day center Opportunity Place, HIP clients can easily use the WorkSource facilities. YWCA HIP staff are also co-located at WorkSource Redmond, yielding the same advantage. When appropriate, HIP clients are referred to the WIA Adult program at WorkSource.

**Table 3:  
HIP Provider Housing Links**

HIP Provider	Housing Links	
<b><i>Community Psychiatric Clinic (CPC)</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low Income Housing Institute</li> <li>• Capitol Hill Housing Improvement Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plymouth Housing Group</li> <li>• CPC Housing Services</li> </ul>
<b><i>FareStart</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Compass Center (20 contract beds)</li> <li>• William Booth (2 contract beds)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plymouth Housing Group</li> <li>• Calhoun Properties</li> <li>• Church Council of Greater Seattle</li> </ul>
<b><i>Seattle Conservation Corps</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pioneer Human Services</li> <li>• Salvation Army</li> <li>• Shelter Plus Care</li> <li>• Low Income Housing Institute</li> <li>• Plymouth Housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Compass Center</li> <li>• City Team Ministries</li> <li>• Capitol Hill Housing Improvement Program</li> </ul>
<b><i>YWCA</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aloha Inn</li> <li>• YWCA</li> <li>• The Compass Center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Church Council of Greater Seattle Self Managed Housing Services</li> </ul>

Of the 311 persons who exited the HIP program in 2004-05, 63% had unsubsidized employment and 63% had upgraded their housing, including 87 people who had permanent, unsubsidized housing. Of those contacted at follow-up 3 months after exit, 78% had upgraded their housing stability status and 84% of those who had jobs were still employed.

All HIP providers make immediate housing stabilization a priority for each participant and assist participants through a network of close partnerships (both formal and informal) with community housing agencies. Shelter and housing are

leveraged through these housing partners, who are funded through HUD and other federal agencies, state funds, local housing levy dollars, and private foundation funds such as Sound Families, funded by the Gates Foundation. Specific linkages are listed below. HIP case managers work closely with these agencies to help each participant find space, complete applications, and meet requirements.

**Pioneer Human Services** received a 2006 Social Capitalist Award from Fast Company magazine. PHS integrates a wide array of services to meet the holistic needs of people living on the margins of society. These basic services include housing, treatment (including mental health and chemical dependency), and rapid access to paid employment, either in businesses that it operates or placements with other companies in the community. A primary segment of their target population are men and women leaving correctional facilities, who initially transition through community reentry centers, many of whom then seek placement in Pioneer's low-cost housing. This is very unique since many providers of affordable housing systematically exclude former felons from housing. Pioneer provides both transitional and permanent supportive housing options and often hires former residents for onsite housing support positions. Since the majority of their housing units are drug- and alcohol-free, their treatment philosophy emphasizes abstinence with limited tolerance for relapse. Specialized housing programs include serving mentally ill offenders, in conjunction with Seattle Mental Health and other community providers.

The **Metropolitan Improvement District Ambassador Program** was founded by the Downtown Seattle Association in 1999 and employs 60 ambassadors to patrol the streets of downtown Seattle. The ambassadors provide directions and information to visitors, assist the Seattle Police Department, offer security escorts, and help maintain a clean urban environment through a comprehensive program of street sweeping, pressure washing, graffiti removal, trash removal, leaf pickup and more. Many of the ambassadors are homeless or formerly homeless individuals. Workers receive approximately \$9.00 an hour and have full medical and dental insurance plans.

The MID has recently expanded its ambassador program to accept non-violent offenders referred by the community court implemented by the Seattle Municipal Court.

**Connections at the Morrison** is a comprehensive daytime service and referral center operated by the Downtown Emergency Service Center. It provides specialized services for homeless men and women seeking employment and affordable housing. Connection case management staff conduct assessments to determine the barriers to employment and housing and develop a specialized plan to help the person obtain their goals. Connections receives \$1 million dollars per year from the City of Seattle to provide this intensive service package. The team consists of "general case managers," a housing specialist, and a vocational specialist. DESC is creating partnerships to expand other services on site, including regular visits from the Veterans Administration and expansion of employment services through the Seattle Job Initiative. Seattle Jobs Initiative is providing employment assistance staffing at Connections as part of an expansion of the FSET pilot described later in this report.

**The Millionair Club** was founded in 1921 and is a 501(c)3 that relies solely on private contributions. They serve approximately 200 homeless men and women each day. They run a dispatch center that works with businesses (such as landscaping, seafood, print shops) and individuals (taking care of homes/yards) to match qualified workers to job sites for day labor. They help match individuals to approximately 20,000 jobs per year. They have a lean administrative structure with 2.5 FTE's. Workers must provide work histories, list qualifications, and submit to a background check for felony history. The majority of placements are a matching service and workers are not covered. If needed, the Millionair Club can act as their agency. In those circumstances, the workers usually earns approximately \$9.00 and the agency collects \$12.00 (just enough to cover insurance and other costs). Many workers participate in the day labor program for months (and some up to a year).

Demographics of Millionair Club workers:

- Approximately 90% of their workers are men
- They estimate that 30-40% are chronically homeless
- Approximately 1/3 are African-American, 1/3 are Hispanic, and 1/3 are Caucasian
- Many of their workers are veterans (about 15%)
- A significant portion of their workers have disabilities and there is a high prevalence of addictions (which may limit their ability to obtain long-term employment).
- 95% have no cars

The Millionair Club has carefully tailored its services to meet the needs of men and women using an employment-first model. The agency defines success with a focus on “quality of life”, increasing self-esteem and the greater benefits to society by having everyone contribute. Gaps in services include the need for more case management along with mental health services that include access to psychiatric assessment and medications. Greater access to supportive housing would also enhance the program.

**CASA Latina** was founded in 1994 by a group of community activists who had been working with Latino homeless in Seattle. In 2005, CASA Latina had a staff of 14, two full-time AmeriCorps members, one work-study student, and 45 regular volunteers to run four programs. CASA Latina is dedicated to empowering Latino immigrants through educational and economic opportunities, helping many immigrants learn the skills and get the jobs that they need to lift themselves and their families out of poverty.

### 3. Specialized Job Assistance Within Supportive Housing Settings

**The Seattle Housing Authority Job Connection** provides comprehensive employment services targeting Seattle Housing Authority residents, including case management and job placement. Working in partnership with participants, The Job Connection strives to increase participants' self-sufficiency through self-directed goal setting, gainful employment, stable housing, and improved access to community services.

The program targets residents living in Low Income Public Housing and HOPE VI communities, some of whom are formerly homeless. Job seekers from the neighborhoods immediately surrounding HOPE VI communities are also served as staff caseloads permit. The services are available at five different SHA locations. Nearly 70 percent of job seekers living in SHA's communities report a primary language other than English. Key components of The Job Connection are cultural competency, language capacity, long-term relationships with residents, and a flexible service model that focuses on each resident's assets, needs, and interests. In 2005, The Job Connection placed 141 adults into jobs at an average wage of \$10.97, with 73 percent offering benefits.

**The Sound Families Initiative**, a 3-county public-private initiative launched with a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, has helped create over 1,000 units of supportive housing for homeless families in King, Snohomish and Pierce Counties. Sound Families has promoted partnerships between housing and service providers to provide social services integrated into affordable housing. Sound Families Initiative has a strong research evaluation component that provides some employment data. Recent data released contains the status of families one year after exiting the program. The research sample consists of 51 families.

Overall, evaluation findings indicate that incomes rose slightly but remained very low:

- Three-fourths of families had higher household incomes one year after exit compared to when they entered transitional housing.
- Incomes remain low, however. Only 32% had a monthly household income greater than \$1,000, even one year after exit.
- Employment levels increased during the period of living in supportive housing, median wages were higher, and more families were receiving benefits for which they are eligible. TANF rates declined by 50%.

Each Sound Families project has a distinct service model with unique differences on what services are provided. Some projects do have supported employment services such as the Helping Hand House in Puyallup.

**Table 4:  
Employment at Intake, Exit, and Post-Exit for Sound Families Residents**

	<b>Intake</b>	<b>Exit</b>	<b>6 mo. after exit</b>	<b>1 year after exit</b>
Full-time employment	8%	16%	19%	24%
Part-time employment	24%	24%	17%	22%
Disabled/unable to work	6%	12%	25%	18%
Average hours worked/week	-	28.1	31.2	32.9
TANF	58%	44%	38%	29%

Source: Sound Families Evaluation, NW Institute for Children and Families, University of Washington School of Social Work.

The data provides a brief snapshot on employment status of families that have successfully moved out of transitional housing. Approximately 46% are employed one year after leaving the program. In many ways, the data raises more questions such as what barriers exist that may prevent a higher number of families from being employed.

### **THCH Supportive Housing Employment Survey**

As part of the research for this report, SHA staff, with Seattle OH and AIDS Housing of Washington support, administered a survey in July 2006 on employment services that are currently available within supportive housing sites. The supportive housing survey used the web-based survey tool called "Survey Monkey." The survey was sent to 67 agencies providing permanent and transitional supportive housing in King County. Responses were received from 26 agencies (39%). Respondents ranged from small, faith-based organizations serving a handful of participants each year to large non-profit agencies serving hundreds of tenants annually. Two respondents served only youth. A large number of transitional housing providers did not respond.

Survey highlights included:

- Fifty-eight percent of the agencies who responded to the survey had staff that was dedicated entirely or partly to providing employment services. Of the 18 agencies that had staff devoted to providing employment services, half had staff positions where a portion of their duties included employment services—with the staff position typically performing a wide range of case management duties. The breakdown of the nine agencies that had specialized positions for employment services were: one housing authority, three licensed mental health providers, four multiple service agencies, and one non-profit housing provider.
- Agencies were asked what services and strategies they provided to support and encourage employment among their tenants. A breakdown of supported employment services ranging from career assessments, training, job readiness, employment search, job tools, incentives and penalties were identified.

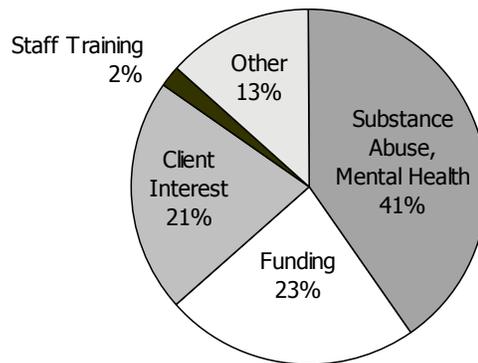
The survey results found that over 70% of supportive housing providers indicate they have existing relationships with outside providers of employment-related services in which they coordinate referrals and/or share mutual clients. The top four “partners” noted in the survey were: WorkSource (7); DSHS WorkFirst (6); Community Colleges (4); and Homeless Intervention Projects (HIP) (3). On the following page is a summary list of the findings.

All services except incentives and penalties are utilized by 90% of the respondents. Services and strategies are performed by in-house program staff with the exception of career-specific skills training. Career-specific training is the only service predominantly provided passively or as a self-service available in the community (64%). On average, 30% of providers reported services provided by partner agencies. Eighteen (58%) of the providers indicated that their tenants have incentives for participation in employment activities with ten agencies providing those incentives directly. Eleven respondents (35%) indicated penalties for non-participation, including five agencies that implement penalties directly.

A number of barriers to employment were identified by the survey respondents, (see chart below). The primary obstacle identified was untreated substance abuse and/or mental illness followed by a lack of adequate funding.

Clearly the survey results indicate that our system recognizes the value of employment services for the individuals they serve within supportive housing settings. Unfortunately, the amount of staff and resources dedicated to providing employment services is quite limited—primarily by case managers with a range of duties—and this is considered a barrier to employment for tenants.

**Chart 1:  
Obstacles to Homeless Individuals Obtaining Employment  
as Perceived by Providers**



Note: Responses in the “Other” category include: clients are undocumented, fear about losing benefits (coupons and housing subsidies) and pregnancy.

## 4. Mainstream (and For-Profit) Employment Services

### WorkSource (One-Stop Career Center) Centers and Services

The Workforce Development Council (WDC) of Seattle-King County is a 501(c)3 non-profit that was established after the passage of the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in 2000. The WDC oversees employment and training programs for adults, dislocated workers, and youth throughout King County, including the administration of WIA funding from the Department of Labor. The WDC is responsible for the One-Stop Career Center system in Seattle-King County known as WorkSource.

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) provides both a mandate for how workforce services will be provided, and funding. The One-Stop Career Center mandate put forth in WIA requires multiple agencies (specified in the Act) to jointly staff and fund the One-Stop Career Center system to reduce duplication of systems and services across funding streams; it also requires employers to be considered equal customers to jobseekers. The state Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is also a major partner and Employment Security's WorkFirst (the name for Washington's TANF program) staff are now located at WorkSource. WorkSource has over 25 community partners with eight One-Stop Career Center locations in King County. Last year they served 67,000 individuals with over 100,000 visits.

Within each WorkSource Center, three levels of service are available: core, intensive and training services. Core services are available to anyone seeking employment and any employer needing assistance with personnel needs. Core services include labor market information, career counseling, job search assistance, and self-service Internet access. It also includes many basic-level workshops on job searching, interviewing, resumes, computer skills, and more. Core services are funded and staffed jointly by all onsite WorkSource partners.

Intensive training services refer specifically to services funded through the Workforce Investment Act funds from the Department of Labor, administered by the WDC. WIA adult funds are prioritized for individuals who are low-income and have a barrier to employment (or veterans, who receive top priority). WIA dislocated worker funds are for those who meet the federal definition of dislocated (laid-off) worker or displaced homemaker. These funds are competitively procured every one to three years by the WDC. Providers include local for-profit agencies and community-based organizations such as the King County Work Training Program, Pacific Associates, and TRAC Associates.

WIA intensive services provide those unable to obtain employment through core services with career counseling, childcare assistance, transportation reimbursement, and other customized services. If additional training is required to enter or re-enter the job market, the individual may access WIA training subsidies. With some exceptions, training provided with WIA funding must be provided through individual training accounts (ITA) for maximum customer choice. These accounts can be used for training in an approved occupation at any training provider on the state Eligible Training Provider List (including community colleges and vocational schools). To receive an ITA, an individual must assemble a portfolio on his or her chosen occupation, including informational interviews with employers and school officials. Once training begins, the customer must maintain satisfactory progress on a quarterly basis. ITA training, although the individual is supported by a case manager, is an intensive, self-directed process. The individual stays in monthly contact with the case manager during training and comes back to WorkSource when ready for assistance with job search and placement.

Federal and state WIA outcomes currently require that 77% of individuals who are enrolled in WIA adult programs must be employed in the month after program exit (82% for dislocated workers), with 83% of adults (89% of dislocated workers) still employed in the third quarter after exit.

#### 1. What is the relationship between One-Stop Career Centers and the Homeless/Housing Systems?

WorkSource (the One-Stop Career Center system in King County) does not track the characteristics of individuals who use the self-directed services; thus, any homeless persons who are using WorkSource for job searches, resumes and other employment needs are not counted as such. Among individuals who are enrolled in WIA Adult and WIA Dislocated Worker programs, a very small number of individuals do identify as homeless on a voluntary basis. More research is underway to determine how homeless individuals are using (or not using) WorkSource and to what degree WorkSource is identifying them and either serving them outside WIA or referring them to other services.

The WorkSource site that serves the most homeless individuals is the downtown Seattle WorkSource Affiliate, which is co-located within the YWCA's Opportunity Place. This site includes permanent supportive housing units, a drop-in shelter for women, a medical clinic, and also the YWCA HIP staff. The YWCA staff work closely with the team at WorkSource to assist their clients in accessing the core (self-directed) services.

When appropriate, YWCA HIP staff refer individuals to the WIA Adult program at WorkSource, which provides more intensive case management and Individual Training Accounts for self-directed training at local training providers. Because of its proximity to the Downtown WorkSource Affiliate, FareStart also makes use of WorkSource services for job search, basic skills training and job readiness training for clients. YWCA HIP staff are also co-located at the WorkSource Center in Redmond, and, before recent budget cuts, were co-located at WorkSource Renton to serve the growing homeless population of South King County.

## 2. What is the relationship between WDC/ One-Stop Career Centers and WorkFirst?

Since July 1, 2005, the Employment Security Department's WorkFirst staff has been colocated at WorkSource sites. Thus, WorkSource and WorkFirst staff share Employment Security as a service provider, and WorkFirst customers share the resource room and core services of WorkSource.

### Seattle Jobs Initiative (SJI)

Seattle Jobs Initiative (SJI) began in 1995 when Seattle, along with five other cities, was chosen by the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) as a part of its Jobs Initiative program to link low-income/low-skilled adults to employers with good-paying jobs. In 1997, after another year of capacity building and pilot programs, SJI was officially launched as a program of the City of Seattle Office of Economic Development. In January 2003, SJI spun off from the City and established itself as an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. SJI continues to function as a workforce development intermediary, committed to improving the local workforce development system to benefit low-income job seekers.

Seattle Jobs Initiative (SJI) directly addresses a critical need of Seattle's low-income adults by eliminating the barriers they face to good paying, long-term work. By partnering with local businesses that are seeking qualified employees, SJI links participants to quality internships and jobs. They align short-term job skills training and job placement assistance with support services that individuals need to succeed in training and to retain employment over the long-term. These services include:

- **Case management and job retention support.** SJI contracts with community-based organizations (CBOs) to provide a broad range of direct services and service referrals required to ensure that job seekers are prepared for training and job placement, and well-positioned to retain employment over the long-term. These may include basic services such as food and housing, and services that support employment and job retention such as childcare, transportation, substance abuse treatment and counseling.
- **Soft skills training.** Soft skills are the attributes and attitudes that equip individuals to succeed as workers. They encompass many areas, including communication, conflict management, decision making, balancing work and home life, managing stress and working as part of a team.
- **Financial literacy training and individual development accounts (IDAs).** Financial literacy training helps participants build wealth by managing their money responsibly. It includes instruction on budgeting, saving and investing, avoiding predatory lending, using credit wisely, and getting out of debt. Through SJI's partnership with United Way, they offer many participants IDAs, asset-building accounts that match 3 to 1 every dollar that participants save for school or for purchase of a home or a car.
- **Training coordination.** SJI's sector coordinators facilitate communication among SJI students, instructors, training institutions (community colleges) and employers and are critical in the smooth operation of training programs.
- **Employer brokers.** SJI works directly with employers to not only identify and fill job openings, but also to engage them in the development and delivery of training programs that respond to employer needs. The employer broker also trains students in job search skills, including resume writing and interviewing.

SJI contracts with CBOs to recruit low-income job seekers to participate in their program. Interested individuals who are City of Seattle residents, at least 18 years of age, and earn at or below 175% of the federal poverty level are eligible for the program. A typical applicant meets with a CBO case manager, who completes a thorough assessment of job seekers' skills, interests and service needs, and then enrolls qualified individuals in the SJI program. An SJI employer-broker contributes to the assessment by communicating workplace standards and providing orientations to sector training programs. To ensure readiness for training, preparatory courses in basic skills and ESL are offered.

To date, SJI has placed nearly 5,000 individuals in jobs with starting wages now averaging \$11.75 per hour and offering benefits and opportunities for advancement. SJI is an experienced employment and training provider to people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless; historically, 27% of those placed in living wage jobs by SJI have been homeless or living in unstable housing situations.

### **Labor Ready**

Labor Ready was founded in 1989 in Kent, Washington.<sup>5</sup> They are a for-profit corporation that receives no public dollars. It is a multinational provider of temporary employees for manual, light industrial and skilled construction jobs. Labor Ready operates branches throughout the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico and the United Kingdom. In 2003, Labor Ready was selected by the Department of Labor as a model for the temporary employment industry. Labor Ready is the first participant in the VIP program in which the employer and the DOL work closely to ensure compliance with all wage and hour rules.

Each year, Labor Ready dispatches approximately 600,000 temporary employees to jobs in construction, manufacturing, hospitality services, landscaping, warehousing, retail and more. More than 300,000 businesses of all sizes throughout the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom use Labor Ready when they need a dependable source of labor.

Labor Ready benefits to temporary employees:

- Gives customers the flexibility to quickly add reliable help on short notice
- Payment on the day the work is done
- Bridge to full-time employment: great way to "audition" candidates for a full-time opening
- Provides a variety of jobs every day in such areas as construction, transportation, warehousing, light manufacturing, hospitality, landscaping, and sanitation
- If employer does not pay the worker, Labor Ready will cover the payment

Other Labor Ready facts:

- The average hours worked at Labor Ready is about 100 hours.
- Most placements happen within one hour.
- Employees receive a work ticket and are paid at the end of every day.
- Labor Ready does pre-site visits to potential employers and will "coach" customers if they are not meeting standards.
- They have ATM-like machines onsite to dispense cash that has a \$1.00-plus-change charge (which is much lower than what other cash checking businesses charge).
- They check on background skills to do "best match" dispatch.
- Most jobs are low-skilled, and workers will make approximately \$8.00/hour with the employer paying \$13.00—after taxes paid, Labor Ready receives approximately \$1.00).
- Labor Ready does have some subsidiaries that hire more skilled laborers such as CLP Resources that hires electricians and plumbers.
- The Labor Ready work space is minimally used between 9am-3pm.

Labor Ready estimates that 40% of their temporary workforce may move into permanent part-time or full-time employment upon leaving their services, but they have no actual way of tracking or confirming this information.

**Labor Ready Interface with Homeless System:**

- They do not have any employee information that gives a person's housing status; therefore, they do not know how many of their employees are homeless while performing temporary shift work.
- Labor Ready does have pick-up vans that go daily to some of the homeless shelters. They also help individuals to access public transportation to get to and from worksites.
- They receive some clothing and coats from social service agencies. They also have safety gear (free of charge if returned at the end of the day).
- They have a partnership with Habitat for Humanity to help train their staff on safety protocols.

**TANF/WorkFirst**

Under WorkFirst, welfare assistance in Washington State is not an entitlement. Cash assistance is limited to a maximum of 60 months (five years) in a person's lifetime. During that time, the person must be involved in the WorkFirst program and working or actively looking for a job. However, benefits may be extended beyond 5 years for parents who continue to abide by the rules and seek work. In response to the 2005 Deficit Reduction Act (DRA), Health and Human Services (HHS) created new interim rules to increase the focus on work and accountability. Changes include an individual having a work verification plan that if not followed for a period of six months will result in the termination of benefits which will be applied in our state as of this Fall. It is estimated that these rule changes may reduce the number of families receiving TANF by 600-1,000 cases in Washington.

Additional changes to TANF/WorkFirst will occur based on the Governor's "high level employment work group" that are largely independent of these federal changes. One of the primary changes is the requirement that all families receive a comprehensive evaluation (CE) as they attempt to access TANF benefits. This will provide the system with in-depth information about each person's barriers to obtaining employment. This new CE process will require that families participate in a multiple step assessment process with information gathered by DSHS, Employment Security and the Community Colleges. Though a number of benefits may result from gathering this intensive information, high-need homeless families may have problems navigating this new interview process that requires attending mandatory appointments at multiple locations.

**WorkFirst Services Provided to Participants:**

- Assistance finding work, identifying career goals, and staying on the job.
- Help paying for child care while participants look for jobs, receive training or are working.
- Short-term, customized training to prepare participants for specific occupations and free college tuition while participants are working.
- Paid, temporary jobs that prepare the hardest-to-employ participants for permanent, unsubsidized employment.
- Participants are always financially better off working because half of their job earnings are not counted as income against cash assistance. A recent study showed that participants who worked made an average of \$23,500 in wages and benefits—more than double the income of those who only collected welfare.
- Health care coverage for adults and children, including birth control options.
- Extensive support services to enable participants to overcome potential obstacles. These include funding for transportation, work clothing and uniforms, professional fees and testing.
- Intensive support services for the toughest cases. Counselors work closely with families who have received welfare for at least three years, resisted participation, and require special interventions.
- Employees at the WorkFirst call center contact workers to ensure they are aware of and connected to services needed to stay employed and move ahead. A recent report showed that participants who received post-employment services had higher rates of employment, higher earnings, and worked more hours.

## 5. Funders of Services

### Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

During the six years since its passage, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 has challenged workforce systems across the nation to not only make better use of existing resources, but to provide comprehensive services for adults and youth seeking employment assistance. At the cornerstone of the new workforce development system, One-Stop Career Centers were authorized by Congress to serve all Americans looking for work, including people with disabilities and those with special needs, such as people who are homeless.

The “Mainstream Workforce Investment System” that is prominent on the landscape today has changed significantly from its predecessors. There's been a history of programs at the Department of Labor that targeted employment assistance to disadvantaged job seekers, including the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) and the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) required states and localities to bring together 17 federally funded employment and training services into a single system—the One-Stop Career Center system under the stewardship of a State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB). It signaled a major shift in policy and practice. The workforce system is driven by the needs of employers for certain skilled workers in high-growth occupations. The decisive shift to an employer demand-driven system under the WIA is a significant feature of the new work force system that has impacted Labor's WIA-funded training and intensive service components.

In King County, the Workforce Development Council, under the leadership of the Seattle-King County Workforce Investment Board and in partnership with state and local government agencies as well as local community-based organizations, provides a wide range of employment and training-related services. In the County, eight WorkSource Centers or One-Stop Career Centers comprise the structure for providing Workforce Investment Act-funded services for employers and job seekers.

In FY2006, the annual operating budget for the Workforce Development Board of Seattle-King County is \$16.1 million dollars, (including administrative costs). Of the total funds, 93% are WIA dollars, which were significantly reduced since last year's budget, (28% reduction in 2005). The other funding sources include McKinney-Vento Act, direct DOL grant, and private funding. Of the \$11.2 million spent on traditional WIA services and training, about 45% is allocated to dislocated worker training, 28% for training for general population/low income, and 27% for youth programs.

### The Food Stamp Employment and Training Program (FSET)

The United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services manages the Food Stamp program nationally with more than 30 billion dollars in the 2006 Budget. One of the Food Stamp programs is an employment and training component referred to as the FSET program. It includes a 100% federal grant program and an uncapped federal/state (50/50) match funding to assist Food Stamp or Basic Food recipients—who are not receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)—to achieve self-sufficiency through employment and training activities. State dollars that can be used as match must be non-federal, including state and local government funds or funds that are provided to a third party agency who partners with the state to provide FSET services. In-kind funds are not acceptable as match. The federal government matches fifty cents of every dollar spent on allowable employment and training activities.

Only state government can match Federal resources; however, the state can partner with other entities who can contribute match funds to the state. In WA State, DSHS administers the Food Stamp program and the employment and training component. In some states, the state food stamp agency partners with the Workforce Investment agency to administer FSET through the One-Stop Career Center system. Other states integrate FSET with the TANF agency workfare programs.

DSHS included in its FY 2006 FSET plan a pilot project in King County using FSET 50/50 match funding. This project includes five CBOs—Seattle Jobs Initiative, YWCA, Goodwill, Port Jobs, and South Seattle Community College. Washington State expects to continue its pilot for another year with the same providers and expand it by adding more community colleges, as well as SJI's employment services collaboration with Connections, the new homeless portal serving individuals in Seattle's downtown core.

Washington's third-party match allows community agencies to match the funding they receive from non-federal sources that is expended on employment and training for Basic Food recipients. The target area for pilot services is White Center/Boulevard Park. The pilot commenced in October of 2005 and is still overcoming start-up challenges.

FSET has excellent potential to bring significant new dollars into local communities to help set low-income adults—in particular, homeless adults—onto a path towards employment. However, this promise is tempered by a few challenges that have emerged during the first year of the pilot. The value added to the provider agency may be diminished by intensive administrative requirements of the program. All the pilot agencies are burdened by the extent of staffing required to enroll individuals in Basic Food, track their participation, confirm their enrollment status with DSHS, and submit accurate billings. There may be benefits to see how this process works in other states.

The biggest challenge in implementing the pilot to date has been the fluctuating status of clients on food stamps. Individuals cycle on and off each month. Often, providers are unaware that clients have been dropped from the food stamp rolls for issues such as failing to turn in the proper paperwork or meet with their DSHS case managers. DSHS has no good way of flagging this information for CBOs and therefore a lot of time is spent revising lists and updating billing documents.

Maximizing the potential of FSET to fund employment services for homeless adults will require an examination of other potential city and county funds that could be leveraged to serve as a match. Additionally, we can gain valuable logistical information about how FSET can be integrated into an employment program for homeless adults through SJI's work with Connections.

### **Ticket to Work and Other Employment Support Efforts for Persons with Disabilities**

The Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program is an employment program for people with disabilities who want to return to the workforce. The Ticket Program is part of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act that was passed in 1999. The goal of this legislation was to remove the barriers that may exist for individuals returning to work including concerns over the loss of health care coverage. TWWIIA has led to the implementation of several distinct but complementary initiatives, which include but are not limited to:

The Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program (or "the Ticket") initiative administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA) and managed by MAXIMUS was designed to increase opportunities and choices for Social Security disability beneficiaries to obtain employment, vocational rehabilitation (VR), and other support services from public and private providers, employers, and other organizations. Under the Ticket Program, the Social Security Administration provides disability beneficiaries with a Ticket they may use to negotiate services they need to prepare for and obtain employment from Employment Networks (ENs).<sup>6</sup> Given the lack of better employment outcomes generated by the Ticket program, SSA will implement significant policy changes this year, which include enhancements to the reimbursement system for participating ENs. What impact these changes will have remains to be seen; some measure of better outcomes is anticipated. (See Attachment A: Summaries by Health and Disability Advocates).

The Medicaid Buy-In Program administered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is designed to remove the barriers to employment based on the fear of losing health care coverage. To implement this optional Medicaid program, the Washington State legislature passed HB 2230 that created the Healthcare for Workers with Disabilities (HWD) program. HWD enables people with disabilities to earn and save more money and purchase healthcare coverage for an amount based on a sliding income scale. HWD does not have a resource test, which allows enrollees to build assets and become more self-sufficient. Depending upon the amount of "unearned" income (e.g., SSDI) an individual receives, he/she can earn up to \$3,600 per month; most enrollees, however, do not enjoy that level of earnings. Since it is a categorically needy (CN) program, it also provides Medicaid Personal Care services (MPC) for those needing assistance with activities of daily living.

In Washington State we have been the recipient of the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) Program is designed to support people with disabilities in securing and sustaining competitive employment in an integrated setting. To achieve this goal, the MIG provides money to states to develop and implement health care delivery systems to meet the needs of people with disabilities who want to work and to promote linkages between Medicaid and employment-related service agencies. The MIG grant was instrumental in supporting the passage of Health Care for Workers Act in our state that compliments the Work First efforts in helping individuals retain their health coverage upon returning to work.

**United Way of King County**

Provides approximately \$1.7 million of funding to agencies to provide a range of employment services. These services include:

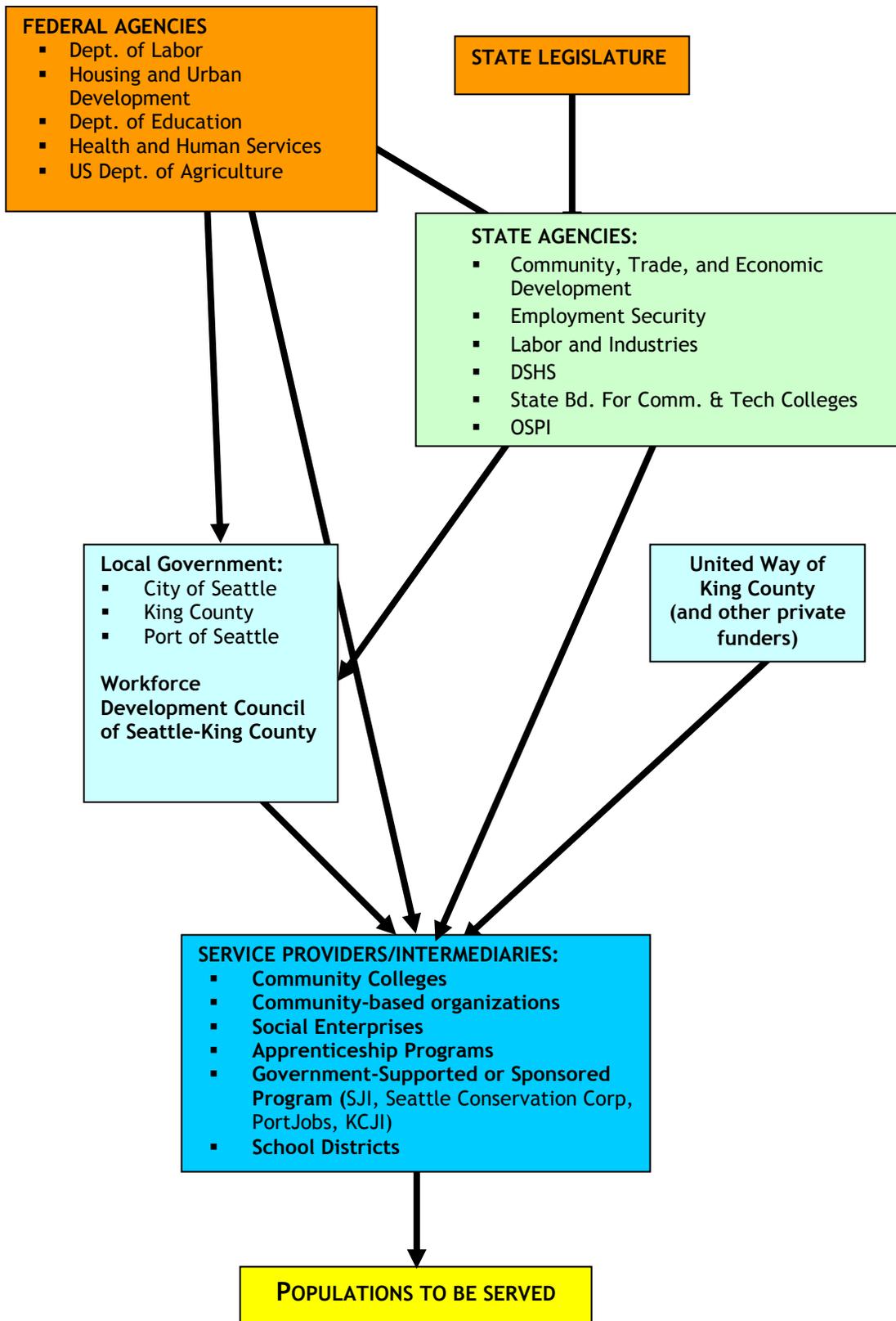
- Support programs that give people concrete job skills
- Teach job seekers how to successfully write a resume and interview for a job
- Educate people about communicating effectively, dealing with conflict, being on time and appropriate dress for the workplace
- Prepare high school students for higher education, vocational education or employment
- Provide meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities

**Funding Charts**

Funding for employment-related services in King County is outlined in the following three charts. Additional research will be required to gain a better understanding of the current resources and additional grant federal, state, local, and private funding opportunities for employment services.

NOTE: Special thanks to Mark Gardner of Seattle Jobs Initiative for creating the following funding charts.

**Chart 2:  
A Schematic Diagram of the Flow of Dollars through the Workforce Training System in King County**

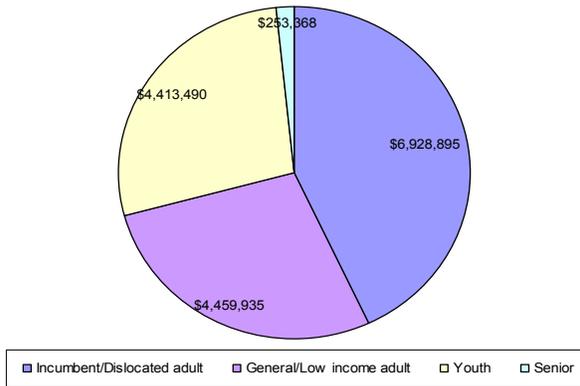


**Table 5:  
Major Funders and Associated Programs within the  
King County Workforce System**

<b>Funder</b>	<b>Programs</b>		
<b>City of Seattle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seattle Conservation Corp</li> <li>• Connections</li> <li>• Youth Employment</li> <li>• Senior Employment</li> <li>• Homeless Intervention Project (federal dollars passed through to WDC)</li> <li>• Community Court</li> <li>• City-Funded Programs (or intermediaries):  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seattle Jobs Initiative</li> <li>Casa Latina</li> <li>Port Jobs</li> <li>Worker Center</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<b>King County</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult Employment (dislocated workers)</li> <li>• King County Jobs Initiative</li> <li>• Youth Employment</li> <li>• Courts</li> </ul>		
<b>Port of Seattle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Port-funded programs:                      PortJobs (also gets city, county, and grant funds; total budget equals about \$1 million)</li> <li>Airport Jobs                      (a program of PortJobs)</li> </ul>		
<b>Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County</b>	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top; width: 50%;">                     Adult:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H1-B Health Care, Info. Tech.</li> <li>• Homeless Intervention Project (\$\$ from City Of Seattle)</li> <li>• Inc. Worker – Biotech</li> <li>• Projects with Industry</li> <li>• Literacy Works</li> <li>• Adult Pre-Apprenticeship</li> <li>• New Emerging Apprenticeships</li> <li>• WIA Adults</li> <li>• WIA Dislocated Worker Svc.</li> <li>• Health Work Force Institute</li> </ul>                     Senior:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Community Service</li> </ul> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top; width: 50%;">                     Youth:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment Foster Teen Advocate</li> <li>• WIA Youth Services</li> <li>• Drop Out Prevention</li> <li>• In-Demand Scholar</li> <li>• Nursing Pathways for Youth</li> <li>• Youth Opportunity Program</li> <li>• Health Workforce</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	Adult: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H1-B Health Care, Info. Tech.</li> <li>• Homeless Intervention Project (\$\$ from City Of Seattle)</li> <li>• Inc. Worker – Biotech</li> <li>• Projects with Industry</li> <li>• Literacy Works</li> <li>• Adult Pre-Apprenticeship</li> <li>• New Emerging Apprenticeships</li> <li>• WIA Adults</li> <li>• WIA Dislocated Worker Svc.</li> <li>• Health Work Force Institute</li> </ul> Senior: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Community Service</li> </ul>	Youth: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment Foster Teen Advocate</li> <li>• WIA Youth Services</li> <li>• Drop Out Prevention</li> <li>• In-Demand Scholar</li> <li>• Nursing Pathways for Youth</li> <li>• Youth Opportunity Program</li> <li>• Health Workforce</li> </ul>
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<b>United Way of King County; other private funders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numerous community-based organizations</li> </ul>		

**Chart 3:  
Amounts and Populations Served – Major Funders in King County, 2005\***

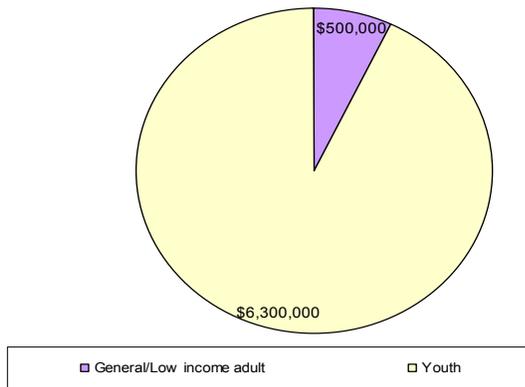
**Seattle-King County WDC Workforce Dollars by Populations Served**



**Seattle-King County WDC**

- About \$16 million total annual budget for workforce (does not include admin. costs).
- About 43% goes to dislocated and incumbent worker training, another 28% to youth.
- About 28% is available for training for general population/low income.
- Administers HIP program for homeless employment - (funding not included here but appears in Seattle totals below).

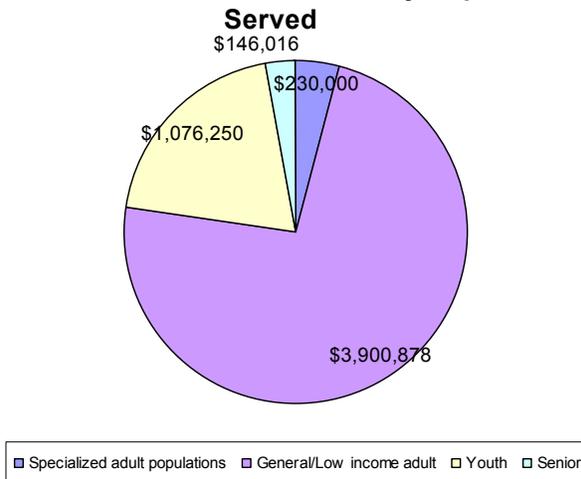
**King County Government Workforce Dollars by Populations Served**



**King County Government Funding**

- About \$6.8 million total annual budget for workforce.
- More than 90% goes to youth employment services, with the remainder to general/low income training via King County Jobs Initiative
- The county also administers a substantial program for displaced workers that is captured in the WDC totals above.

**City of Seattle Workforce Dollars by Populations Served**



**City of Seattle Funding**

- About \$5.3 million total annual budget for workforce.
- Seattle has by far the largest proportion of dollars available for low income and general adult training and related services (73%). The next largest segment is youth at about 20%.
- The city passes through federal McKinney dollars to the WDC for administration of the HIP program for homeless employment.

\* 2005 fiscal years; definition of fiscal year periods vary.

## Section 5: Homeless Job Seeker Placements in Occupational Groupings

### Key Findings

Key findings from our research into the job placements and outlook for growth in these occupations included:

- A sampling of two programs serving homeless job seekers (SJI and HIP) found that between 40-50 percent of homeless employment program participants were placed in employment.
- Many of the entry-level jobs homeless job seekers find pay more than minimum wage but less than a self-sufficiency wage. Homeless job seekers who were placed in employment by HIP or SJI received an average wage of nearly \$11 per hour at placement. This amount is less than the living wage for a single adult in Seattle/King County (\$11.89). For a household with a single mother and two children, the living wage more than doubles to \$25.35.
- More than two-thirds of workers retained their jobs for at least 3 months. However, SJI data also demonstrated that job retention decreased rapidly, from 72 percent after 3 months to 44 percent after 12 months. Data for HIP participants was not available after 3 months post-placement.
- Nearly 90 percent of all SJI and HIP homeless job placements were in 8 primary “occupational groupings”: Building, Groundskeeping and Maintenance; Construction and Extraction; Food Preparation and Serving-Related; Healthcare Support; Office and Administrative Support; Production; Sales and Related; Transportation and Materials Moving.
- HIP data shows more placements in service occupations (32 percent), partially due to FareStart’s food service training program, and SJI data shows more placements in office worker positions (29 percent) due to its office occupations sector training program.
- More than 200 occupations with entry-level wages between \$10 and \$20 per hour had more than 30 job openings in King/Snohomish County annually. Each of these occupations required less than a BA degree. More than three-quarters of the HIP and SJI homeless job seekers had received a high school diploma or GED.
- Within the 8 primary “occupational groupings,” many occupations show promise for growth in the number of available jobs, growth in wages, and career advancement. For example, landscaping worker positions are currently growing at 3.2 percent each year, require short-term on-the-job training, and have an entry-level wage of \$9.15 per hour. The current mean hourly wage for landscaping workers is \$12.35, a 26.6 percent increase over entry-level wages. In addition, for 2007–2012, job growth is predicted to be 1.6 percent annually.
- Employment leaders in King County have developed industry-specific workforce development approaches which generally overlap with the 8 primary “occupational groupings.” Homeless job seekers, therefore, have opportunities to secure entry level or higher jobs in these high-growth sectors being promoted by workforce funders, providers, and the business community.

### Jobs Secured by King County Homeless Job Seekers

Local data was available for homeless job seekers and job placement for the Homeless Intervention Project, and for Seattle Jobs Initiative:

There are two primary differences between the data sets. First, data was available over a period of two program years, February 2004 to January 2006, for HIP program participants, and over the period of November 1996 to April 2006 for SJI program participants. Secondly, the definition of homelessness varies between the SJI and HIP participants.

For the HIP data, generally speaking, the HUD definition of homelessness is used. This definition of homelessness is outlined by HUD as:

- An individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and
- An individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is:
  - A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill);
  - An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or
  - A public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

For the SJI data, homelessness is defined as:

- An individual who is without shelter, living in transitional housing, or temporarily living with others.

### **SJI and HIP Program Demographic Data**

A comparison of SJI and HIP program demographic data must be prefaced by a brief explanation of the employment outcome standards characteristic of each program. For SJI, client job placements must meet minimum standards, which include full-time employment that pays at least \$9 per hour and provides benefits. Clients are also provided one year of follow-up retention services. HIP client placements can be either full- or part-time, or temporary employment without wage or benefit restrictions. HIP clients also receive retention services, and retention is currently measured at the three-month point after placement. Although the HIP program is more flexible in its placements of homeless job seekers, 78 percent of HIP placements are for jobs offering 40 hours a week or more.

During the past 10 years, nearly 3,000 homeless job seekers (including those temporarily living with others) have received services from SJI; 39 percent were placed in unsubsidized employment. Homeless job seekers comprise 27 percent of SJI customers. For HIP, which serves homeless (HUD definition) job seekers exclusively, 50 percent of its 674 homeless job-seeking customers found placement in unsubsidized employment over the past two years.

The HIP program served 73 percent males, compared to 64 percent of SJI's homeless job-seeking customers (including those temporarily living with others). Approximately 60 percent of homeless job seekers from both programs were in their 30s or 40s, with SJI having slightly fewer younger customers and slightly more older customers.

The highest level of education reached by homeless job seekers varied between the two programs. Thirty-nine percent of SJI's homeless job seekers had some post-secondary education, compared to 27 percent of HIP clients. Meanwhile, 75 percent of SJI's homeless job seekers earned at least a high school diploma (or GED), while 83 percent of HIP clients earned at least a high school diploma or equivalent.

HIP and SJI reported comparable average wages for initial placement of homeless job seekers, despite different homeless definitions. HIP reported an average wage at initial placement of \$10.92 for program years 2004 to 2006, while SJI reported an average wage at initial placement of \$10.66 for program years 1996 to 2006. However, SJI data does not factor in cost of living adjustments.

Job retention is measured after 3 months for HIP participants, but not at any later date. Seventy-two percent had retained their placements after three months. For SJI homeless job seekers, retention is measured for one year, in three-month increments. After three months, 69 percent had retained their job placements; at twelve months, 44 percent remained employed in their original placement. The following summary of data provides demographic information for homeless program participants for the SJI and HIP programs.

**Table 6:  
Program Participant Demographics: Homeless Job Seekers  
Seattle Jobs Initiative (1996-2006) and Homeless Intervention Project  
(2004-2006)**

Demographic Category	SJI (1996-2006)		HIP (2004-2006)	
	Actual	Percent	Actual	Percent
<b><i>Homeless Job Seeker Placements/Retention</i></b>				
Number of Homeless Program Participants*	2,941	27%	674	100%
Placed in Unsubsidized Employment	1,138	39%	378	50%
Average Wage at Placement	\$10.66	N/A	\$10.92	N/A
Job Retention: 3 months	771	69%	272	72%
Job Retention: 6 months	683	62%	N/A	N/A
Job Retention: 9 months	504	47%	N/A	N/A
Job Retention: 12 months	456	44%	N/A	N/A
<b><i>Gender</i></b>				
Male	1,876	64%	490	73%
Female	1,065	36%	184	27%
<b><i>Age at Program Entry</i></b>				
Age 19-25	184	6%	84	12%
Age 26-30	362	12%	78	12%
Age 31-40	809	28%	211	31%
Age 41-50	952	32%	216	32%
Age above 50	634	22%	85	13%
<b><i>Educational Level</i></b>				
No Education	29	1%	32	5%*
10th - 11th Grade	706	24%	79	12%
12th Grade	1,054	36%	377	56%*
13th - 14th years	548	19%	106	16%
15th - 16th years	219	7%	66	10%
Higher than 16 years	385	13%	7	1%
<small>*Note: 100% of HIP participants are homeless; 27% of SJI participants have been homeless (including those living temporarily with others). For HIP participants, "no education" includes 5 with less than an 8th grade education and 27 with less than a 9th grade education; "12th Grade" includes 328 HS grads and 49 GED recipients. Data will be updated to provide consistency of years for SJI and HIP programs.</small>				

**Occupational Groupings Framework**

Participants in the HIP and SJI programs were placed in unsubsidized employment in a large variety of occupational groupings and occupations. This data is useful in identifying the occupational groupings that homeless job seekers have been placed in most often. Within this section of the report, these occupational groupings and occupations will be analyzed for alignment with SJI and HIP program homeless job seeker placements; occupational growth; wage progression; career advancement; and education/training necessary.

As part of their deliberations, the Supply and Demand Side Sub-workgroups considered extensive local market analysis data, compiled by the State of Washington Employment Security Department, Labor Market and Economic Analysis Branch, and analyzed by Mark Gardner of Seattle Jobs Initiative, Margret Graham of Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County, and Mark Putnam of AIDS Housing of Washington. These "Occupational Employment Projections" provided a glimpse into employment opportunities by sector and wage level relevant to people who are homeless and seeking to enter or reenter the work force.

A closer look at this data examined projected job openings over the 2007-2012 period, eliminating occupations that are projected to have fewer than 30 annual openings. Occupations where the typical education level is BA degree or higher were also eliminated; although some of the homeless population may have a BA, including 13 percent of SJI homeless customers and 1% of HIP participants, this is not the norm. More than three-quarters of HIP and SJI homeless job seekers had a high school diploma or GED. Occupations where wage and education information was not available were not considered in this analysis.

**Nearly 90 percent of SJI and HIP homeless job seekers found jobs primarily in 8 occupational groups.** These 8 occupational groups, which will be utilized for further analysis within this section, are shown in the following table.

**Table 7:  
Top 8 Occupational Groupings: Unsubsidized Job Placements for Homeless Job Seekers: Seattle Jobs Initiative (1996-2006) and Homeless Intervention Project (2004-2006) by Occupational Group and Percent of Program Total**

Occupational Group	SJI (1996-2006)		HIP (2004-2006)	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	79	7.0%	45	12.1%
Construction and Extraction	130	11.5%	48	12.9%
Food Preparation and Serving-Related	76	6.7%	119	32.1%
Healthcare Support	57	5.0%	20	5.4%
Office and Administrative Support	274	24.2%	22	5.9%
Production	199	17.6%	28	7.5%
Sales and Related	59	5.2%	23	6.2%
Transportation and Material Moving	113	10.0%	37	10.0%

## In-Demand Jobs and Required Skills

Occupational data is analyzed in this section and compared to the jobs that homeless job seekers have been placed in by the HIP and SJI programs. A large variety of jobs are included in each of the top 8 Occupational Groupings of homeless job placements for the SJI and HIP programs. For example, for the Food Preparation and Serving-Related Occupational Grouping, there are fifteen occupations. Homeless Job Seekers have been placed in occupations within each of these top 8 groupings with some regularity.

The State of Washington Employment Security Department, Labor Market and Economic Analysis Branch develops "Occupational Employment Projections" periodically for Washington state, by region. Using this data source, the Demand Side Sub-workgroup analyzed the occupational outlook for each of the top 8 Occupational Groupings for unsubsidized job placements for homeless job seekers.

Within each of the Occupational Groupings, some jobs exist for job seekers who are homeless who may fit into one of the three groups above. The Demand Side group has not attempted to fit homeless job seekers into particular Occupational Groupings or occupations based on the amount of employment assistance and case management anticipated.

It is recognized that many people who are homeless will not have the "job literacy" (e.g., math and language skills) or more job-specific skills required for many of these positions, and that moderate to extensive training may be required to prepare people who are homeless for work in these various categories of employment. Further analysis of homeless job seeker interest in and capacity for these occupations is needed.

For homeless job seekers to maintain housing stability in a high-priced market such as Seattle/King County, stability in employment is necessary. Additionally, career advancement and income progression is essential to keep up.

The following table demonstrates the 25 occupations that show the most promise for increases in job openings over the next five years (2007-2012). Please note that other occupations also show promise and may be more appropriate for some homeless persons.

**Table 8:  
Top 25 Occupations for Career Advancement and Growth Potential for Homeless Job Seekers among Occupations Requiring "Short On the Job Training"**

Occupation	Average Annual Growth Rate (2007-2012)	Mean Hourly Wage	Progression: Increase from Entry Wage to Mean Wage
<b><i>Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance</i></b>			
Landscaping and groundskeeping workers	1.6%	\$12.35	26.6%
Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners	1.8%	\$12.09	26.9%
Tree trimmers and pruners	1.8%	\$14.98	27.8%
<b><i>Construction and Extraction</i></b>			
Helpers—Carpenters	1.4%	\$14.13	63.9%

Occupation	Average Annual Growth Rate (2007-2012)	Mean Hourly Wage	Progression: Increase from Entry Wage to Mean Wage
<b><i>Food Preparation and Serving Related</i></b>			
Food preparation workers	1.5%	\$10.22	22.2%
Cooks, short order	1.4%	\$10.28	24.3%
<b><i>Healthcare Support</i></b>			
Medical equipment preparers	1.9%	\$13.58	39.4%
Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants	1.8%	\$12.28	24.1%
All other healthcare support workers	1.4%	\$14.41	21.8%
<b><i>Office and Administrative Support</i></b>			
Office machine operators, except computer	2.1%	\$11.40	21.7%
Office clerks, general	1.8%	\$13.58	33.3%
Mail clerks and mail machine operators, except postal service	2.1%	\$12.95	33.2%
Interviewers, except eligibility and loan	2.6%	\$12.02	32.2%
Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers, recordkeeping	1.9%	\$15.64	24.7%
Human resources assistants, except payroll and timekeeping	1.9%	\$17.74	25.3%
<b><i>Production</i></b>			
Photographic processing machine operators	1.7%	\$11.01	19.1%
Electrical and electronic equipment assemblers	2.9%	\$14.85	30.8%
Bindery workers	2.2%	\$14.77	36.1%
<b><i>Sales and Related</i></b>			
Telemarketers	1.4%	\$12.40	41.5%
Retail salespersons	1.4%	\$12.39	28.3%
Counter and rental clerks	1.4%	\$11.15	22.0%
Cashiers, except gaming	1.4%	\$10.98	25.8%
<b><i>Transportation and Material Moving</i></b>			
Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand	1.3%	\$11.78	28.3%
Cleaners of vehicles and equipment	1.5%	\$11.64	24.5%
Driver/sales workers	1.1%	\$10.99	19.6%

Note: Homeless job seekers have not been placed in each of the specific occupations listed in this table. Rather, these are occupations within Occupational Groupings that have shown promise for homeless job seekers in the past through the SJI and HIP programs. In addition, higher-paying positions within each Occupational Grouping demonstrate career advancement possibilities: positions that, after gaining experience, could be attainable for homeless job seekers.

## Alignment of Attainable Jobs with Employment Sector Initiatives

Several employment leaders in King County have developed sector approaches to better serve the needs of its customers. It should be noted that occupations and occupational groupings are different than sectors—a single occupation, such as receptionist, can be found in many different sectors. Sector initiatives are industry-specific workforce development approaches. They share four common elements that distinguish them from conventional programs:

- 1) Target a specific industry, crafting solutions tailored to that industry in that region
- 2) Offer the presence of a strategic partner with deep knowledge of the targeted industry and its companies linking them with organizations that may include community-based nonprofits, employer organizations, organized labor, community colleges, and others;
- 3) Provide training strategies that benefit low-income individuals, including the unemployed, non-traditional labor pools, and low-wage incumbent workers; and
- 4) Promote systemic change that cultivates a win-win environment by restructuring internal and external employment practices to achieve changes beneficial to employers, low-wage workers, and low-income job seekers.

In Seattle/King County, at least four leading employment entities have developed sector approaches, three of which have been described in previous sections of the report:

- Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County
- City of Seattle, Office of Economic Development
- Seattle Jobs Initiative
- The Prosperity Partnership, a coalition of over 150 government, business, labor and community organizations from King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties dedicated to developing and implementing a common economic strategy. Their shared goal is two-fold: long-term economic prosperity and 100,000 new jobs for the central Puget Sound region.

The following charts demonstrate that there is crossover among the sectors being promoted by these 4 employment leaders in our region. In addition, the charts show that there is a general connection between the types of occupations that homeless job seekers have found and the region's current workforce development approaches.

The sector information is provided to give the reader an understanding of some of the possibilities for aligning the goals of the business community to develop strong workforces with the goals of homeless job seekers. This review is a preliminary step toward identifying opportunities for homeless job seekers in various occupations.

For King County, the following table demonstrates the sector approaches promoted by four leading employment agencies or initiatives.

**Table 9:  
Sector Approaches for Workforce Development Council, City of Seattle Office of Economic Development, Seattle Jobs Initiative, and Prosperity Partnership**

Employment Entity	Sector Approach
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Health Care</li> <li>• Information Technology</li> <li>• Life Sciences</li> <li>• Manufacturing</li> </ul>
City of Seattle, Office of Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Film and Music</li> <li>• Health Care</li> <li>• High Tech</li> <li>• Bio Tech</li> <li>• Manufacturing</li> <li>• Green Industries</li> <li>• Clean Energy</li> <li>• Maritime</li> </ul>
Seattle Jobs Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Health Care</li> <li>• High Tech</li> <li>• Manufacturing/Welding</li> <li>• Automotive</li> <li>• Office Occupations</li> <li>• Electronic Assembly</li> </ul>
Prosperity Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logistics and trade</li> <li>• Clean Tech</li> <li>• High Tech</li> <li>• Bio Tech</li> <li>• Aerospace</li> </ul>

The following table demonstrates how these sectors overlap with each other or do not overlap. Six sectors are promoted by at least two of the entities and three are promoted by all four entities: Life Sciences/Biotechnology; Information Technology; and Manufacturing.

**Table 10:  
Overlapping Sector Approaches for Workforce Development Council, City of Seattle  
Office of Economic Development, Seattle Jobs Initiative, and Prosperity  
Partnership**

Overlapping Sectors						
<b>City of Seattle, OED</b>	Green Building	Health Care	Biotechnology	Information & Communications Technology	Basic Industries	Clean Energy
<b>WDC of Seattle-King County</b>	Construction	Health Care	Life Sciences	Information Technology	Manufacturing	-
<b>SJI</b>	Construction	Health Care	Life Sciences	High Tech	Manufacturing / Welding	-
<b>Prosperity Partnership</b>	-	-	Life Sciences	Information Technology	Aerospace	Clean Technology

**Alignment of Homeless Job Placement Data with Industry Sectors: OED**

The following table aligns the job placement data from SJI and HIP with the sectors promoted by the City of Seattle Office of Economic Development, Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County, Seattle Jobs Initiative, and the Prosperity Partnership, for the six overlapping sectors in Table 9.

Sectors are defined differently by each employment entity. In addition, some occupational groups have not been pulled apart, such as office and administrative support, to identify occupations in various sectors. Therefore, this is an inexact analysis, but is simply intended to demonstrate that many homeless job seekers have found employment in these sectors, each of which are being promoted for increased job growth in Seattle/King County.

**Table 11:**  
**Alignment of Homeless Job Placements for SJI and HIP with  
 Seattle-King County Key Industry Sectors**

Overlapping Key Industry Sectors	Homeless Job Seeker Placements by SJI and HIP in Key Industry Sectors	
	Number	Percent
<i>Construction/Green Building</i>	178	12%
<i>Health Care</i>	78	5%
<i>Life Sciences/Biotechnology</i>	6	<1%
<i>Information Technology</i>	0	0%
<i>Manufacturing</i>	377	25%
<i>Clean Energy/Technology</i>	0	0%
<b>Total Placed in Key Industry Sectors</b>	<b>639</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Total Number of Homeless Job Seeker Placements</b>	<b>1,502</b>	<b>100%</b>

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