

San Francisco Workforce Accelerator Fund 8.0

*Meeting with the
Local Homeless Coordinating Board*

January 4, 2021



Agenda

1. Introductions
2. About WAF 8.0
3. Best Practices Research
4. Input & Questions



SAN FRANCISCO

Office of Economic and Workforce Development

 **CivicMakers**

The CivicMakers logo features a teal gear icon to the left of the text "CivicMakers", where "Civic" is in teal and "Makers" is in red.

2. About WAF 8.0

About. The California Workforce Development Board Workforce Accelerator Fund (WAF) competitive grant supports innovative solutions to accelerate system-wide changes to improve outcomes for lower income Californians.

WAF 8.0 (April 2020 – September 2021) prioritizes service delivery for people experiencing homelessness (PEH).

Purpose. Align workforce services with existing housing and benefits support systems to alleviate homelessness in San Francisco.

Outcomes.

- Coordinated Entry Access Points will incorporate job readiness assessment as part of whole person care.
- Quality system coordination among City and community-based providers serving people experiencing homelessness (PEH).
- Service delivery system efficiencies will improve whole person care outcomes.

By September 2021, CivicMakers will...

- Convene public and community-based stakeholders
- Conduct desk and field research
- Pilot a job interest/readiness assessment toolkit
- Map an integrated service delivery model to deliver workforce development services to the homeless
- Identify local providers to deliver services
- Create implementation and training recommendations

3. Best Practices

(in workforce development for people experiencing homelessness)

People Experiencing Homelessness (PEH) face broader **Barriers to Employment**

Lack of a permanent address

Age

Impact of lifestyle change

Access to clothing, shower facilities, & laundry

Criminal histories

Managing housing stability/recovery and work

Alcohol or drug use

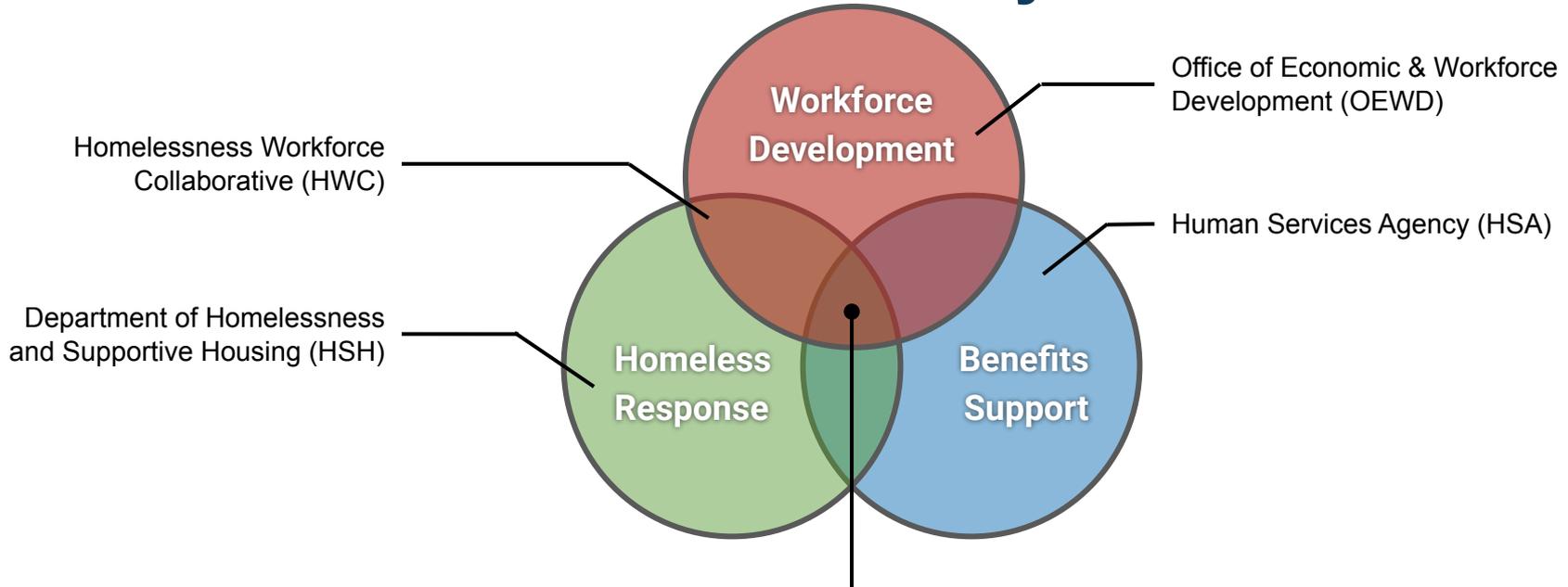
Poor employment histories

Physical & mental health issues

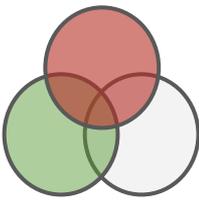
Disability

Focus on immediate needs vs. longer term goals

In San Francisco, these barriers to employment are addressed across **3 Different Systems**

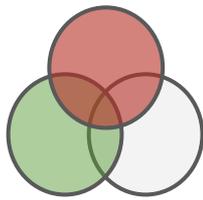


To improve employment outcomes for PEH, workforce development needs to align with housing and benefits-support systems.



Housing and **Employment** are deeply interconnected; the status of each can have a significant impact on the other.

Models & Mindsets



Recommendation: Consider each alongside the other

'Housing-First' Model

Where housing-placement is not contingent upon 'readiness' or 'compliance'

- **What?** Prioritizes permanent housing for people experiencing homelessness, in order to create a stable platform to support other needs and goals.
- **Why?** Housing-first programs improve employability outcomes among homeless individuals.
- **Caution:** Long-term employment is likely to be difficult without stable housing.

'Employment-First' Model

Where employability is not contingent upon 'job readiness'

- **What?** Prioritizes job placement to support an individual's pathway to self-sufficiency.
- **Why?** Employment support can benefit some housing programs which require the individual or family to become self-sufficient in paying for housing.
- **Caution:** Employment-first programs without housing support have limited or no impact on housing stability.

Summary of Findings

1. Introductions

2. About WAF 8.0

3. Best Practices

4. Questions

Best practices for workforce alignment to support people experiencing homelessness (PEH)

1. Focus employment support on those that are **interested in work**
2. Be prepared to address common **barriers to employment**
3. Ensure entry points to services maintain a **low threshold for access**
4. Identify and nurture **intensive partnerships** with local organizations
5. Appoint **'Employment Specialists'** to develop customized and contextualized plans to support people through the employment pipeline
6. Build in **pathways toward self-sufficiency** and career advancement
7. Align homelessness support systems for **continuity of service**
8. Offer **long-term support** to reduce recidivism to unemployment and homelessness

4. Input & Questions

Your Input & Questions *[in progress]*

- **SF Continuum of Care.** Where does this fit into the work that you are already doing? What should we know about the San Francisco context for this work?
- **Stakeholders.** Who else should we be talking to? Who in San Francisco might already be doing this well?
- **Ongoing engagement.** How does the LHCB want to be involved going forward?

Thank you!

Cristelle Blackford - cristelle@civicmakers.com

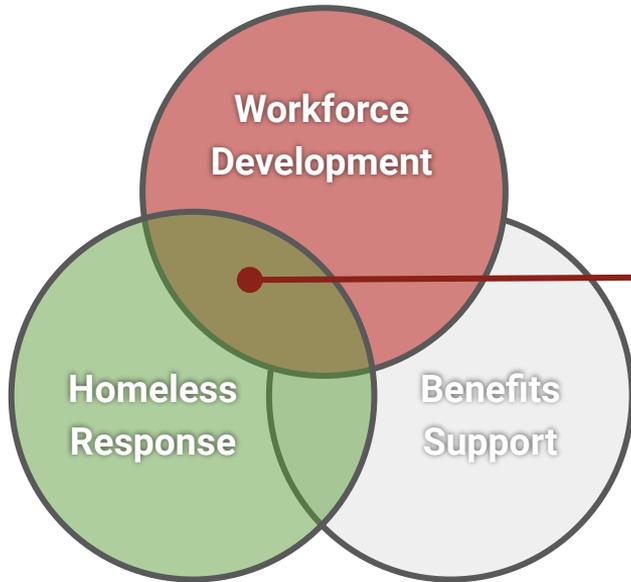
Appendix

Impact of **Housing** on Employment Outcomes



- Outreach and engagement for employment programming is improved when homeless persons find placement in permanent housing.
- Sustained contact through housing-based services allows programs to better develop individualized employment services and better link employment services with behavioral health services.
- Housing-stable job seekers are a more reliable labor pool for employers, making it easier for employment specialists to develop relationships with employers willing to hire formerly homeless persons in permanent jobs.
- Having a fixed address helps to reduce the barrier of transportation.
- Sustained housing allows for better tracking of long-term employment outcomes.

Impact of **Employment** on Housing Outcomes



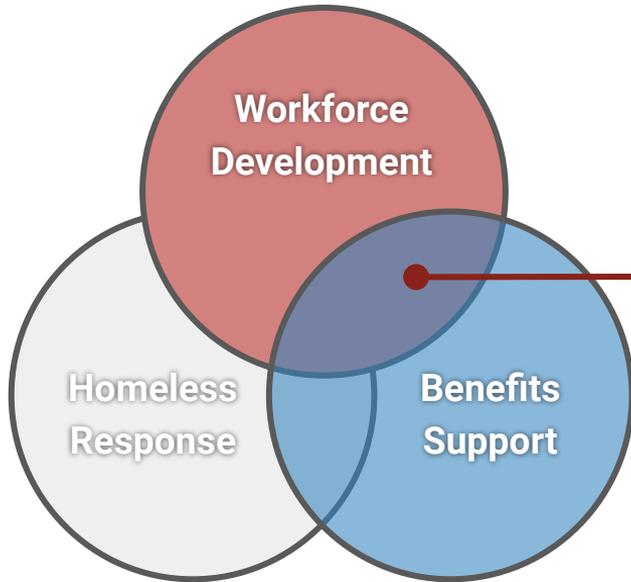
- Self-sufficiency gained through employment programs can result in a higher chance of homeless persons retaining housing.
- In addition to providing a fixed income, employment can also contribute to improved mental health and housing retention.
- Employment is critical to the success of certain housing programs such as rapid rehousing that depend on clients using the stability of housing to find employment and transition off of the rent subsidy.



When considering how to align the **Employment System** with **Housing**, it's important to factor in both:

- 1 Housing status** - which can help provide a fixed address and stability. *reduces barriers to work*
- 2 Housing services** - which can provide an anchor and long-term contact with clientele. *supports long-term employment outcomes*

Impact of **Employment** on Benefits Outcomes



- In addition to providing a fixed income, employment can also contribute to improved mental health and housing retention.
- Self-sufficiency helps people to move out of service programs and reduces recidivism - making room for others to utilize services.
- Employment can strengthen supportive housing by helping to stretch subsidy dollars, and it can provide tenants with disposable income to achieve their personally important goals.



3. Best Practices for Workforce Development

(in support of people experiencing homelessness)

Best Practices

1. Focus employment support on those that are **interested in work**
2. Be prepared to address common **barriers to employment**
3. Ensure entry points to services maintain a **low threshold for access**
4. Identify and nurture **intensive partnerships** with local organizations
5. Appoint **'Employment Specialists'** to develop customized and contextualized plans to support people through the employment pipeline
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1. Focus employment support on those that are interested in work

A. Drawing from ‘Employment-First,’ **willingness to work** indicates employability.

“A major distinguishing factor was a strengths-focused approach to counseling; the program did not use any work readiness indicators to determine eligibility for services, instead serving all who expressed interest.”

(Pine Street Inn; City of Boston)

“Chrysalis serves all hard-to-employ clients, including homeless, low-income, and re-entering individuals; there are no restrictions to who can engage with Chrysalis service.”

(Chrysalis; City of Los Angeles)

B. Assess and incorporate **other goals and commitments** that people seek to make.

“Services are individually tailored and reflect close collaboration between case managers and career counselors. Jericho emphasizes a unified plan that incorporates multiple goals, not just employment.”

(Jericho; New York City)

“To be eligible for RWA, a trainee has to be homeless, able to work, committed to full time employment and to sobriety.”

(Ready, Willing and Able; New York City)

2. Be prepared to address common barriers to employment

A. Identify the various segments of people served, and how their **unique barriers** to work may have varying impacts on their access to work.

“The program [stresses] the importance of having policies, procedures, and partnerships that are set up to address the full range of a person’s employment barriers”

(Chrysalis; City of Los Angeles)

B. Directly address or **subsidize barriers** to employment.

“Jericho has a small fund that can offer up to \$500 per person for transportation, books, application/certification fees”

(Jericho; New York City)

C. Offer access to immediate work through a **no-exclusion hiring** process.

D. When people experience barriers that impact ‘ability to work’ **offer support** through a direct combination of housing, supportive services and employment support.

“All clients had an employment specialist/counselor; those with serious barriers (usually the chronically homeless) also had a case manager through another Pine Street service.”

(Pine Street Inn; City of Boston)

3. Ensure entry points to services maintain a low threshold for access

A. Minimize the number of ‘asks’ that occur upon entry to ensure **accessibility**.

“There is a strong desire to ensure the initial entry is easy and accessible right off the bat.”

(Chrysalis; City of Los Angeles)

“The [program] is a supported work program designed to provide a low- to no-barrier work experience for people throughout the city who are experiencing homelessness”

(Denver Day Works Pilot Program; City of Denver)

B. Offer **drop-in services**, as opposed to appointment-based, to ensure people can access services when they are needed.

“Programs that operate by appointment – like career counseling or psych services -- are not effective since need is so variable and time-sensitive in this population.”

(Jericho; New York City)

C. Offer **inclusive and well-compensated** work opportunities.

“If a participant does not have access to identification, they are offered the same work experience as others and instead are provided other supportive services, including a non-monetary compensation.”

(Denver Day Works Pilot Program; City of Denver)

4. Identify and nurture intensive partnerships with local organizations

A. Focus on a small group of intensive, ongoing **partnerships with employers.**

“Partnerships with employers needed to be carefully cultivated and long-term, since the process of setting expectations among employers is long and difficult.”

(Pine Street Inn; City of Boston)

“Partnerships and practices have been created over time. As Employment Specialists develop connections with providers in the community, they track specific contacts from within partnerships through a Wiki database. Though most partnerships naturally form on an informal basis, there are several institutionalized partnerships that have developed over time.”

(Chrysalis; City of Los Angeles)

B. Identify work skill opportunities within **fertile/stable industries.**

“[The non-profit] a non-profit that provides job readiness training and basic coding skills to the city's homeless, formerly incarcerated, and disenfranchised populations — with the goal of putting them to work in the tech industry... We prepare and nurture each participant to enter the workforce for long term establishment.”

(Code Tenderloin, City & County of San Francisco)

5. Appoint ‘Employment Specialists’ to develop customized and contextualized plans to support people through the employment pipeline

A. Distinguish **employment specialists** from supportive services specialists or housing specialists.

“The incorporation of the housing specialists from Brilliant Corners has also allowed the Employment Specialists to focus even more on employment needs.” ... “Chrysalis also relies on a large web of partners to which employment specialists can refer clients for additional needs.”

(Chrysalis; City of Los Angeles)

“The main function of the employment specialist was to assist with job search and placement, but employment specialists occasionally offered some counseling and referrals for barrier remediation.”

(Pine Street Inn; City of Boston)

B. Develop a **custom employment plan** for each individual.

“After completing the Work Ready phase, the client and case manager work on a plan that is tailored to individual needs and career goals.”

(Project Place; City of Boston)

6. Build in pathways toward self-sufficiency and career advancement

Recommendation: Start from the ABC Model

A. 'Get A Job' -- set a baseline by conducting a **job readiness assessment**.

"Case management services begin at the initial intake, including a needs assessment to determine the client's levels of competencies and deficits"

(Project Place; City of Boston)

B. 'Get a Better Job' -- train in **career development skills** and support access to **continuing education** (or completing education).

"[The program offers] career development classes on issues such as job searching, resume preparation, and interview skills, and job readiness and placement services...[plus] life skills training, including conflict resolution, financial management, and parenting"

(Ready, Willing and Able; New York City)

C. 'Start a Career' -- offer ongoing **career counseling** and support.

"From the point of entry to the non-ending follow-up support services, an effective employment program allows a full range of options to clients and seeks to provide services that can help address any barrier they walk in the door with"

(Chrysalis; City of Los Angeles)

7. Align homelessness support systems for continuity of service

A. Clearly **define referral services/policy** to support ‘wraparound services’.

“...importance of having policies, procedures, and partnerships that are set up to address the full range of a person’s employment barriers.”

(Chrysalis; City of Los Angeles)

“Staff across all Pine Street programs frequently helped clients sequence needed services by referring them to IES [IMPACT Employment Services]”

(Pine Street Inn; City of Boston)

B. Coordinate client support through **case conferencing** and/or sufficient **data-sharing policies**.

“Jericho relies heavily on Salesforce to coordinate clients’ plans/activities as well as match them to job openings.”

(Jericho; New York City)

“[The program measures] their success by tracking how many of the people they contact are connected with services like behavioral health, housing, and employment assistance.”

(There’s a Better Way; City of Albuquerque)

8. Offer long-term support (with an emphasis on job retention) to reduce recidivism to unemployment and homelessness

A. Timelines and **milestones should be realistic** - considering individual differences.

“Path to recovery is hugely variable and Jericho sets no timeline...milestones need to be realistic”
(Jericho Project; New York City)

“Pine Street programs are characterized by few strict timelines or conditions on assistance. Neither program is tied to receipt of other aid, so clients tend to participate on a voluntary basis and the program works with them for as long as it takes to find quality employment.”
(Pine Street Inn; City of Boston)

B. **Track long-term outcomes** for participants and recidivism rates.

“For those who graduate...the analysis concluded that that every \$1 invested in the program produced a savings of \$2.28-\$3.60 in shelter and re-incarceration costs, and in lost earnings and lost child support payments.”
(Ready, Willing and Able; New York City)

“Using a new retention initiative, Chrysalis was able to contact former students and learned 75% were still employed six months after obtaining their first job post-program”
(Chrysalis; City of Los Angeles)

4. COVID-19 Impact

COVID-19 Context

- Focus employment support on those that are **interested in work** ————— *Increased unemployment*
- Be prepared to address common **barriers to employment** ————— *Increased need for survival necessities*
- Ensure entry points to services maintain a **low threshold for access** ————— *In-person intake is minimized; digital divide*
- Identify and nurture **intensive partnerships** with local organizations ————— *Coordinating remote services and digital access with contracted providers*
- Appoint **'Employment Specialists'** to develop customized and contextualized plans to support people through the employment pipeline ————— *Increased need for 1:1 attention; more time*
- Build in **pathways toward self-sufficiency** and career advancement
- Align homelessness support systems for **continuity of service** ————— *Clients are increasingly requesting open access to information*
- Offer **long-term support** to reduce recidivism to unemployment and homelessness ————— *Focused on responding to immediate needs*

5. References

[insert further references upon approval of content/direction]

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“Best” Practices in Job Development. (2008). www.worksupport.com/documents/bestpracticesjobdev1.ppt

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Schnur, C., Warland, C., Young, M., & Maguire, T. (2017). Integrating rapid re-housing & employment: Program & policy recommendations for enhancing rapid re-housing. Chicago, IL: Heartland Alliance’s National Initiatives on Poverty & Economic Opportunity.

Shaheen, G., and Rio, J. (2007). “Recognizing Work as a Priority in Preventing or Ending Homelessness.” *Journal of Primary Prevention*, vol. 28, no. 3-4, July 2007, pp. 341–358.

(Vazir, 2018)

Researched & Prepared by



Research Areas (drafting).

1. What **support systems** are available for PEH in San Francisco?
 - *What alignment currently exists between them?*
 - *What is the estimated capacity of the current system?*
2. How does an employment assessment inform an individual's **pathway** out of homelessness?
 - *How do housing and employment plans/pathways relate to each other?*
3. **At what stage(s)** of the homelessness case management process is it most appropriate to assess employment needs?