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## County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
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SACHI A. HAMAI  
Chief Executive Officer

August 15, 2019

To: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Sachi A. Hamai  
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors  
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Fifth District

### **EMPLOYMENT INNOVATIONS TO LINK HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS TO JOBS (ITEM NUMBER 8, AGENDA OF APRIL 9, 2019)**

On April 9, 2019, the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to report back with performance metrics and/or an evaluation framework for measuring the success of efforts to establish an Employment Innovation Fund (Fund), which aims to achieve long-term employment for homeless clients. The Board directed the CEO to provide \$1 million in funding to the United Way of Greater Los Angeles (UWGLA) to administer the Fund. This effort will complement and inform the work of the Employment and Homelessness Taskforce (EHT), which is currently implementing a set of recommendations to improve access to employment for homeless job seekers. UWGLA will implement the Fund as part of a larger UWGLA initiative aimed at placing 100 individuals experiencing and exiting homelessness into long-term employment by June 30, 2020.

This memorandum responds to the Board's directive by outlining the objectives related to the Fund, which informed the development of a set of performance metrics (listed below) to gauge the Fund's success.

#### **Objectives Related to the Fund**

In consultation with stakeholders, UWGLA has identified the following objectives for its efforts related to the Fund:

- Place 100 individuals experiencing and/or exiting homelessness in jobs by December 31, 2019.

- Collect in-depth workforce and housing data for each participant through June 30, 2020.
  - Achieve at least 6-month employment retention for 70 percent of participants by June 30, 2020.
- By July 30, 2020, identify and report to the EHT effective and scalable practices that lead to long-term employment for individuals experiencing and exiting homelessness.

To realize these objectives, UWGLA intends to partner with workforce development and homeless services providers, provide flexible funds to participants, and engage employers. UWGLA will provide ongoing supports for employers who hire people experiencing homelessness in order to ensure a successful long-term placement; these supports will include a toolkit geared toward employers, as well as trainings and consultations.

### **Performance Metrics to Gauge Success of the Fund**

UWGLA and CEO have devised a set of metrics to gauge the success of efforts related to the Fund. As planning for the launch of the effort is still underway, it is possible that some of these metrics will be modified to reflect feedback from key stakeholders. However, the following set of metrics provides a broad sense of the type of information that UWGLA will be collecting and sharing with CEO and other core partners:

- Number of individuals engaged
  - Demographics
  - Baseline income/employment information
  - Referral source for participant (e.g., bridge employer, America's Job Center of California (AJCC), homeless service provider)
  - Types of services provided (e.g., case management, job search assistance, resume building)
- Number of individuals receiving training
  - Type of training
  - Completion/certification information
- Number of individuals obtaining employment
  - Wage, industry information
  - Type of supports provided to participant
    - Hours of case management
    - Any stipends or flexible funds used to support participant
- Number of individuals retaining employment for at least 3 months/6 months
- Participant housing status throughout engagement, including information on any housing subsidies received
- Employer Information

- Number of employers engaged
  - Industry, location
- Number of employers using toolkit and/or partaking in training/workplace tours
- Number of employers hiring an individual experiencing and/or exiting homelessness
  - Number of employees hired
  - Retention information

In addition to the above quantitative data, UWGLA will work with providers to collect qualitative data, including success stories from participants and employer feedback.

### **Next Steps**

CEO will work closely with UWGLA to ensure that data is collected for the above metrics, or some variation of the above metrics. As data becomes available, CEO will include this data in the Homeless Initiative Quarterly Reports, enabling the Board and the public to observe the progress of this effort.

If you have any questions, please contact Phil Ansell, Homeless Initiative Director, at (213) 974-1752 or [pansell@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:pansell@ceo.lacounty.gov).

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SACHI A. HAMAI  
Chief Executive Officer

December 23, 2019

To: Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Chair  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Janice Hahn

From: Sachi A. Hamai  
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### **EMPLOYMENT INNOVATIONS TO LINK HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS TO JOBS (ITEM NO. 8, AGENDA OF APRIL 9, 2019)**

On April 9, 2019, the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to identify regional clusters (Clusters) based on overlapping boundaries for General Relief (GR), CalWORKs, Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN), Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) and America's Job Centers of California (AJCC), homeless services providers and Community Colleges/Adult Schools to refine and implement recommendations from the Employment and Homelessness Taskforce (EHT) and report back in 60 days on the feasibility of scaling piloted recommendations Countywide. An extension was subsequently granted, allowing for a report back in eight months. This memorandum provides an interim report back on implementation efforts thus far and the feasibility of scaling the piloted recommendations.

#### **Regional Clusters**

In January 2019, the EHT, comprised of representatives from the CEO; Department of Public Social Services (DPSS); Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS); and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), presented a set of recommendations to the Homeless Policy Board Deputies. These recommendations aim to establish systems changes that will increase the number of people experiencing homelessness who secure and retain employment. The EHT subsequently presented an Action Plan to the Homeless Policy Board Deputies, including a plan to divide the County into 14 Clusters, which align with the GR program boundaries and include homeless services providers, AJCC's, Community Colleges/Adult Schools, and other entities serving homeless job seekers within those boundaries. Two of those Clusters were selected for initial implementation of many of the EHT recommendations: a cluster in the

Eastern San Gabriel Valley (within the Pomona GR boundaries) and a cluster within South Los Angeles (within the South Central GR boundaries).

Since September 2019, consultants from the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) and its subcontractor, Heartland Alliance (HA), have convened multiple meetings of service providers within the two Clusters to begin implementing the EHT recommendations. Within the Clusters, these convenings have yielded several important outcomes, including:

- Through a collaboration with the Chief Information Office, system maps were created for each cluster, visualizing the relationship between the participating agencies (from the homeless, public benefits, workforce, and education systems) and helping these agencies to identify opportunities to enhance collaboration, referrals, and information/resource sharing.
- Cluster meeting participants received information – and shared their own knowledge – about evidence-based employment models for people experiencing homelessness and barriers to employment. In addition, participants in the cluster meetings provided input and feedback on the types of trainings that would be most useful to them in order to better serve homeless job seekers. A schedule of trainings is under development by CSH and HA.
- Two program managers have been hired through funding provided to the United Way of Greater Los Angeles (United Way) by the County. One program manager has been assigned to each cluster to assist with local implementation and coordination.
- Cluster participants have provided input on appropriate uses of flexible cash assistance, which has contributed to the development of a program design for the implementation of flexible funding to support homeless jobseekers to secure and retain employment.

### **Scaling Piloted Recommendations Countywide**

Although considerable progress has been made in the Clusters, the CEO believes it is too early to assess the feasibility of scaling all aspects of the pilots Countywide. However, there are two piloted (or soon-to-be piloted) recommendations that are well-positioned to move toward Countywide implementation in the near future:

#### **Employment-Related Assessment Questions**

The EHT's pursuit of employment-related assessment questions is fortuitously timed with broader efforts within the homeless services system to reform the assessment process. LAHSA has developed an Initial Access Tool (IAT) which will help to triage participants into appropriate pathways when they first encounter the system. This brief intake tool is currently under review and includes proposed questions related to employment, as recommended by EHT. Should these proposed questions be included in the final version, they will enable LAHSA to gather data on the employment needs and service preferences of participants at

their initial contact with the homeless services system. Since many of these participants may never be connected to scarce housing subsidies, employment is a central means for them to be able to afford housing; the inclusion of employment questions in the IAT helps to ensure that employment is central to conversations with participants regarding how to resolve their housing crisis.

#### *Flexible Funding for Homeless Job Seekers*

The EHT is optimistic about the prospects for scaling flexible funding for homeless job seekers Countywide in Fiscal Year 2020-21. LAHSA has recently established an infrastructure for the implementation of its problem-solving assistance fund, which provides flexible funds to help participants overcome obstacles to resolving their housing crisis without entering the homeless services system. Over the coming months, LAHSA and the EHT will consider how learnings from the implementation of the problem-solving assistance fund can be applied to implementation of a similar, employment-focused flexible funding program, to enable participants to quickly attain or retain employment. Further, the EHT will draw on learnings from the use of flex funds in the three "100-day challenges" described below to scale the program Countywide.

#### **100-Day Challenges**

To further drive implementation of the EHT recommendations, the CEO is pursuing the opportunity to launch 100-day challenges in the two pilot Clusters by the beginning of March 2020. This will be part of a statewide effort initiated by Governor Newsom's office, which will support the launch of multiple 100-day challenges related to combatting homelessness in counties across California. A 100-day challenge to place Rapid Re-Housing participants into employment is currently underway in Service Planning Area (SPA) 4, and is funded by Measure H as a part of the Employment Innovations Fund administered by United Way. The Governor has urged Counties to utilize part of their Homeless Housing and Prevention (HHAP) grants to fund the challenges; in turn, the State will contribute some of its HHAP administrative funds toward a technical assistance provider.

These challenges bring together key stakeholders to realize critical, challenging goals by engaging in collaborative, innovative, and rapid efforts. The County's challenges will be led by Rapid Results Institute (RRI), a non-profit organization that pioneered the 100-day challenge model and has worked on homelessness-related 100-day Challenges in more than 100 U.S. communities, including as a part of efforts to develop the Coordinated Entry System (CES) and to address youth homelessness in the County.

The focus of the challenges in the two Clusters will be to place a specific number of homeless job seekers into employment and support retention of employment going forward. Because of the timing of these challenges, the Clusters will have the opportunity to benefit from learnings from the SPA 4 challenge, which will be almost complete by the time the cluster challenges launch. Through these challenges, the CEO will gain further insight into best practices for implementing the EHT recommendations Countywide.

After the completion of the 100-day challenges – and once the EHT has further experience in implementing recommendations in the Clusters – the CEO will report back to the Board to further assess the feasibility of scaling the recommendations. This report back will be submitted by June 30, 2020.

If you have any questions, please contact Phil Ansell, Homeless Initiative Director, at (213) 974-1752 or pansell@ceo.lacounty.gov.

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Acting Chief Executive Office

December 11, 2020

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair  
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Janice Hahn  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Fesia A. Davenport  
Acting Chief Executive Officer

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## EMPLOYMENT INNOVATIONS TO LINK HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS TO JOBS (ITEM NUMBER 8, AGENDA OF APRIL 9, 2019)

On April 9, 2019, the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Chief Executive Office (CEO) to identify regional clusters, based on overlapping boundaries for General Relief (GR), CalWORKs, Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN), Workforce Development Board (WDB), America's Job Center of California (AJCC), homeless services providers, and Community Colleges/Adult Schools to refine and implement recommendations from the Employment and Homelessness Taskforce (EHT), and report back on the feasibility of scaling piloted recommendations Countywide. The EHT is comprised of representatives from CEO-Homeless Initiative (CEO-HI); Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS); Department of Public Social Services (DPSS); the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA); and United Way of Greater Los Angeles (UWGLA). The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) and Heartland Alliance have provided consulting support to the EHT. In December 2019, CEO provided an interim report back, outlining the progress so far in the two pilot regional clusters (East San Gabriel Valley and South Los Angeles) and scaling of piloted recommendations from the EHT. In addition, the report stated that a 100-Day Challenge (100 DC) focused on placing Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) participants into employment was underway in Service Planning Area (SPA) 4, and that two more employment-related challenges for people experiencing homelessness (PEH) were planned for the two pilot clusters.

This memo provides an update on the outcomes of the SPA 4 challenge, the impact of COVID-19 on the two additional planned challenges, and the EHT's plans to move forward by advancing three key strategies, which are informed by and build upon what the EHT has learned so far. The EHT's next steps also consider the current economic and public health context.

#### **SPA 4 100-Day Challenge**

In December 2019, the UWGLA, in collaboration with Rapid Results Institute (RRI), launched a 100 DC to place 100 RRH participants into employment. The 100 DC model inspires teams to set ambitious goals and to create an environment with intense levels of innovation, collaboration, and execution. The effort was funded by Measure H as a part of the Employment Innovations Fund administered by UWGLA, which was established by the April 9, 2019 Board motion (Item Number 8). The 100 DC involved five service providers and a range of other partners, including representatives from the public workforce development and public benefits systems. Though the outcomes of the 100 DC were somewhat hampered by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which emerged toward the end of the 100 days, the 100 DC team was successful in placing 66 people into employment. Moreover, the lessons learned from this effort provided valuable information to the EHT as it determined its next steps. The attachment provides UWGLA's full report on the 100 DC.

#### **Planned Challenges in East San Gabriel Valley and South Los Angeles**

Even though the EHT embarked on the planning process to launch two additional employment-focused 100 DC pilots in the regional clusters, these plans had to be adjusted due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. These two challenges were set to be part of a cohort of communities statewide – led by the Governor's office – executing more 100 DCs related to combatting homelessness. However, COVID-19 made these plans impossible, both due to health concerns and constraints on the job market due to widespread closures and the economic downturn. The State and the partners involved with the challenges collectively decided to re-focus the challenges on re-housing PEH receiving temporary shelter during the COVID-19 pandemic through the County's Project Roomkey effort.

#### **Strategies to Further Advance the EHT's Goals**

Over the past several months, the EHT has had the opportunity to reflect upon lessons from its efforts thus far, while considering the implications of the current economic and public health context for its ongoing work. Based on findings from the 100 DC and the work conducted by CSH and Heartland Alliance, as the consultants to the EHT, the EHT identified three key strategies to drive the next phase of its work. These strategies were presented to the Homeless Policy Board Deputies on November 12, 2020. The strategies and the work associated with them are described below.

- **Strategy 1: Integrate employment and income elements into a Coordinated Entry System (CES) Assessment process.** To ensure that employment is centered as part of every participant's engagement with the homeless services system, LAHSA has added basic income and employment questions to its draft CES Initial Access Tool. This initial triage tool will be implemented across all CES entry points in the current fiscal year. Responses to these questions will inform next steps related to mainstream benefits linkages and employment support. In addition, more comprehensive employment and

income assessment questions will be tested through a stand-alone employment assessment tool in the Employment Services Pilot (described below).

- **Strategy 2: Strengthen the focus and build capacity towards employment in the homeless services system.** Based on experiences in the clusters and the SPA 4 100 DC, the EHT believes that strengthening employment services within the homeless services system is essential for increasing access to employment for homeless jobseekers. Continued attention to ensuring strong linkages between the homeless services, public workforce, and benefits systems is also needed. Therefore, beginning in early 2021, LAHSA will lead an employment services pilot. The pilot will include the following components:
  - **Direct Employment Services:** A total of seven full-time Employment Specialists will be added to LAHSA's Recovery Re-Housing contracts in SPAs 1, 3, and 7. Services provided to participants will include pre-employment training/preparation and referrals to training programs, transitional employment, and unsubsidized employment.
  - **Employer and Public Workforce System Coordination:** One full-time Employment Liaison will be added to Adult CES Lead Agencies in SPAs 1, 3, and 7. The Liaison will be responsible for developing and stewarding relationships with workforce development partners and employers on behalf of CES participating agencies SPA-wide.

The pilot will have a soft launch on January 4, 2021. Full implementation will occur by March 1, 2021. The CEO is working with LAHSA to develop an evaluation strategy, which will be established by the time the pilot begins its soft launch.

- **Strategy 3: In the context of COVID-19, explore the types of employment opportunities that have increased demand and consider how to best connect PEH to those opportunities.**
  - **Growth Industry Identification:** WDACS and its partners have identified the following sectors as growth industries in the current environment: social services and advanced manufacturing, including green transportation infrastructure, aerospace, and defense. WDACS will work with employers in these sectors to set aside training cohorts for PEH and will work to upskill and reskill PEH for these opportunities. Furthermore, WDACS will partner with the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) to identify additional industry opportunities.
  - **Expansion of Careers for a Cause:** WDACS is exploring expansion of Careers for a Cause, a pilot that launched in Supervisorial District 2. This program partners with Community Colleges and homeless service providers to provide people with lived experience of homelessness with training and a career pathway into the homeless services sector.

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### **Next Steps**

The CEO will report back to the Board on progress implementing the strategies outlined above. This report back will be submitted by June 30, 2021.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Phil Ansell, Homeless Initiative Director, at (213) 974-1752 or [pansell@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:pansell@ceo.lacounty.gov).

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### **Attachment**

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
County Counsel  
Public Social Services  
Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services  
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority  
United Way of Greater Los Angeles

# **100-DAY CHALLENGE FINAL REPORT**

*Presented by United Way of Greater Los Angeles*



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## I. Pilot Concept

In early 2019, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved the motion “Employment Innovations to Link Homeless Individuals to Jobs,” authored by Supervisors Barger and Kuehl. The motion permitted the establishment of an Employment Innovation Fund “to expedite the implementation of several recommendations made by the Employment and Homelessness Taskforce.”

United Way of Greater Los Angeles (UWGLA) partnered with Rapid Results Institute (RRI), whose 100-Day Challenge (100 DC) model inspires teams to set goals and create an environment with intense levels of innovation, collaboration, and execution. In consultation with the Employment and Homelessness Taskforce (EHT), UWGLA chose to focus the challenge on Rapid Rehousing (RRH) and Interim Housing (IH) clients in Service Planning Area (SPA) 4 (Metro Los Angeles).

Five RRH Service Providers were selected to participate in the 100 DC in SPA 4. These providers were PATH, Covenant House, The Center at Blessed Sacrament, The Los Angeles LGBT Center, and The People Concern.

Launched in late December 2019, the 100 DC team convened with RRI and UWGLA to choose the following goal: *In 100 days, 100 single adults (18+) who are housed through RRH will be gainfully employed; 70% will retain employment for a minimum of 60 days.*

In addition to the goal of placing 100 people in employment, the team was also interested in exploring the following:

- *What are the breakdowns and linkages of the housing and workforce system as it relates to RRH?*
- *Where is the system not supporting RRH participants in preparing them for long-term employment?*

## II. 100 DC Team

The team was comprised of:

- a. UWGLA
- b. Housing Case Managers from PATH, the LGBT Center, the Center at Blessed Sacrament, Covenant House, and the People Concern
- c. Employers at UPS, Hospitality Training Academy, and First Step Staffing
- d. Other Public Agencies: America’s Job Centers of California (AJCC) (via Goodwill), LAHSA, and DPSS

The 100 DC model relies on intensive communication and collaboration. Prior to the challenge, this group of individuals had never met or collaborated with one another. During the challenge, the team met every week for 90 minutes and held ongoing digital communication via Slack and email. UWGLA acted as the backbone of the group,

facilitating all meetings, administering operational and flex/training funds, leading employer engagement, and tracking data for the challenge.

The meetings created an opportunity for Case Managers to share challenges, best practices, job leads, and other resources. Employers participated in meetings to share candidate expectations and to learn how Case Managers were prepared to address concerns that arise from populations transitioning out of long-term homelessness. The challenge team shared that the regular weekly meetings with other Case Managers in SPA 4 were valuable because of the camaraderie and thought partnership they were able to build. This rapport built and fostered between parties made the ability to brainstorm, collaborate, and share resources much more fluid.

### III. Participants

All 100 DC participants were clients of one of the five housing providers. At the onset of the challenge, the focus was on RRH participants, but ultimately the team expanded the participant pool to include IH.

Based on the job leads presented at weekly meetings by employers and the 100 DC team, Case Managers assessed which clients could potentially be a good fit for opportunities and subsequently invited those clients to participate in the challenge.

In total, 162 individuals were invited to participate in the challenge, 91 were in RRH and 71 were in IH. Charts A-D are a breakdown of participant demographics.

Chart A: Race

Black or African American	63.6%
Hispanic or Latino	14.8%
White	14.2
Mixed	4.9%
Native American	2.5%
Asian	0%

Chart B: Gender

Male	59.5%
Female	30.1%
Gender Diverse	9.2%
Unknown	1.2%

Chart C: Education

No GED	17%
HS Diploma/GED	60%
Bachelor's Degree	3%
Unknown	20%



Chart D: Age

18 – 25 years old	66%
26 – 45 years old	21%
42- 50+ years old	13%

## IV. Results

### *Placements*

The 100 DC started in late December 2019 and was scheduled to conclude at the end of March 2020. It is worth noting that the last two weeks of the challenge were disrupted by COVID-19.

In total:

- **162** participants were invited to the challenge
- **66** participants were placed in employment
- **10** participants dropped out of the challenge
- **86** participants were actively engaged in attempting to obtain employment at the time the stay-at-home order went into effect (i.e. they had completed applications, attended hiring fairs, attended trainings, and/or conducted interviews).

Below is additional data regarding the 66 participants placed in employment:

Chart E: Race

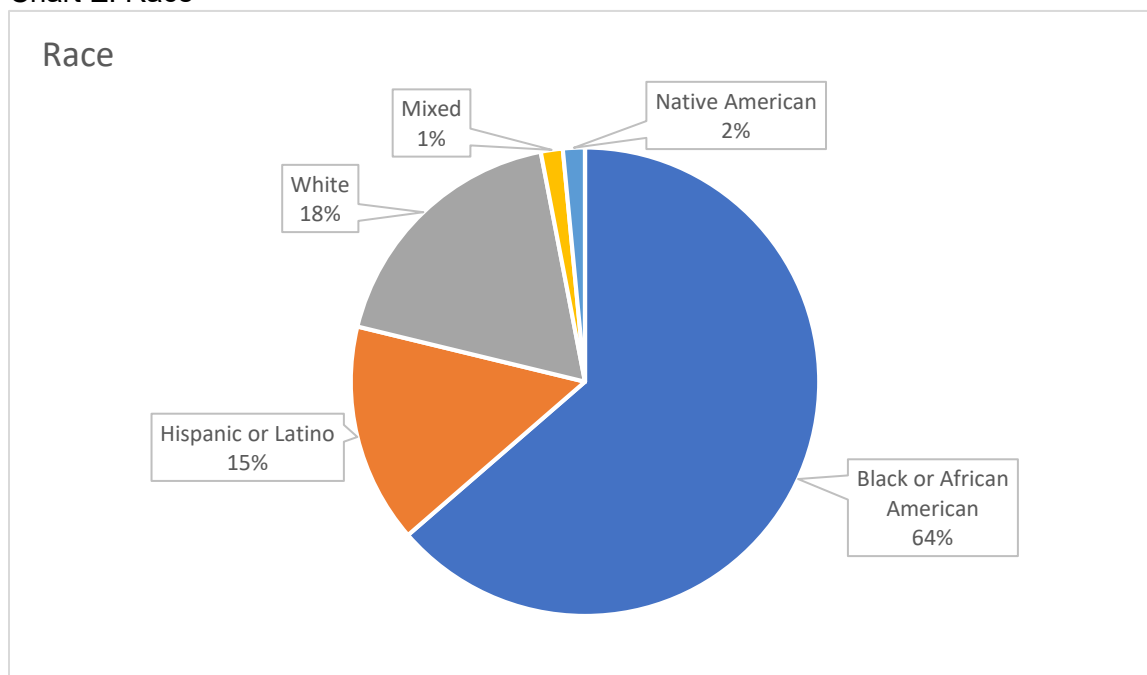


Chart F: Gender

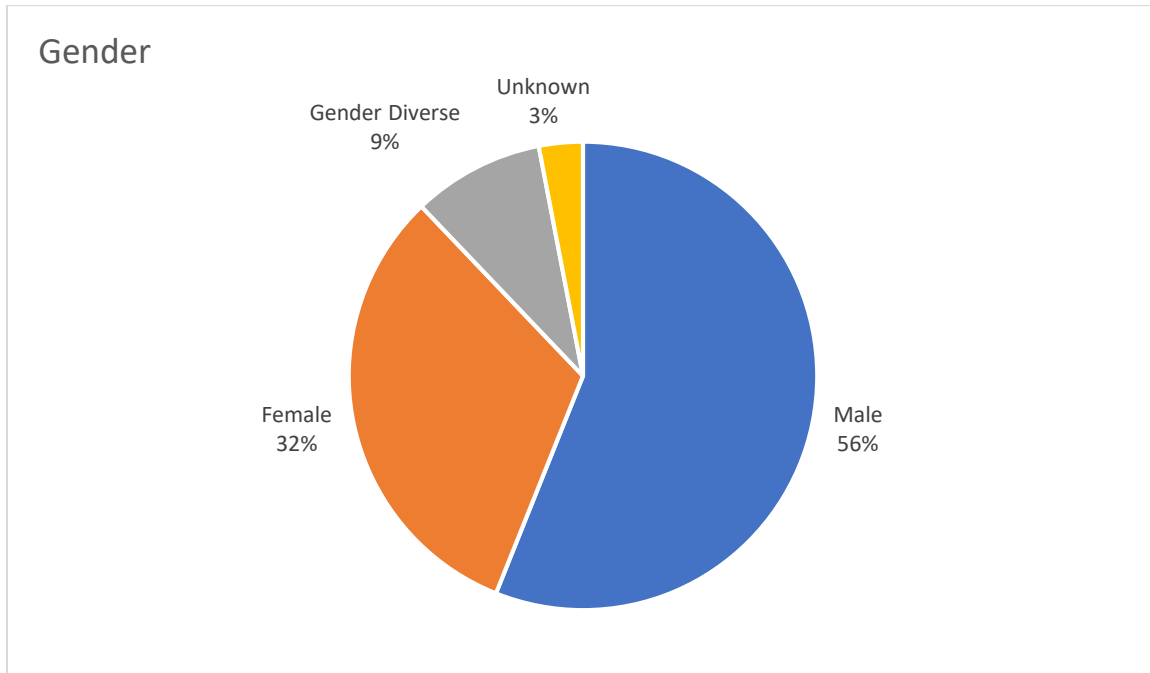


Chart G: Education

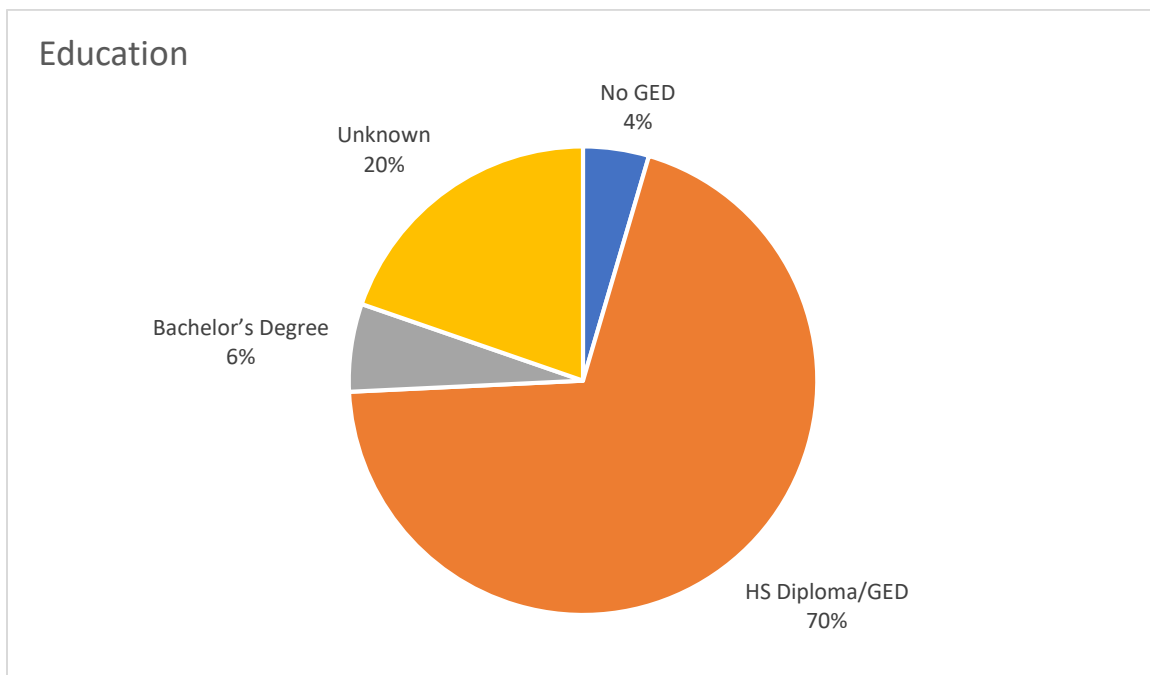
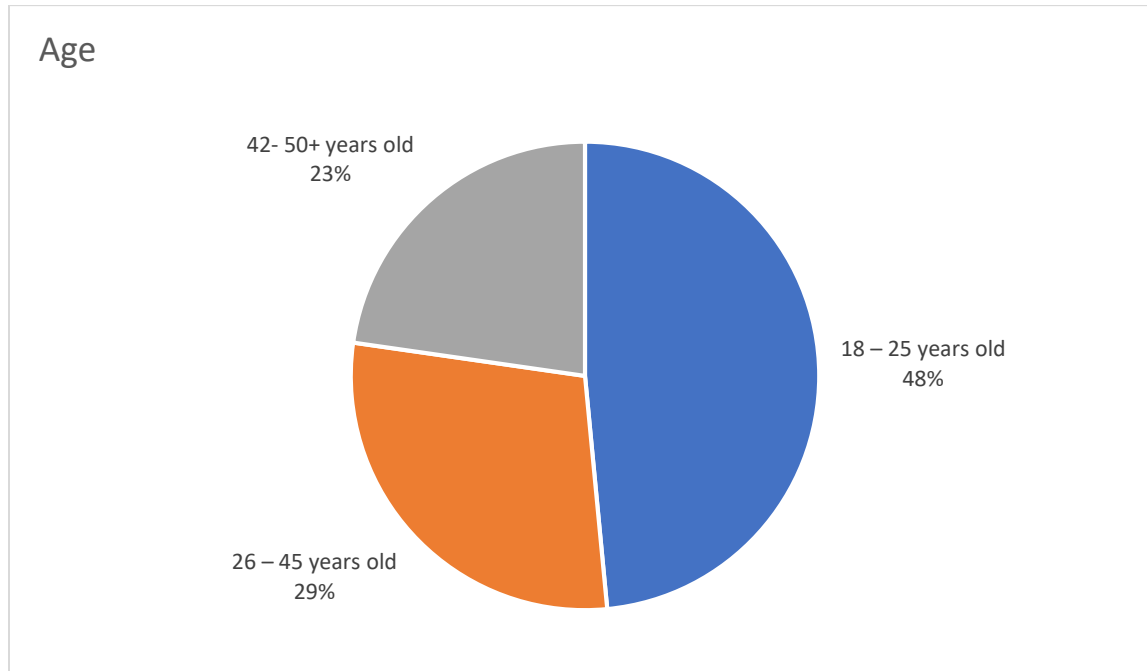


Chart H: Age



### Case Management

Case Managers reported that, in order to meet the goal of the challenge, they had to increase the amount of case management normally provided to participants. In total, Case Managers provided 5,743 hours of case management during the challenge to the 162 participants. Per week, an average amount of 410 hours was devoted to 100 DC participants specifically on workforce development. For the 66 participants that were placed in employment, Case Managers reported providing, on average, an additional eight hours per participant of workforce development case management over the course of the 100 days.

### Flex Funding

Case Managers were provided access to up to \$2,360 per participant in flex funding for training. Case Managers reported using a total of \$8,813.77 in flex funding for 53 participants. (see Chart I for a breakdown of flex funds spent by category).

For participants that were placed in employment and used flex funding, the average amount used was \$162.33 per participant. Out of the 162 participants, 32 attended training and/or obtained a certification.

Chart I: Flex Funding Category

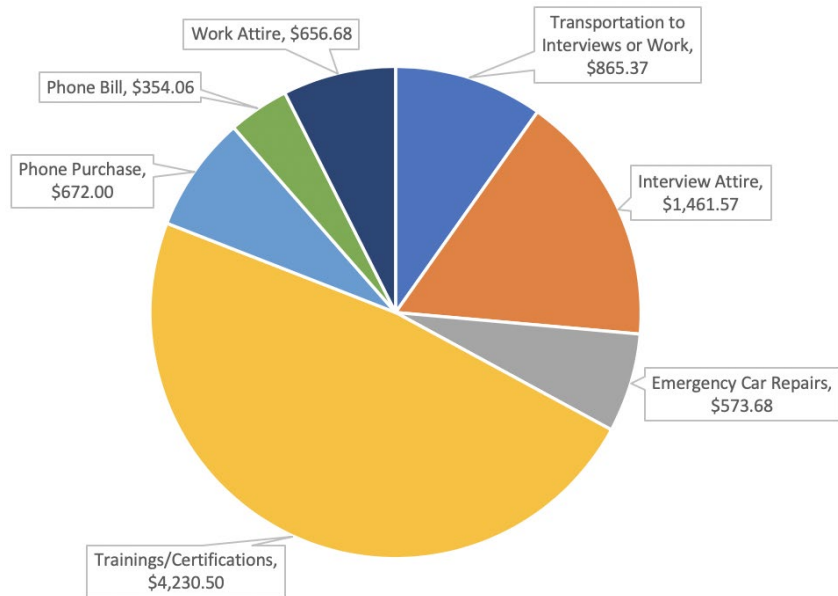
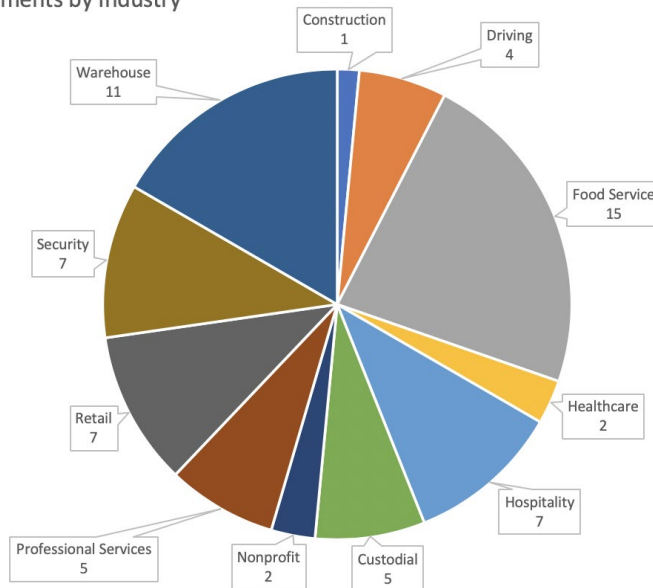


Chart J: Participants Hired by Industry

Placements by Industry



### Retention

Of the 66 participants that were placed in employment during the challenge, 18 lost employment during the challenge, of which 14 job losses were related to the COVID pandemic.

After the challenge, 11 more participants who were placed in employment during the challenge lost their jobs due to COVID-19. However, five of those participants who lost their jobs were re-employed between April 2020 and June 2020.

Additionally, four participants who were not employed during the 100 DC but were actively seeking employment obtained a job between April 2020 and June 2020.

## **V. Employer Engagement**

The 100 DC team prioritized employer engagement and invited employers to be part of the solution to end homelessness. 25 companies/corporations were engaged to be part of the challenge. Out of the 25 companies, 11 did not confirm or reported being unable to hire individuals within the 100-day timeframe; 14 companies made job commitments for the challenge. Out of the 14 employers who made job commitments, six hired multiple participants in the 100 days (marked by an asterisk in the list below).

Through this challenge employers interested in hiring formerly homeless individuals in SPA 4 were provided with a central place to not only share job opportunities but also their concerns. Employers were able to hear directly from Case Managers about the type of supports and interventions that would be provided to participants about whom employers raised concerns. It also established a direct communication between employers and Case Managers. An employer who hired participants in the challenge reported feeling more comfortable and optimistic about hiring individuals transitioning out of homelessness after participating in several 100 DC meetings.

Employers that hired participants from this challenge include:

- Belmont Village
- Hollander Sleep Product
- Cooper Space Design
- Jersey Mike's
- Wisdom Treatment Center
- Walgreens
- TAO Nightclub
- Sushi Stop

- Smart N Final
- Allied Universal
- Judi's Deli
- Dodgers Concessions
- DD's Discount
- Securitas
- Forever 21\*
- Public Outreach
- Shake Shack\*
- Servicon\*
- Mendocino Farms
- Chipotle
- Staples Center – HTA\*
- Dave and Buster's
- Subway
- Flutter Experience
- Washington Iron Works – Hire LAX\*
- LAZ Parking
- Amazon
- Charitable Causes
- Writer's Guild
- Universal Studios\*
- Bubba Gump's Restaurant
- Sprouts
- Ralph's

### *Employer Recruitment*

UWGLA hired a dedicated consultant to proactively seek and recruit employers with potential employment opportunities that would best fit participants. Employers were approached and informed about the 100 DC, including the types of supports offered to employers and employees through the 100 DC. If the employer expressed interest, they would be invited to be part of the 100 DC team.

Some employers engaged were from UWGLA's network of corporate partners. Prior to the launch of the 100 DC, the consultant met with UWGLA's development department to determine the existing network of corporations. A one-pager was developed explaining the 100 DC model, the population being served, and benefits to employers. Next, a meeting was planned with the corporations' HR representatives to discuss the 100 DC and determine the employer's ability to be involved in the challenge. Once an employer committed, they were invited to participate in the kickoff meeting and subsequent weekly meetings.

### Hiring Events

Through the course of the challenge, employers held six hiring events exclusively for challenge participants. UWGLA scheduled and coordinated these events with employers. UWGLA ensured the time slots worked for providers and their clients, arranged locations, and tracked RSVPs. UWGLA shared pertinent information about the available job positions with the group beforehand so that Case Managers could engage participants that were a viable fit.

From the six hiring events, approximately 18 participants were hired.

Case Managers shared that both they and the participants greatly benefitted from hiring events; the group events allowed Case Managers to coordinate to more easily accompany participants to events. Attending hiring fairs in a group also increased peer support and reduced participants' anxiety. Finally, it also strengthened the relationship between Case Managers and participants.

Chart K: Hiring Events

Event	Date
Servicon	1/28
HTA	2/11
Multi-Employer Event	2/19
First Step Staffing	2/21, 2/28, 3/6

Observations indicated that single employer events were more effective than multi-employer ones. Single employer events were much simpler to coordinate and produced targeted results, because participants were screened by Case Managers prior to attending. Employers also enjoyed attending these events because the interview and hiring process was much simpler. They only needed to set aside a specific amount of time to interview a group of people who were confirmed to arrive and were pre-screened. Employers mentioned this was a better experience than when they previously tried to hire from this population on their own, because sometimes candidates did not show up to their interview or were simply not prepared to interview.

## **VI. Current Role of the Workforce System**

The America's Job Center of California/WorkSource Center (AJCC) serving SPA 4 100 DC participants is Goodwill Industries, which participated in the challenge. Goodwill shared job leads and resources in the weekly meetings, such as expungement clinics, job fairs in the community, etc. Having Goodwill on the team was beneficial for Case Managers to understand what resources AJCCs offer; however, Case Managers shared that they were reluctant to send their clients to Goodwill because of the fear that the client would not be comfortable working with an additional Case Manager and traveling to another location.

After 14 weeks of intensive collaborative meetings, where housing providers and Goodwill were present, it appeared that the service provider the client initially engaged for their housing needs was the appropriate person to provide clients workforce development case management. The unique needs and challenges that arise for an individual transitioning out of homelessness and seeking employment require an intensive and established professional relationship with a Case Manager who fully understands the complexity of their housing situation.

Housing Case Managers shared that staff from Goodwill did not always display the training and flexibility to serve those transitioning out of homelessness. Housing Case Managers had the flexibility and established relationship with the participant to provide the individual support participants needed in their journey to obtain employment. This included having conversations with participants about grooming and presentation, driving participants to hiring events and training, helping participants obtain interview attire, and helping participants through moments of anxiety. Typically, Housing Case Managers have more trauma-informed care training that allows them to assist clients transitioning out of homelessness in these difficult conversations.

## **VII. Challenges**

### **Client Engagement**

Case Managers reported that a number of participants exhibited a reluctance to engage in workforce development due to fear of losing public assistance, having public assistance reduced, and challenges commuting long distances between home and work. Case Managers shared that this fear surrounding public benefits is common amongst individuals transitioning out of homelessness. While Housing Case Managers have some general knowledge of the public benefits system, the fear participants feel can only be effectively addressed through financial literacy coaching. Additionally, participants exhibited a fear of returning to work due to long-term unemployment and/or emotional issues.

### **Lack of Capacity & Workforce Development Expertise**

None of the agencies hired additional employees to assist with the 100 DC work. Pre-challenge, Case Managers were overwhelmed with the duties of managing a workload within the housing sector. The added responsibilities of the 100 DC increased Case Managers' duties outside of normal scope of work, leading them to feel overwhelmed. Out of the five Case Managers, only two had job development experience.

### **Data**

Due to lack of employment data in LAHSA's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), it was a challenge obtaining benchmark data.



## **VIII. Best Practices**

### **Case Manager Capacity**

Based on the analysis of qualitative data from Case Managers, going to greater lengths to support participants was helpful for a client securing successful employment. In some cases, Case Managers accompanied participants to interviews, thus increasing participant confidence levels.

In addition to sending emails, Case Managers sent text messages to participants to remind them about hiring events, job trainings, and interviews.

Case Managers were more successful in identifying interested clients, leveraging their interest, and having the ability to match participants with employers when they had smaller caseloads.

Recommendation: Provide funding to Homeless Service Providers to hire more Case Managers to assist with workforce development efforts. These case managers should have some training on workforce development in order to effectively provide job coaching.

### **Collaboration & Thought Partnership between Workforce Development staff & Housing Providers within SPAs**

The 100 DC model required the team of Case Managers and partners to meet weekly. In the meetings, the team was able to be informed about employer's open positions, discuss hiring events, work through participant challenges, and gain education from each other on employment services. Case Managers reported that the weekly meetings helped them connect the dots between housing services and employment services.

Recommendation: Conduct regular convenings of Homeless Service Providers who facilitate employment services and workforce development staff who facilitate employment services to increase camaraderie and transfer of knowledge.

### **Flex Funding**

Case Managers reported feeling less overwhelmed when flex fund availability was mentioned. They also reported that participants expressed hesitancy in using funds as they were seen as a handout and participants desired to fill their workforce needs separately from the Homeless Service Provider. In addition, Case Managers reported that some participants showed a reluctance to attend an unpaid training stating that they had a more immediate need for financial support.

Participants utilized flex funding for interview clothes, training, and transportation to interviews.

Recommendation: Provide \$165 of flex funding per participant for all participants in a future 100 Day Challenge.

### *Specialized Knowledge in Workforce Development*

The most successful Case Managers possessed workforce development skills and understanding of the participant population. Case Managers who had experience as a Job Developer were less stressed throughout the challenge. They also had greater ability to maintain connections with external partners and greater ability to collaborate effectively with team members.

#### Recommendations:

Train Housing Case Managers in workforce development

Hire Housing Case Managers with workforce development experience

Prioritize workforce development as an integral part of client case management amongst Homeless Service Providers

### *Data Collection*

Tracking data throughout the challenge kept the Case Managers focused on the goal of employing 100 participants in 100 days. During the weekly meetings, Case Managers shared how many participants were employed, actively seeking employment, or experiencing job loss.

Recommendation: LAHSA collect, track, and continuously monitor data regarding employment within RRH programs.

### *Employer Engagement*

Hiring an Employment Specialist who was able to engage employers with the 100 DC team was helpful. Inviting the employers to be part of the solution to end homelessness via jobs and attending weekly meetings increased collaboration between Case Managers and employers. When employers attended the weekly meetings, they were able to share expectations and employee challenges. This led to better comprehension of the unique challenges and solutions to sustaining employment for a person transitioning out of homelessness.

#### Recommendations:

Have 1-2 employment specialists per SPA housed at LAHSA to provide continuous employer engagement

With the help of housing Case Managers and support from LAHSA, provide a space for ongoing collaboration between Case Managers and employers

Have the employment specialists partner with employers to conduct employer-specific hiring events

Disseminate the UWGLA Employer Toolkit to employers, Homeless Service Providers, workforce development system partners, and local Chambers of Commerce.



# County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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FESIA A. DAVENPORT  
Chief Executive Officer

October 4, 2021

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair  
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Janice Hahn  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Fesia A. Davenport  
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors  
HILDA L. SOLIS  
First District

HOLLY J. MITCHELL  
Second District

SHEILA KUEHL  
Third District

JANICE HAHN  
Fourth District

KATHRYN BARGER  
Fifth District

## **EMPLOYMENT INNOVATIONS TO LINK HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS TO JOBS (ITEM NO. 8, AGENDA OF APRIL 9, 2019)**

On April 9, 2019, the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to implement recommendations from the Employment and Homelessness Taskforce (EHT) and report back on the feasibility of scaling piloted recommendations county-wide. The EHT is comprised of representatives from CEO-Homeless Initiative (CEO-HI); Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS); Department of Public Social Services (DPSS); the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA); and United Way of Greater Los Angeles (UWGLA). The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) and Heartland Alliance have provided consulting support to the EHT. In December 2019 and December 2020, the CEO provided interim report backs to the Board, outlining the progress in implementing the recommendations of the EHT.

In the December 2020 report, the CEO indicated that it would be advancing three key strategies, which are informed by and build upon the EHT's learnings thus far. These strategies are:

- Strategy No. 1: Integrate employment and income elements into the Coordinated Entry System (CES) Assessment process.
- Strategy No. 2: Strengthen the focus on and build capacity towards employment in the homeless services system.
- Strategy No. 3: In the context of COVID-19, explore the types of employment opportunities that have increased demand and consider how to best connect PEH to those opportunities.

Each Supervisor  
October 4, 2021  
Page 2

The attachment provides an update on the above strategies. Full implementation of the first strategy has been on hold due to the pandemic but is expected to resume by the end of the fiscal year. The second and third strategies are underway and are expected to make progress over the coming year.

### **Next Steps**

The EHT meets monthly to assess progress in implementing the three strategies described above, share resources, provide feedback, and identify opportunities for new partnerships and collaborative efforts. As implementation of these strategies continues, the EHT will provide ongoing support and oversight. The CEO will report back on progress during the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 by July 31, 2022.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact me or Cheri Todoroff, Interim Director of the Homeless Initiative, at (213) 974-1752 or [ctodoroff@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:ctodoroff@ceo.lacounty.gov).

FAD:JMN:TJM  
CT:JR:EBI:ns

### **Attachment**

c:     Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
       County Counsel  
       Public Social Services  
       Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services  
       Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority

## **Employment and Homelessness Taskforce Strategy Implementation Updates**

### ***Strategy No. 1: Integrate employment and income elements into the Coordinated Entry System (CES) Assessment process.***

As part of broader efforts to streamline intake processes, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) developed an Initial Access Tool (IAT), a front-end triage tool that supports appropriate service connection at the first point of engagement between a participant and the homeless service system. The tool will standardize how homeless service providers connect participants to the correct point of service entry based on their respective populations, special needs, and household demographics. This tool will be utilized at all system entry points and administered prior to problem-solving conversations. The IAT aims to confirm the current housing status of the participant. If a participant is determined eligible for CES, the tool will facilitate connection to the correct point of entry and referral to interim housing. If the participant is not eligible for CES, the tool will facilitate participant connection to mainstream benefits and/or prevention services. Consistent with the recommendations of the Employment and Homelessness Taskforce (EHT) to integrate employment and income questions into assessment tools in the homeless services system, the IAT includes two questions that ask participants about their current level of income and their interest in increasing their income. This will facilitate problem-solving conversations which may take place after the IAT is completed, assisting in appropriate referrals to employment and employment services.

The IAT is pending implementation due to constraints created by the pandemic. LAHSA is building a pilot project plan to test and evaluate the tool within this fiscal year.

### ***Strategy No. 2: Strengthen the focus on and build capacity towards employment in the homeless services system.***

To implement this strategy, LAHSA has designed an Employment Services pilot program which will test strategies for strengthening the overall focus on employment in the homeless service delivery system. Further, the pilot aims to position the homeless service delivery system to play a lead coordination role with public workforce development system partners.

Through the pilot, service providers in three service planning areas (SPAs) were funded to hire staff to fill two sets of new positions: (1) Employment Specialists, who are responsible for providing direct employment services to people experiencing homelessness (PEH), and (2) Employment Liaisons, who are responsible for regional-level coordination with public workforce development entities and employers. Participants enrolled in Recovery Re-Housing who express interest in employment (through their case manager) are referred to employment specialists, who provide supportive services that foster bridge building to self-sufficiency and help eliminate barriers to accessing living wage employment opportunities. LAHSA has set forth the following target outcomes for the pilot:

- 100 percent enrollment per quarter (for a program funded to serve 200 individuals, 50 per quarter)
- 80 percent of clients receive training/supportive services
- 80 percent job placement

- \$16.99 average hourly wage
- 76 percent retain employment six months after exit
- 72 percent retain employment one year after exit

Full program operations of the pilot began on July 1, 2021, and will continue through June 30, 2022. Homeless services providers participating in the pilot include Valley Oasis (SPA 1), Union Station Homeless Services (SPA 3), and People Assisting the Homeless (SPA 7). The hiring of Employment Specialists and Liaisons has been completed in all SPAs except for SPA 3, where two vacancies for Employment Specialists remain due to the tight labor market and limited term of the position. Since implementation, providers report the following referral and enrollment data:

- 39 clients referred in SPA 1, 14 enrolled
- 8 clients referred in SPA 3, 7 enrolled
- 4 clients referred in SPA 7, 1 enrolled

As a part of the pilot, partnerships have been established with multiple agencies and Employment Liaisons are participating in key regional meetings to further build their networks. LAHSA has facilitated ongoing partnerships with America's Job Centers of California, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Public Social Services, and the California Department of Rehabilitation, with the goal of fostering systems integration and collaboration.

In the coming months, pilot lead agencies will work to increase referrals into the program. Further, they will focus on building additional partnerships with employers and workforce development system partners to increase employment opportunities for program participants.

Through a partnership with Supervisorial District 5, a professional evaluation firm, Harder & Co., has been procured by the Homeless Policy Research Institute. This will enable the EHT to maximize the impact of the pilot and apply the learnings that emerge to Countywide efforts to bolster employment resources for PEH.

***Strategy No. 3: In the context of COVID-19, explore the types of employment opportunities that have increased demand and consider how to best connect PEH to those opportunities.***

#### **Careers For a Cause**

In the last report back to the Board on this motion, the Chief Executive Office noted that Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS) would pursue an expansion of the Careers For A Cause (C4C) program as a part of its efforts to expand employment opportunities for PEH. C4C is an 8-week training program for persons with lived experience of homelessness to gain skills to work within the homeless services system.

The pilot was sponsored by Supervisorial District 2 (SD 2). Cohort 4 is currently underway, and Cohort 5 will be held from January 24, 2022 to March 18, 2022. Cohort 4 will mark the end of SD 2 pilot funding. Three Cohorts have been completed to date with 88 graduates, of which 33 individuals have been placed in full-time employment. This represents a 38 percent employment placement rate. This outcome falls short of the targeted 60 percent employment

placement rate. WDACS believes more work is needed to address the trauma experienced by participants with lived experience of homelessness, including some experiencing homelessness during the training program, which prevented more individuals from successfully entering full-time employment. The program aims to address these barriers with added supportive services.

To this end, WDACS received two-years of American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding to expand the C4C program countywide (\$2.6 million per year). WDACS is currently in the planning phase of the expansion and engaging additional partners to support and enhance the existing program design to meet participant and employer needs. The scheduled implementation date for C4C expansion programming is April 2022 after the completion of the last SD 2 sponsored Cohort.

WDACS continues to work with LAHSA and its network of providers to encourage the hiring of graduates and provide hiring incentives to employers, including the On-the-Job Training program, which may provide up to 90 percent reimbursement of wages to employers, and promotion of the new State Homeless Hiring Tax Credit, which can allow for up to \$30,000 in employer tax credits (effective January 2022).

#### **Implementation of Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) Recommendations**

On February 9, 2021, the Board adopted a motion directing WDACS and partners to develop an implementation strategy for the recommendations outlined in LAEDC's *Pathways for Economic Resiliency: Los Angeles County 2021 – 2026* report. The Board directed WDACS and other County departments and agencies to identify recovery strategies needed to catalyze equitable economic recovery. Central to WDACS's economic recovery efforts since the onset of the pandemic has been to stabilize the economic situation of those who have been most negatively impacted.

As such, WDACS requested and received ARP funding (\$9 million) to expand its existing High Road Training Partnership (H RTP) programs and build new pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships in health care, advanced manufacturing, construction, film and digital media, early childhood education and early care, social/human services, transportation and warehousing, bioscience, and information technology. As part of the ARP funding allocation for the expansion of H RTP, WDACS will seek to procure new industry partners through a new post-pilot solicitation to build upon the Hire Up Pilot Model. The Hire Up program is a multi-agency collaborative effort led by WDACS that assists individuals who are homeless and at-risk of homelessness into a career pathway within high-growth sectors, such as construction, hospitality, and civil service.

To further incentivize the hiring of PEH, WDACS has revised its current On-the-Job Training policy, which currently reimburses 50 percent of wages for new hires, to increase the reimbursement of wages up to 90 percent for businesses with less than 50 employees. Additionally, with ARP funding, WDACS will enhance its Fair Chance Hiring Campaign, which will also include the promotion of the newly passed Homeless Hiring Tax Credit (effective January 2022), which can garner a tax credit of up to \$30,000 for a H RTP business that hires PEH and pays a family-supporting wage.





# County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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FESIA A. DAVENPORT  
Chief Executive Officer

August 12, 2022

Board of Supervisors  
HILDA L. SOLIS  
First District

HOLLY J. MITCHELL  
Second District

SHEILA KUEHL  
Third District

JANICE HAHN  
Fourth District

KATHRYN BARGER  
Fifth District

To: Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, Chair  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Janice Hahn  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Fesia A. Davenport  
Chief Executive Officer

## **EMPLOYMENT INNOVATIONS TO LINK HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS TO JOBS (ITEM NO. 8, AGENDA OF APRIL 9, 2019)**

On April 9, 2019, the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Chief Executive Officer to implement recommendations from the Employment and Homelessness Taskforce (EHT) and report back on the feasibility of scaling piloted recommendations countywide. The EHT is comprised of representatives from the Chief Executive Office-Homeless Initiative (CEO-HI), Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), Department of Public Social Services, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), and United Way of Greater Los Angeles. The Corporation for Supportive Housing and Heartland Alliance have provided consulting support to the EHT. In December 2019 and December 2020, the CEO-HI provided interim report backs to the Board, outlining the progress in implementing the recommendations of the EHT.

In the December 2020 report, the CEO-HI indicated that it would be advancing three key strategies, which are informed by and build upon the EHT's learnings thus far. These strategies and brief updates on their progress follow below.

- Strategy No. 1: Integrate employment and income elements into the Coordinated Entry System Assessment process.

To advance the first strategy, LAHSA has enhanced the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), the data system used across the Los Angeles County (County) rehousing system, to include an Employment Assessment Tool (EAT) for use by providers participating in the Employment Services Pilot (Strategy No. 2). The EAT is used to assess participant employment-related interests, preferences, strengths, barriers, and help develop an individualized Employment Action Plan. Depending on the outcome of the pilot, LAHSA and the CEO-HI will determine whether and how to scale use of the EAT and make any needed refinements to the tool.

- Strategy No. 2: Strengthen the focus on and build capacity towards employment in the homeless services system.

LAHSA's employment pilot launched on July 1, 2021, and is set to continue until at least December 31, 2022, with the possibility of extending through the end of Fiscal Year 2022-23. Nearly 220 people have received services and training through the pilot, which is taking place in Service Planning Areas 1, 3, and 7. In addition, nearly 60 people have found employment through the pilot.

- Strategy No. 3: In the context of COVID-19, explore the types of employment opportunities that have increased demand and consider how to best connect people experiencing homelessness (PEH) to those opportunities.

DEO has received funding to expand its Careers For A Cause program, which is an eight-week training program for persons with lived experience of homelessness to gain skills to work within the homeless services system. DEO is partnering with five community colleges as part of this expansion. In addition, DEO is expanding its High Road Training Partnership programs to build new pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships in health care, advanced manufacturing, construction, film and digital media, early childhood education and early care, social/human services, transportation and warehousing, bioscience, and information technology. Additional pilots are underway to expand employment opportunities to PEH and other vulnerable groups, with a focus on high-growth industries.

The Attachment provides further updates on the above strategies.

### **Next Steps**

The EHT meets monthly to assess progress in implementing the three strategies described above, share resources, provide feedback, and identify opportunities for new partnerships and collaborative efforts. As implementation of these strategies continues, the EHT will provide ongoing support and oversight. We will report back within 60 days of the end of the pilot, which is expected no later than September 2023.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact me or Cheri Todoroff, Executive Director of Homeless Initiative, at (213) 974-1752 or [ctodoroff@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:ctodoroff@ceo.lacounty.gov).

FAD:JMN:CT  
JR:EBI:PM:ns

### **Attachment**

c:     Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
        County Counsel  
        Economic Opportunity  
        Public Social Services  
        Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority

## **UPDATE ON EMPLOYMENT AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGIES**

### ***Strategy No. 1: Integrate Employment and Income Elements into the Coordinated Entry System Assessment Process.***

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) has enhanced the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), the data system used across the Los Angeles County rehousing system, to include an Employment Assessment Tool (EAT) for use by providers participating in the Employment Services Pilot program (Pilot), described below under Strategy No. 2, to assess participant employment-related interests, preferences, strengths, barriers, and help develop an individualized Employment Action Plan. The assessment helps to inform which services are most appropriate for each participant, including career counseling, job readiness training, and other supportive services. The EAT is a comprehensive employment assessment questionnaire designed to capture baseline data and information about participants in the Pilot. Subsequently, providers track changes in regular income, employment status, and/or disabling conditions and barriers in HMIS by completing Status Update Assessments.

Depending on the outcomes of the Pilot, LAHSA will consider whether the EAT should be made available beyond the providers participating in the Pilot to potentially allow for both employment and non-employment providers throughout the homeless rehousing system to use the tool to assess the employment needs of their clients.

LAHSA is also currently engaged in a broader effort related to rethinking and revamping assessment tools within the Coordinated Entry System (CES) as a whole. Grounded in early research, recommendations of LAHSA's Ad Hoc Committee on Women and Homelessness and Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness, provider feedback, and client experience, LAHSA has recognized a need to undertake system refinements to advance equity, improve system flow, and increase confidence in the system to support appropriate service connections for all those experiencing homelessness. The Coordinated Entry System Triage Tool Research and Refinement (CESTRR) project emerged from this context. The project aligns research around equity issues focused on three interrelated areas: Assessment (the questions), Administration (the process), and Application (use of the data). The research team and the project's community advisory board (CAB), a 20-person diverse group of individuals with lived experience of homelessness and LA homeless rehousing system staff, identified questions in the tool that were racially and/or ethnically biased or insensitive, not trauma-informed, and/or poorly written or confusing. Together, the CAB and research team rewrote these questions. Moving forward, the Employment and Homelessness Taskforce (EHT) will work with LAHSA to ensure that lessons learned through the CESTRR project are applied to any employment-related assessment tools that are scaled as a result of the current employment Pilot project.

### ***Strategy No. 2: Strengthen the Focus on and Build Capacity Towards Employment in the Homeless Services System.***

To implement this strategy, LAHSA designed an Employment Services Pilot program which is testing strategies for strengthening the overall focus on employment in the homeless service delivery system. Further, the Pilot aims to position the homeless service delivery system to play a lead coordination role with public workforce development system partners. The Pilot launched on July 1, 2021.

Through the Pilot, service providers in three service planning areas (SPAs) were funded to hire staff to fill two sets of new positions: (1) Employment Specialists - responsible for providing direct employment services to people experiencing homelessness (PEH), and (2) Employment Liaisons - responsible for regional-level coordination with public workforce development entities and employers. PEH who express interest in employment (through their case manager) are referred to employment specialists, who provide supportive services that foster bridge building to self-sufficiency and help eliminate barriers to accessing living wage employment opportunities. LAHSA has set forth the following target outcomes:

- 100 percent enrollment per quarter (for a program funded to serve 200 individuals, 50 per quarter);
- 80 percent of clients receive training/supportive services;
- 80 percent job placement;
- \$16.99 average hourly wage;
- 76 percent retain employment in Q2 after exit; and
- 72 percent retain employment in Q4 after exit.

The Pilot has been extended until at least December 31, 2022, with the possibility of extending to the end of the fiscal year.

### **Employment Pilot - First Year Update, July 2021 to June 2022**

As a part of the Pilot, partnerships have been established with multiple agencies, and Employment Liaisons are participating in key regional meetings to further build their networks. LAHSA has facilitated ongoing partnerships with America's Job Centers of California (AJCCs), the County Departments of Mental Health (DMH) and Public Social Services, and the State Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), with the goal of fostering systems integration and building capacity in the homeless services system.

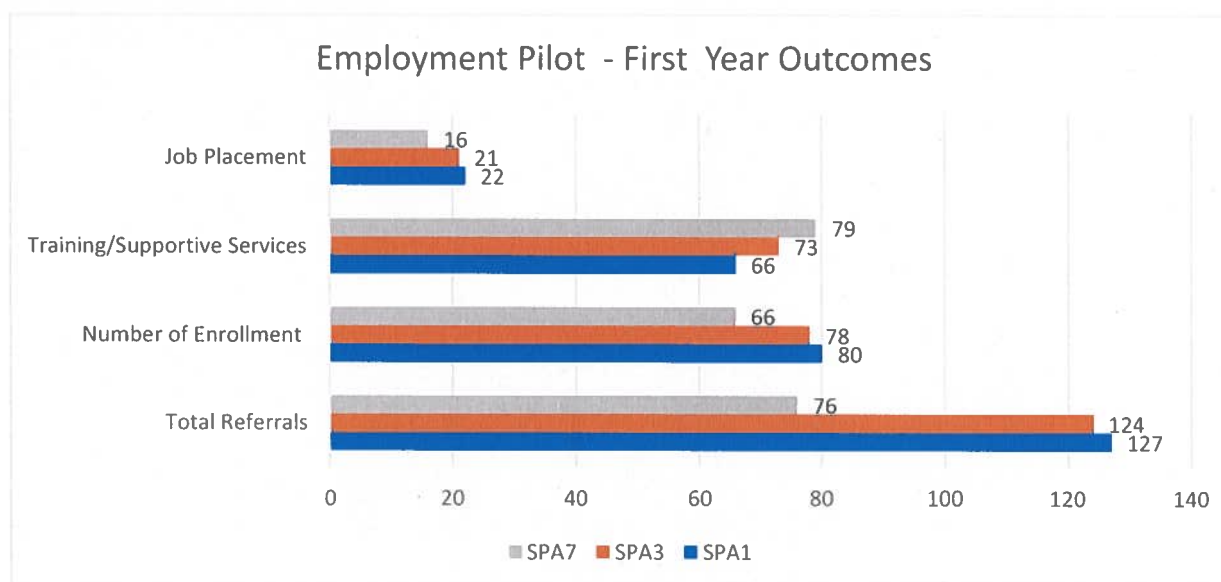
Employment Liaisons developed and maintained partnerships with the public workforce development system, AJCCs, Worksource Centers, adult schools and community colleges, and other relevant workforce partners in their SPAs. Below are a list of system integration efforts that were achieved:

- AJCC Automated Referral System referral training and launch;
- LA: RISE referral launch;
- DOR referral system launch;
- DMV referral for ID issuance;
- California lifeline cell phone;
- Legal services referral for undocumented clients;
- Free computer/tablet (SPA3 only, in-progress to expand to other SPAs); and
- Coordination and connections to various workforce development and community partners.

Employment Specialists delivered low-barrier, trauma-informed, and strengths-based employment services to participants, including career counseling, job readiness training, and supportive services. A total of 218 participants received supportive services and referrals to career training and education to increase their skills and employability.

Since implementation, providers report the following referral and enrollment data:

	SPA1	SPA3	SPA7	Total
Total Referrals	127	124	76	327
Number of Enrollment	80	78	66	224
Training/Supportive Services	66	73	79	218
Job Placement	22	21	16	59
Average Wage/hour				\$16.16
Average Hours				29



**Strategy No. 3: In the context of COVID-19, Explore the Types of Employment Opportunities that Have Increased Demand and Consider How to Best Connect PEH to Those Opportunities.**

#### **Careers For a Cause**

In the last report back to the Board, the CEO noted that the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) would pursue an expansion of the Careers For A Cause (C4C) program as a part of its efforts to expand employment opportunities for PEH. C4C is an eight-week training program for persons with lived experience of homelessness to gain skills to work within the homeless services system. Supervisorial District 2 sponsored five cohorts of the C4C program, with the last cohort held from April 11, 2022, to June 3, 2022, at Los Angeles Southwest College. The five cohorts resulted in 142 graduates, and to date, 48 individuals have been placed in full-time employment. This represents a 34 percent employment placement rate. This outcome falls short of the targeted 60 percent employment placement rate. DEO believes more work is needed to address the trauma experienced by participants with lived experience of homelessness, including some experiencing homelessness during the training program, which

prevented more individuals from successfully entering full-time employment. The program aims to address these barriers with added supportive services.

To this end, DEO received two-year American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to expand the C4C program countywide (\$2.6M/per year). C4C increases economic self-sufficiency and reduces returns to homelessness by preparing 220 participants for careers in social services. The focus is individuals with lived homelessness and justice-involved experience. With ARPA funding, DEO is partnering with three community-based organizations (Amity Foundation, St. Joseph's Center, and Fathers and Mothers Who Care) and five community colleges to implement the program, including Los Angeles Southwest College, Compton College, East LA College, Pierce College, and Rio Hondo College. DEO is in the process of identifying a community college to serve participants in Supervisorial District 5.

**ARPA Funded C4C Expansion Cohort Updates are as Follows:**

Compton College C4C Cohort 1 (Started April 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20 Participants Enrolled</li> <li>• 95% Graduation Rate</li> <li>• 30% Hire Rate</li> <li>• Starting Pay Range: \$17 - \$21.63</li> <li>• Cohort 2 Start Date: August 22, 2022</li> </ul>
ELAC C4C Cohort 1 (Started April 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20 Participants Enrolled</li> <li>• 100% Graduation Rate</li> <li>• 45% Hire Rate</li> <li>• Starting Wage Range: \$18 - \$22</li> <li>• Cohort 2 Start Date: 9/26/2022</li> </ul>
Pierce College C4C Cohort 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 34 Participants Enrolled in Cohort 1</li> <li>• Cohort 1 Start Date: 7/18/2022</li> <li>• Cohort 2 Start Date: 01/04/2023</li> </ul>
LA Southwest College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment in Process thru 8/5/2022</li> <li>• Cohort Start Date: 9/26/2022</li> </ul>
Rio Hondo College	Projected Start Date: 01/2023

**Types of C4C Graduate Job Placements:**

- Case Manager
- Practitioner
- Monitor
- Job Developer
- Security Guard

DEO continues to work with LAHSA and its network of providers to encourage hiring of graduates and provide hiring incentives to employers, including the On-the-Job Training program, which may provide up to 90 percent reimbursement of wages to employers, and promotion of the recently passed State Homeless Hiring Tax Credit, which can allow for up to \$30,000 in employer tax credits.

**Implementation of Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) Recommendations**

On February 9, 2021, the Board adopted a motion directing DEO and partners to develop an implementation strategy for the recommendations outlined in LAEDC's *Pathways for Economic*

*Resiliency: Los Angeles County 2021 – 2026* report. The Board directed DEO and other County departments and agencies to identify recovery strategies needed to catalyze equitable economic recovery. Central to DEO economic recovery efforts since the onset of the pandemic has been the goal of stabilizing the economic situation of those who have been most negatively impacted.

ARPA provides funding for state and local governments to build an equitable economic recovery from the devastating economic effects caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. At the Board's direction, DEO is using these funds to address longstanding inequities and transform underserved communities that have been hard hit during the pandemic, including PEH. DEO's ARPA funds are advancing equitable access and opportunity for workers of all ages to secure quality jobs with family-sustaining wages and career pathways and to enable communities to thrive in a vibrant regional economy. As such, many of DEO's ARPA-funded programs are designed with LAEDC's recommendations in mind.

DEO is using \$9M in ARPA funding to expand its existing **High Road Training Partnership (H RTP)** programs and build new pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships in health care, advanced manufacturing, construction, film and digital media, early childhood education (ECE), and early care, social/human services, transportation and warehousing, bioscience, and information technology. DEO will seek to procure new industry partners through a new post-Pilot solicitation, aiming to build upon the Hire Up Pilot Model. The Hire Up program is a multi-agency collaborative effort led by DEO that assists individuals who are homeless and at-risk of homelessness into a career pathway within high-growth sectors, such as construction, hospitality, and civil service.

The first H RTP program (construction) will start in August 2022, assisting 175 individuals to prepare for and at least 140 of these individuals to gain access into one of the 48 local unions and 14 trades unions represented by the Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building and Construction Trades Council. This builds on the County's HireLAX and Hire Up work and prepares DEO for Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill investments, which will focus investments on rebuilding America's roads, bridges, and rails, leading to the creation of good-paying union jobs. H RTP programs in healthcare, ECE, and technology will then follow throughout the Fall of 2022.

To further incentivize the hiring of PEH, DEO has revised its current **On-the-Job Training** policy, which currently reimburses 50 percent of wages for new hires, to increase the reimbursement of wages up to 90 percent for businesses with less than 50 employees. Additionally, with ARPA funding, DEO will enhance its **Fair Chance Hiring Campaign**, which will also include the promotion of the recently passed State Homeless Hiring Tax Credit, which can garner a tax credit up to \$30,000 for a H RTP business that hires PEH and pays a family supporting wage.

In addition, the Youth@Work **Elevate** program will provide 500 of LA County's foster youth, individuals experiencing homelessness, LGBTQ+, and justice impacted youth, ages 17-24, with pathways to unsubsidized jobs in high-growth and emerging sectors. Participants will receive 400 hours of personal enrichment training, paid mentorship, and work experience with high-growth and emerging sector employers, including hospitality, trade and logistics, advance manufacturing, information technology, and health care, while earning \$16.04 an hour. Elevate will be implemented using a cohort-based model, with the first cohort set to begin September 2022. DEO is currently recruiting eligible youth, as well as employers from high-growth sectors with a commitment to evaluate participants for hire after completion the of program.

Finally, the **Pandemic Relief Rapid Reemployment (PRRR)** program is an ARPA-funded effort that addresses the employment needs of those most impacted by the pandemic. The purpose of



PRRR is to support 1,200 individuals who are unemployed or underemployed due to COVID-19 impacts on the economy to quickly regain employment. Targeted populations that will be served by this program includes low-income, Black and Indigenous individuals, and women. These populations are inclusive of PEH, an already vulnerable population for whom the economic consequences of the pandemic have added another layer of marginalization. In addition, the pandemic has put more individuals at risk of entering homelessness.

Strategies under this program include subsidized employment opportunities and career and training services to prepare individuals for jobs, as well as workforce readiness services. With subsidized employment opportunities, participants will receive on-the-job training with an employer reimbursement rate of 90 percent, and/or subsidized transitional jobs to allow for participants to “Earn and Learn” and to incentivize employers to hire. Workforce readiness training is offered to prepare individuals for jobs, and to get, keep, and excel at a new job by learning skills such as effective communication, problem solving, resume building, and interviewing, as well as development of good work habits that facilitate their ongoing success. Supportive services are also available to help individuals successfully participate in the program and remove barriers to employment. This program is set to fully launch in October 2022.





**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

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**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Fesia A. Davenport

October 18, 2023

To: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell  
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Fesia A. Davenport   
Chief Executive Officer  
FAD (Oct 17, 2023 10:23 PDT)

**EMPLOYMENT INNOVATIONS TO LINK HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS TO JOBS  
(ITEM NO. 8, AGENDA OF APRIL 9, 2019)**

On April 9, 2019, the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Chief Executive Officer to implement recommendations from the Employment and Homelessness Taskforce (EHT), and report back on the feasibility of scaling piloted recommendations countywide. The EHT is comprised of representatives from the Chief Executive Office-Homeless Initiative (CEO-HI), Departments of Economic Opportunity (DEO), Public Social Services, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), and United Way of Greater Los Angeles. The Corporation for Supportive Housing and Heartland Alliance have provided consulting support to the EHT. In December 2019, December 2020, and August 2022, the CEO-HI provided interim reports back to the Board, outlining the progress in implementing the recommendations of the EHT.

In the December 2020 report, the CEO-HI indicated that it would be advancing three key strategies, which are informed by and build upon the EHT's learnings thus far. In the August 2022 report, the CEO-HI provided updates on the strategies and indicated that it would report back after the end of LAHSA's pilot program, described below, in September 2023. These strategies and brief updates on their progress follow below, with more detailed updates found in Attachment I.

• **Strategy No. 1: Integrate employment and income elements into the Coordinated Entry System Assessment process.**

To advance the first strategy, LAHSA enhanced the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), the data system used across the County of Los Angeles rehousing system, to include an Employment Assessment Tool (EAT)



for use by providers participating in the Employment Services Pilot (Strategy No. 2). Since the last update, the EAT in HMIS has been enhanced to track various data points for enrolled participants to support service improvement and allow for a more coherent narrative about employment services.

In addition, LAHSA has developed a new referral system in HMIS to be used by the housing programs teams to refer people experiencing homelessness (PEH) to the new post-pilot Employment Services Program (ESP), which began on July 1, 2023. The new system will support LAHSA in tracking the number of referrals to the ESP. This system includes a dashboard and community queue, designed to streamline enrollment to the ESP and track various data points, as well as enhance the data quality of the ESP.

- **Strategy No. 2: Strengthen the focus on and build capacity towards employment in the homeless services system.**

LAHSA designed an Employment Services Pilot Program (ESPP) aimed at testing strategies for strengthening the overall focus on employment in the homeless service delivery system. The pilot launched on July 1, 2021, and over 400 people have received services and training through the pilot, which took place in Service Planning Areas (SPAs) 1, 3, and 7. In June 2023 a final evaluation report (Attachment II) on the ESPP, funded by the office of Supervisor Kathryn Barger, was published. During the pilot, 409 people were enrolled in the ESPP with 111 achieving job placements, where they earned an average of \$17.49 per hour and worked approximately 30 hours per week. Building on the pilot and lessons learned, LAHSA launched the ESP in July 2023 which will serve participants in all SPAs.

- **Strategy No. 3: In the context of COVID-19, explore the types of employment opportunities that have increased demand and consider how to best connect people experiencing homelessness to those opportunities.**

In Fiscal Year 2022-23, DEO supported 1,965 PEH to obtain employment through their America's Job Center of California (AJCC) and other targeted programs. Additionally, the Careers for a Cause Program has supported 260 individuals with lived justice and/or homelessness experience in gaining homeless services industry-informed skills and credentials and earning jobs in the homeless services sector, resulting in meeting the hiring and training needs of the sector, building a more empathetic workforce, and creating job opportunities for PEH. DEO is currently working with a consultant, Social Finance, to review and bolster the program before launching new cohorts. DEO is in the process of planning for the launch of several Centers of Excellence for priority populations and high-growth sectors, including a Center of Excellence for PEH. This dedicated AJCC will build

Each Supervisor  
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targeted outreach strategies, customized training and supportive services, and business services that prioritize hiring individuals with lived homelessness experience, as well as building the capacity of the entire public workforce system to serve this population more effectively.

### **Next Steps**

The strategies recommended by CEO-HI in December 2020 are now ongoing programs/efforts at LAHSA and DEO. As these programs continue to evolve and improve, CEO-HI will continue to work closely with LAHSA and DEO to provide support and assess funding opportunities. Subsequent updates on these programs will be provided in CEO-HI quarterly reports.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact me or Cheri Todoroff, Executive Director of Homeless Initiative and Affordable Housing, at (213) 974-1752 or [ctodoroff@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:ctodoroff@ceo.lacounty.gov).

FAD:JMN:CT  
EBI:PM:yy

### **Attachments**

c:     Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
        County Counsel  
        Economic Opportunity  
        Public Social Services  
        Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority

**UPDATE ON EMPLOYMENT AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGIES*****Strategy No. 1: Integrate Employment and Income Elements into the Coordinated Entry System Assessment Process.***

In the last report on this strategy, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) reported that it had enhanced the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), the data system used across the County of Los Angeles (County) rehousing system, to include an Employment Assessment Tool (EAT) for use by providers participating in the Employment Services Pilot program (ESPP), described below under Strategy No. 2, to assess participant employment-related interests, preferences, strengths, barriers, and help develop an individualized Employment Action Plan. The assessment helps to inform which services are most appropriate for each participant, including career counseling, job readiness training, and other supportive services. The EAT is a comprehensive employment assessment questionnaire designed to capture baseline data and information about participants in the Pilot. Subsequently, providers track changes in regular income, employment status, and/or disabling conditions and barriers in HMIS by completing Status Update Assessments.

Since the last update, the EAT in HMIS has been enhanced to track various data points for enrolled participants to support service improvement and allow for a more coherent narrative about employment services.

In addition, LAHSA has developed a new referral system in HMIS to be used by the housing programs teams to refer people experiencing homelessness (PEH) to the new post-pilot Employment Services Program (ESP), which began on July 1, 2023. The new system will support LAHSA in tracking the number of referrals to the ESP. This system includes a dashboard and community queue, designed to streamline enrollment to the ESP and track various data points, as well as enhance the data quality of the ESP. The system also facilitates collaboration between the ESP and the housing team and supports access for ESP participants to more supportive services, which are needed for the participants to secure and sustain stable career opportunities.

***Strategy No. 2: Strengthen the Focus on and Build Capacity Towards Employment in the Homeless Services System.***

LAHSA launched the ESPP in July 2021 to strengthen the capacity of the homeless rehousing system to support increasing household income of people experiencing homelessness (PEH), as part of its initiative to integrate employment and income elements into the Coordinated Entry System. As a convener of the pilot program,

**UPDATE ON EMPLOYMENT AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGIES**

LAHSA supported the pilot through onboarding training, working with ESPP participants to address any challenges or barriers and to track program outcomes and successes. ESPP introduced two new positions: (1) Employment Liaisons; and (2) Employment Specialists, to addresses system and individual barriers to obtaining and retaining employment. On the systems front, each partner organization was funded to hire an Employment Liaison who was responsible for regional-level coordination with public workforce development entities and employers. By having a dedicated Employment Liaison, the ESPP program hoped to increase the number and strength of partnerships between the workforce development and homeless service delivery systems, increase the number of subsidized and unsubsidized employment opportunities available to and/or prioritized for people experiencing homelessness, build relationships in the community, and enhance the capacity of homeless service provider staff to deliver high-quality employment services. Employment Specialists provided direct services to PEH to help remove barriers and build the skills needed to secure and retain employment. Employment Specialists provide one-on-one tailored support to PEH to prepare and connect PEH to potential training and/or employment opportunities.

Between July 2021 and June 2023, the ESPP focused on three Service Planning Areas (SPAs) within the County working with the leading homeless services agencies (SPA 1 - Valley Oasis, SPA 3 - Union Station Homeless Services, and SPA 7 - PATH).

**Employment Pilot Final Outcomes - July 2021 to June 2023**

As a part of ESPP, partnerships have been established with multiple agencies, and Employment Liaisons are participating in key regional meetings to further build their networks. LAHSA has facilitated ongoing partnerships with America's Job Centers of California (AJCCs), Departments of Mental Health (DMH), Public Social Services (DPSS), and the State Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), with the goal of fostering systems integration and building capacity in the homeless services system.

Employment Liaisons developed and maintained partnerships with the public workforce development system, including AJCCs, Worksource Centers, adult schools and community colleges, and other relevant workforce partners in their SPAs. Below is a list of system integration efforts that were achieved:

- AJCC Automated Referral System (ARS) referral process training and launch;
- LA:RISE referral process launch;
- DOR referral system launch;

### ***UPDATE ON EMPLOYMENT AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGIES***

- DMV referral process for ID issuance established;
- Birth certificate and SSN support established;
- California lifeline cell phone access facilitated;
- Employer education and relationship building;
- Community colleges and technical training relationship building;
- Legal services referral process for undocumented clients established; and
- Coordination and connections to various workforce development and community partners.

Employment Specialists delivered low-barrier, trauma-informed, and strengths-based employment services to participants, including career counseling, job readiness training, and supportive services.

All three funded agencies captured enrollment and retention data for ESPP participants in HMIS. Across all the pilot agencies, 409 PEH enrolled in the program between July 2021 and June 2023. Employment Specialists received referrals and completed enrollment in HMIS. Overall, 27 percent of clients enrolled in the program were connected to employment. Some clients were supported in connecting to multiple jobs during their time in the program. In total, employment specialists supported 111 clients with job placements, 140 clients were referred to Educational and Career training opportunities to continue their education and/or pursue a career training of interest, and a total of 859 employment supportive services were provided.

The ESPP was evaluated by Harder & Co Community Research, with the support of the Homeless Policy Research Institute (HPRI), and funding from the Office of Supervisor Kathryn Barger. Attachment II of the final Evaluation Report includes more detailed program outcome data.

### **ESPP Evaluation Recommendations**

The key recommendations from the evaluation are summarized below. Please see the full report for further details.

1. More fully integrate employment services into care planning by assessing and planning for them from the beginning of client outreach.
2. Create success metrics that better reflect the unique individual nature of progress by measuring progress that is sensitive to where clients begin and milestones other than the final job placement.

### ***UPDATE ON EMPLOYMENT AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGIES***

3. Ensure manageable caseloads for Employment Specialists to allow for the intensive levels of services that some clients need and to prevent burnout.
4. Strengthen connections to the larger employment services system via robust MOUs that memorialize referral processes to efficiently connect participants to AJCCs.
5. Continue to provide flexible funding that can be used for material resources to meet participant needs such as work boots, interview clothing, identification cards, and other tools and transportation.
6. Enhance HMIS and align with data collection systems from the employment sector to assess opportunities for data integration.

#### **Next Steps**

Building on the lessons learned from the pilot, LAHSA is expanding the ESPP to serve all eight SPAs and become an ongoing program. The new Employment Services Program (ESP) will continue to expand the work of the pilot by strengthening the overall focus on employment in the homeless rehousing system and positioning the homeless rehousing system into a lead coordinator role with public workforce development partners.

The new ESP launched on July 1, 2023, and is integrated into the Time-Limited Subsidy (TLS) Program. This strategic decision was taken because 80 percent of program enrollments are expected to come from LAHSA funded TLS programs, with an additional 20 percent coming from other housing programs. A total of six Employment Liaisons, and 18 Employment Specialists covering all SPAs are expected to serve an average of 450 participants per year, providing employment support and job placement in living-wage, stable jobs. ESP aims to place 70 percent of enrolled participants in employment, career training, adult education, and or internships. In addition, ESP has a target of 80 percent of enrolled participants receiving job readiness training along with other supportive services. ESP referral and enrollment data will be tracked in LAHSA's HMIS, as noted in Strategy No. 1.

The following additional enhancements are currently in progress:

- LAHSA is continuing to strengthen connections to the broader public workforce development system, including AJCCs, by:
  - Working with Department of Economic Opportunity (DEA) team to build a more robust referral system to AJCC's and pair each SPA employment team with the AJCC's serving their SPA.

**UPDATE ON EMPLOYMENT AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGIES**

- Building a clear communication channel between the LAHSA ESP team and the AJCC teams that serve each SPA.
  - Strengthening the connections with AJCC team by creating MOUs, co-location of staff, and sharing resources.
  - Ensuring that the LAHSA ESP team has clear referral pathways for clients served in the program to access subsidized employment opportunities and on-the-job training opportunities.
  - Training AJCCs' designated staff on the issue of homelessness in general and the Coordinated Entry System, and providing other trainings designed to create better understanding of and services for PEH.
  - Exploring the possibility of creating a universal referral system that homeless services providers can utilize to refer PEH to AJCCs and vice versa, building on the learning from the ARS system.
- LAHSA is continuing to build and enhance relationships with stakeholders and employers through various approaches, including:
    - Coordinating webinars with LA:RISE, Enterprise partners, and DOR.
    - Coordinating in-person visits to AJCC's.
  - LAHSA is building and enhancing relationships with employers and education partners, including:
    - Partnering with METRO on a new employment program to hire PEH.
      - 22 participants were referred to the 1<sup>st</sup> cohort during August 2023, 9 started during August 2022 working in a custodial part time job, up to 30 hours per week, earning an average of \$23.21 per hour and joined the union.
      - LAHSA is currently planning for the next cohort which is anticipated to start in Oct 2023. This cohort will have 25 to 30 participants.
    - Partnering with community colleges to refer PEH to adult career training.
      - Currently LAHSA is working with Mt. San Antonio College School of Continuing Education which offers more than 55 certificates in a variety of tuition-free, short- term career noncredit courses.

***Strategy No. 3: In the context of COVID-19, Explore the Types of Employment Opportunities that Have Increased Demand and Consider How to Best Connect PEH to Those Opportunities.***

DEO has a two-customer approach to workforce development, supporting both jobseekers in career exploration and readiness, gaining in-demand skills and credentials, and connecting to supportive services and job opportunities while also



**UPDATE ON EMPLOYMENT AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGIES**

ensuring that local employers – big and small – have access to a diverse and qualified talent pipeline. DEO delivers for these customers – targeting historically disinvested workers, including PEH, and high-road and high-growth industries – through its AJCCs, as well as dozens of programs and services.

In Fiscal Year 2022-23, DEO supported 1,965 PEH obtain employment through its AJCCs and targeted programs like LA:RISE, Homeless Opportunities for Meaningful Employment, Alternative Staffing Organizations, SkillUp or CalFresh Employment for social enterprises, Careers for a Cause (described further below), and dedicated Youth@Work work-based learning experiences. Further, DEO has deployed \$54 million in Measure H since Fiscal Year 2017-18 and, with that funding braided with other local and federal workforce dollars, served 11,074 PEH and connected 6,260 of those served to unsubsidized jobs across the County and City partners.

With the local State of Emergency for homelessness,<sup>1</sup> the continued public investment of Measure H dollars, and collective regional efforts to curb the humanitarian crisis, there has been an expansion in employment opportunities in the homeless and social services sector. LAHSA reports that there are about 4,000 open positions among their contracted providers alone. To help address the staffing challenges within the homeless services sector, while also opening opportunities for people with lived expertise to find jobs, DEO created Careers for a Cause (C4C) initially within the Second District, and subsequently expanded it Countywide with \$5.2 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. DEO and its partners, including five community colleges and three homeless service providers, have supported 260 individuals with lived justice and/or homelessness experience in gaining industry-informed skills and credentials and earning jobs in the sector, both meeting the hiring and training needs of the sector and building a more empathetic workforce and creating job opportunities for PEH. To date, the ARPA-expanded C4C program has seen an 81 percent completion rate with 113 full and part-time hires in jobs like Case Manager, Practitioner, Job Developer, and Security Guard. DEO is currently working with its consultant, Social Finance, to review and bolster the Program before launching new cohorts this fall, as well as to identify sustainable funding streams once the one-time ARPA funds are exhausted at the end of Fiscal Year 2023-24.

C4C is one of 15 of DEO's ARPA-funded economic and workforce development programs, which will run through Fiscal Year 2023-24 and have the potential to impact thousands of workers and businesses in County's highest and high need

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<sup>1</sup> On January 10, 2023, the Board of Supervisors voted to proclaim a local emergency for homelessness in the County of Los Angeles.

***UPDATE ON EMPLOYMENT AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGIES***

communities, as determined by the County's Equity Explorer Tool. As such, all DEO's ARPA-funded programs prioritize individuals with lived homelessness experience. Right now, DEO has open recruitments for its Construction High-Road Training Partnership, a pre-apprenticeship program with the Apprenticeship Readiness Fund and Building Trades; its Pandemic Relief Rapid Reemployment program, which offers paid transitional work and on-the-job training to COVID-19 dislocated workers through AJCCs; and its Fair Chance Hiring Program for justice-system impacted workers, which provides connections to re-entry friendly hiring partners, among others.

Finally, DEO is in an active procurement for a modernized public workforce system and new AJCC providers, set to start contracts in January of 2024. One key modernization is the creation of Centers of Excellence for priority populations and high-growth sectors, including a Center of Excellence for PEH. This dedicated AJCC will work with DEO and countywide initiatives, including the Homeless Initiative, to build targeted outreach strategies, customized training and supportive services, and business services that prioritize hiring individuals with lived homelessness experience, as well as building the capacity of the entire public workforce system to serve this population more effectively. DEO looks forward to increasing the numbers of PEH served and hired through its system and programs through this approach, and to scaling its efforts as part of the County's efforts to end homelessness in our region.

# Employment Services Pilot Program

Evaluation Report

June 2023



*This evaluation was funded by the office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger.*

# Background

People Experiencing Homelessness (PEH) face a myriad of complex barriers to becoming employed. This can include substance use disorder, mental and physical health limitations, lack of training and lack of access to tools required for work. In addition, some PEH, especially those who have experienced extended periods of being unhoused and older youth may lack “soft” vocational skills (such as conflict and stress management) and independent living skills that are necessary to obtain and maintain employment (HPRI, 2020). Furthermore, the trauma associated with being unhoused, and experiences related to time spent unsheltered or unstably housed, can lead to trauma responses that may resurface during work. Poremski, et al. (2015) found that many newly housed PEH were reluctant to pursue work due to anxiety about trauma responses resurfacing in work settings.

Structural barriers pose additional challenges to PEH who desire to work. This includes discrimination by potential employers, lack of reliable public transportation, and time required to obtain identity documents. For those PEH newly housed in shelters, institutional curfews can restrict work hours.

## About the Employment Services Pilot Program

Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) launched the Employment Services Pilot Program (ESPP) in July 2021 to strengthen the capacity of the homeless service system to support increasing household income of people experiencing homelessness (PEH), as part of its initiative to integrate employment and income elements into the Coordinated Entry System. As a convener of the pilot program, LAHSA supported the pilot through onboarding training, working with ESPP participants to address any challenges or barriers and to track program outcomes and successes. ESPP uses a two-pronged approach that addresses system and individual barriers to obtaining and retaining employment. On the systems front, each partner organization was funded to hire an Employment Liaison who was responsible for regional-level coordination with public workforce development entities and employers. By having a dedicated Employment Liaison, the ESPP program hoped to drive a measurable increase in the number and strength of partnerships between the workforce development and homeless service delivery systems, the number of subsidized and unsubsidized employment opportunities available to and/or prioritized for people experiencing homelessness, and the capacity of homeless service provider staff to deliver high-quality employment services. The intent of the Employment Liaison position was to have dedicated staff time to build relationships in the community by educating employers, training programs and others about the ESPP. Employment Specialists provided direct services to PEH to help remove barriers and build the skills needed to secure and retain employment. Employment Specialists provide one-on-one tailored support to PEH to prepare and connect PEH to potential training and/or employment opportunities.

## About the Agencies

The ESPP focused on three Service Provider Areas (SPAs) within Los Angeles County including SPA 1, SPA 3 and SPA 7. Three agencies were funded to implement the ESPP including Valley Oasis, PATH and Union Station.

LAHSA has designed an Employment Services pilot program aimed at testing strategies for strengthening the overall focus on employment in the homeless service delivery system and positioning the homeless service delivery system into a lead coordinator role with public workforce development partners.

### Employment Specialists

provide direct services to PEH to help remove barriers and build the skills needed to secure and retain employment. Also called Job Coaches or Job Developers by some organizations.

### Employment Liaisons

were responsible for regional-level coordination with public workforce development entities and employers. Employment Liaisons provide advocacy and remove structural barriers for PEH.

## Valley Oasis

[Valley Oasis](#) (SPA 1) is a community-based organization dedicated to eliminating social and domestic violence and homelessness through community awareness, intervention, prevention, safe shelter, and supportive services. For more than 33 years, Antelope Valley Domestic Violence Council, now known as Valley Oasis, has devoted its energy to passionately advocating for the hurt, needy and politically under-represented members of the Antelope Valley.

After participating in the ESPP, Valley Oasis was able to secure services focused on workforce development for individuals. The pilot program allowed them to hire an Employment Liaison to oversee newly hired Employment Specialists, build an employer and training network, and bring together local service providers to regularly share resources and knowledge about the community and individuals they served. Through the ESPP, Valley Oasis was also able to hire two Employment Specialists who dedicated their time to providing personalized guidance on education and employment goals to program participants.

## PATH

[PATH's](#) (SPA 7) mission is to end homelessness for individuals, families, and communities. PATH envisions a world where every person has a home. Their values include creative collaborations, strategic leadership, empowerment for all, and passionate commitment. Across the state and throughout Los Angeles County, PATH helps people find permanent housing and provide case management, medical and mental healthcare, benefits advocacy, employment training, and other services to help them maintain their homes stably.

PATH has an extensive history of providing support for PEH, including connecting them to employment. The ESPP provided an opportunity for PATH to focus on supporting PEH in SPA 7. It also allowed them to hire a dedicated Employment Liaison whose role was to connect with the community in SPA 7 by advocating for participants and the program, connecting with potential employers and training programs and developing in-house job fairs and trainings for program participants. PATH was also able to leverage existing employer partnerships to support ESPP participants.

## Union Station Homeless Services

[Union Station Homeless Services](#) (Union Station; SPA 3) recognizes the inherent value, dignity, and humanity of the people they serve. Together, with them, they work to end homelessness through housing solutions, supportive services, and connection to community. The organization advocates for equitable and just systems that ensure all individuals and families will have a safe place they can call home. Union Station has been serving the community for almost 50 years. As the lead agency coordinating homeless services in the San Gabriel Valley, they serve a region with a combined population of over 1.5 million across more than 36 cities and communities.

While Union Station has a long history of providing employment services through their Sources program, the ESPP provided an opportunity to expand their team. The Employment Specialist was a new position funded for the first time under the ESPP program, which also allowed Union Station to expand the number of full-time Employment Specialists to three. Union Station is a full-service organization that includes outreach and assessment, housing navigation (including connections to interim and permanent housing) and wraparound services.

## Evaluation Overview

Over the course of 2021, ESPP aimed to enroll 200 individual (50 per quarter) with the following performance metrics and outcomes:

- 80% of clients receive training/supportive services
- 80% job placement
- \$16.99/hr avg hourly wage
- 76% retain employment in Q2 after exit
- 72% retain employment in Q4 after exit.

Given that ESPP is in a pilot implementation, LASHA also wanted to document successes and challenges in order to make real-time adjustments to ensure program success and to inform future efforts to replicate and scale this approach.

The Harder+Company team used a mixed-methods evaluation design to examine both the impact and implementation of ESPP. This included analysis of existing programmatic data to document program enrollment and retention. The evaluation team also interviewed a total of ten ESPP staff across all three funded agencies to gain a nuanced understanding of the implementation successes and areas to strengthen. Interviews were conducted with four Employment Liaisons and Program Managers and six Employment Specialists. In addition, the evaluation team interviewed eight program participants.

# Learnings

This section highlights key learnings from program data and interviews with Program Managers, Employment Liaisons and Employment Specialists.

## Program Data

All three funded agencies captured enrollment and retention data for ESPP participants. Across all the pilot agencies, 409 PEH enrolled in the program between July 2021 and April 2023 which means they were referred by their case manager to one of the three pilot agencies in HMIS. Once Employment Specialists received a referral notification, they reached out to connect with the referred individual and completed enrollment in HMIS. Overall, 27% of clients enrolled in the program were connected to employment. Of those, some clients were supported in connecting to multiple jobs during their time in the program. In total, employment specialists supported 111 clients with 137 job placements. Exit reason was not available upon finalization of this report, however it is important to review for full program understanding.

### Exhibit 1. ESPP program enrollment by SPA

SPA	Number of unique participants enrolled in ESPP	Number of unique participants connected to employment	Percent of participants connected to employment
SPA 1	157	42	27%
SPA 3	111	33	30%
SPA 7	141	36	26%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>27%</b>

The majority of clients enrolled in pilot were Black, African American or African (40%) or Hispanic/Latino (40%) followed by white (10%; Exhibit 2). A slightly higher percentage of participants were female (52%) followed by male (46%) and transgender (1%; Exhibit 3).

### Exhibit 2. Race and ethnicity of participants enrolled in ESPP

Race/Ethnicity	Number of unique participants	Percent
Black, African American or African	163	40%
Hispanic/Latino	164	40%
White	40	10%
Asian/Asian American	7	2%
American Indian, Alaska Native	7	2%
Multiracial	5	1%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	2	0%
Unknown	21	5%



### Exhibit 3. Gender identity of participants enrolled in ESPP

Gender identity	Number of unique participants	Percent
Female	212	52%
Male	188	46%
Transgender	3	1%
Unknown	6	2%

The Vulnerability Index= Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) is a "survey administered to both individuals and families to determine risk and prioritization when providing assistance to homeless and at-risk of homelessness persons.<sup>1</sup> Depending on the version of the tool, the average score can help a provider understand the level of support a client may need. The following guidelines can help interpret scores:

- 0-3: Assess for least intensive service supports
- 4-7 (Individual)/4-8 (Family): Assess for moderate and often time-limited supports
- 8+ (Individual)/9+ (Family): Assess for high-intensity supports lasting for a longer duration of time and perhaps even permanently.

Overall, we have vulnerability data from 331 participants enrolled in the program. Of those, the average score indicates that the average ESPP participant may need more high-intensity supports lasting for a longer duration of time (Exhibit 4). This may, in part explain the relatively low rate of success in connecting participants to employment. This issue is more fully discussed in the interview findings section of this report.

### Exhibit 4. CES data for participants

CES Assessment	Number of unique participants	Average Acuity Score
CES for Families - VI-FSPDAT v2	28	9.5
CES for Individuals - CES Survey Part 1	286	9.8
CES for Youth - Next Step Tool	17	8.1
Total	331	9.7

<sup>1</sup> CT HMIS Measuring Success. [https://www.cthmis.com/info/detail/vi-spdatt/13#:~:text=The%20VI%2DSPDAT%20\(Vulnerability%20Index,at%20risk%20of%20homelessness%20persons.](https://www.cthmis.com/info/detail/vi-spdatt/13#:~:text=The%20VI%2DSPDAT%20(Vulnerability%20Index,at%20risk%20of%20homelessness%20persons.)



## Interview Findings

Interviews were conducted by evaluation team members. Each team member worked exclusively with program staff and participants from one agency to support the development of deep contextual understanding of each organization. This approach also allowed us to build upon and/or follow up about points raised in earlier interviews over time, and to more effectively explore themes that emerged in discussion that we had not anticipated in the development of the interview guide. All interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic content analysis to identify important themes across interviewees. The evaluation team used Rapid Analysis, an iterative process that allows for “intensive, team-based qualitative inquiry using triangulation, iterative data analysis and additional data collection to quickly develop a preliminary understanding of a situation from the insider’s perspective” (Beebe, 2001).

From the Rapid Analysis, interview findings were organized into five key thematic areas and are presented below:

- **Participant Benefits:** Participants’ experience in the program including their relationships with ESPP staff, personal growth, and recommendations.
- **Support to Participants:** Information that describes the myriad ways that ESPP staff worked to support participants to obtain employment by building on their assets and addressing barriers.
- **Collaboration and Integrated Care:** How ESPP staff work together and/or alongside other staff from inside their organization (such as care/case managers, therapists or housing navigators) to meet the desires and needs of program participants.
- **Work with Community Partners:** Meaningful partnerships and collaborations that ESPP staff developed or leveraged to meet the needs of ESPP participants.
- **Organizational Context:** The organizational characteristics that supported or created challenges for the work of ESPP staff.

Within each of these thematic areas, both facilitators and challenges to the work are highlighted and discussed within the context of the work.

### Participant Benefits

Overall, participants shared that they appreciated the ESPP program and especially the relationship they developed with the Employment Specialist. A few participants had participated in other employment programs in the past and indicated that this program was more beneficial because of the tailored one-on-one support, including the opportunity to co-develop a detailed employment plan that the Employment Specialist. Participants appreciated this individualized support that provided them an opportunity to build on previous work experience or training, to get connected to new training or certificate programs and to ultimately seek and secure jobs aligned with their interests and long-term employment goals.

Participants also shared that this program helped build their confidence and skills. For some, having the resources to pay for a certificate or training allowed them to build off their previous work experience. One participant shared that they wished they would have been connected to a program like this earlier in life,

“This [employment plan], it gave me hope. And I’m like, okay, someone

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**“Being able to choose your jobs and not having to get the first job that's available because you have to... I feel like a lot of people would benefit from that because you have to feel comfortable at your job. I feel like that's the greatest thing ever. I really like the job readiness workshop. I feel like it did get me better, especially updated on how the experience are now.**

**-Participant**

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wants to see me succeeding, they're helping me out to do it. So hey, a lot of help. I wish I had knew this fresh out of prison years ago. I would've been successful by now."

All participants indicated that they would and have recommended this program to family or friends. When asked what would make others successful in this program, participants shared that participants must be willing to work and meet the Employment Specialist halfway.

"The main thing is, you have to be willing to want to get a job before you could do anything. So that's the first step is wanting and willing to go get a job. The second step is finding somebody that can help you get a job. And through [organization] I found that they do help you try to find work."

Participants recognized the value of the work of the Employment Specialist. One participant even shared that they would like to be an Employment Specialist one day to be able to support other people,

"Someday I would want to be [an] Employment Specialist. I would want to help people like [my Employment Specialist] is doing with the others. I would want to work for them. So that's how good I would recommend it. Because I would want to be doing what my Employment Specialist is doing someday."

### Support to Participants

A key aspect of the program's workforce development was the support—both material and social-- provided to clients. While there were differences among each agency's processes, several common themes surfaced across agencies which illustrate the range of supports provided to best meet participants' needs.

Employment Specialists had a unique role in providing support to program participants. From their initial outreach to participants, Employment Specialists began building rapport and trust to support participants in their journey toward employment. The support they provided varied for each participant depending on their needs. For example, some clients had specific employment goals while others needed more time to complete trainings, develop their resume or practice interviewing skills. Employment Specialists worked with them every step of the way to ensure that they tailored support to the participants' needs. This level of tailored support was time intensive and required Employment Specialists to regularly connect with participants via phone calls and text messages. Employment Specialists also supported clients through mock interviews, following up on job leads, assisting with resume development and more. Participants shared that the one-on-one support that Employment Specialists provided was really helpful. They also described Employment Specialists as responsive, supportive, and easy to reach. One participant shared more about their relationship with the Employment Specialist,

"She's honest with me. I'll ask her questions point blank, and not just about jobs, but just going from being homeless, you know what it's like to be a regular person, just asking her reference questions about stuff. She's been very helpful, very responsive. If I text her at 9:00 PM at night, 8:00 PM at night, she'll hit me back at least by the morning. Her responsiveness has been very much appreciated."

All staff who were interviewed felt that funding for clothing for interviews, transportation to and from interviews or meetings with Employment Specialists, certificate programs, and skills trainings were critical to participant success. This

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**"But when you turn around, I want you to see, I'm right there, I got your back. You know what I mean? So yeah, it's just like riding a bike. A kid riding a bike. We going to push you out there, and it's not going to be easy at first. But then again, you keep doing it over and over again. You keep going to work, you keep being responsible, then you don't even need us."**

**-Employment Specialist**

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funding ensured that participants had access to needed resources to gain the skills they needed to apply for jobs and to be ready for interviews when the time came. Some participants were able to meet educational goals and acquire licenses or IDs. With funded transportation, participants were able to meet with the Employment Specialists to participate in mock interviews, learn about time and budget management, etc. In addition to building skills necessary for employment, receiving these extra supports provided a way for Employment Specialists to build rapport with participants. As one Employment Specialist shared,

"Empowering a person to believe that they can now all of a sudden do or be part of a process when most of their lives have been told you can't do it... that initial contact will help build and strengthen what we have to do in the next step, which is employment."

Participants reiterated that the resources that this program provided have been a huge benefit including clothing and shoes for job interviews, transportation, and paying licensing fees. One participant shared,

"Well, transportation is an issue, but I put aside enough money to be able to pay for bus fare, but that money transitions or shifts from somewhere else. The licensing, that was a huge help because that's over \$100 right there. I didn't have to allocate from somewhere else."

One challenge that Employment Specialists shared was that referrals from case managers are often driven by housing placements rather than client readiness. For example, a client may be referred to ESPP through HMIS because they need employment to qualify/keep their housing. Employment Specialists found that sometimes these referrals were made too late and there was not sufficient time to support the participant. Therefore, they recommended case managers refer clients early in their housing process to ensure that Employment Specialists have time to work with the participant.

HMIS includes an employment screening tool. This tool was intended to be a starting point to assess readiness for employment services. Ideally, case managers would pre-screen participants prior to referring them to the program. However, Employment Specialists shared that often, prescreening did not happen in advance of referrals. Screening was then conducted by Employment Specialists after participants had been referred to ESPP. This resulted in some participants not being fully ready to engage in training/employment.

### **Collaboration and Integrated Care Planning**

There was clear evidence of collaboration among Employment Specialists and Employment Liaisons across all three ESPP sites to meet the needs of participants. In interviews, employment staff emphasized the importance of having a team based and collaborative approach to providing tailored support to participants and offered examples of how they did so. While Employment Liaisons did not typically have direct contact with participants, they played an important role in advocating for participants and the ESPP program behind the scenes as they built connections in the community. Employment Liaisons also managed communication among Employment Specialists and other community organization members by flagging employment opportunities, attending job fairs, and hosting meetings with community partners across SPAs. Oftentimes, Employment Liaisons collaborated with Employment Specialists to problem-solve specific issues (such as lack of transportation to a job interview) and sometimes served as the connection between case managers or housing managers and Employment Specialists.

Employment Liaisons were also able to build on their lived experiences to find

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**"The first month I would say is the moment of all hands on deck because they don't have a paycheck, so they need transportation assistance. Sometimes they don't have the attire required for this job."**

***-Employment Liaison***

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opportunities for participants in the community. Because of their ongoing communication and collaboration with Employment Specialists, Employment Liaisons were able to tailor their outreach to target specific industries based on participant interests. Employment Specialists also had a day-to-day collaboration partner to further develop resource and employment ideas.

In contrast, collaboration between care teams (e.g., case managers, housing managers, etc.) and the ESPP team was uneven and varied by organization. Some employment staff said they felt comfortable connecting with participants' case managers to follow up about how participants were doing or share information about other needs that employment staff were not able to address. This collaboration with case managers, however, appeared to be dependent on individual staff willingness to build rapport across the care team (i.e., ESPP staff and case managers). Other employment staff felt that their partnerships with care team members could be enhanced to better understand how each other's roles can best serve participants. In one case, employment staff shared additional considerations for collaboration with case managers who are external to the organization.

From their perspective, participants were mostly unaware of the degree to which their Employment Specialist worked with their case manager or other members of the care team. One participant out of the eight interviewed acknowledged that they met with their Employment Specialist and case manager together. At least two participants described having a "housing" support person and an "employment" support person who they met with separately.

### **Organizational Context**

The ESPP was situated within the larger organizational context of three unique agencies. As such, there were varied reporting structures and levels of support for ESPP staff members' work. In two cases, program managers (a role also sometimes held by Employment Liaisons) were closely connected to organizational leaders. This helped ensure that ESPP needs were prioritized. For example, when it became necessary to hire additional staff or replace staff due to turnover. Having a champion for ESPP among the senior organizational leadership of the agency seemed to have a tangible impact on the program and its ability to access and/or maintain program resources. For example, the Employment Liaison at one agency shared that since the pandemic, the program's dedicated space had been reduced quite severely. This included loss of a computer lab that was once exclusively for the use of employment program participants and space for storing clothing that participants could access for interviews and work attire. This reduced the program's effectiveness at meeting participants' needs. The ESPP staff did not feel like their concerns were being heard by the organization's leadership and wished they had a champion for their work.

Additionally, organizational leaders can strongly influence the degree of collaboration among the employment program staff and the larger care team. Organizational values, attitudes and expectations about the practice of integrated care sets the tone for the way staff work together. In all three organizations staff agree there is room to strengthen the connections and more fully integrate the work of the employment team with that of the housing navigators, care coordinators and clinicians.

### **Work with Community Partners**

The addition and/or expansion of the Employment Liaison role was especially meaningful in helping organizations build and strengthen external partnerships. This included relationships with potential employers as well as other service

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**"We are an asset to the community because a lot of case managers can't do it all. They cannot work on mental health barriers, physical barriers, advocating for their clients, doing the while housing situation, looking for housing, setting up the housing appointments, and then also employment. So taking that responsibility and working as a compliment to the case management team, really allows for the case manager to focus on whatever barriers the client has."**

***-Employment Liaison***

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organizations that could be leveraged to meet program participant needs. Employment Liaisons also more fully developed relationships that may have been initiated by Employment Specialists as they worked with individual participants.

Throughout the pilot period, Employment Liaisons spent time attending partnership meetings in the communities in which they work, which allowed them to share information about their work and to connect to other service providers. This often resulted in access to important resources for program participants. One Employment Liaison shared an experience of how a connection with one agency quickly led her to connect to a deep network of services and supports for folks with criminal justice system involvement of which she had not been previously aware. These resources are extremely valuable given that many PEH have criminal justice involvement as a result of the time spent unhoused.

While Employment Liaisons and Employment Specialists had success building relationships with community-based organizations (CBOs) and some employers, relationships with other public sector organizations, especially those specifically related to employment services, were more challenging to build. ESPP staff acknowledged that LAHSA helped make formal introductions to some public sector agencies. However, they noted that they often felt these agencies were not responsive to their requests for assistance finding resources and placements for their clients. Staff suggested that it would be helpful to have additional formal introductions from LAHSA and to negotiate formal memoranda of understanding (MOUs) that clarify expectations about the way agencies (for example, America's Job Centers) are available to support their work. Furthermore, we noted in our interviews that staff did not mention working closely with other agencies that are likely sources of additional support for PEH. This includes Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACs), Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD), Department of Rehabilitation (DoR), and Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) and others.

ESPP staff need support to become more familiar with the larger universe of employment and training resources available in the public sector and for their work and clients to be prioritized by these agencies. It would be even more powerful if direct connections and MOUs were in place to guide organizations' coordination and collaboration. Bringing different organizations together means there will inevitably be different interpretations about how support for PEH should be done, how organizations will coordinate with each other, and how they will hold themselves and each other accountable to performance metrics that are most appropriate for vulnerable populations. As a result, MOUs should be detailed and explicit, and include a plan based on an integrated services delivery system, labor market growth areas, the needs of employers in growth areas, and where there are gaps in workforce skills.

# Recommendations

The ESPP has resulted in training and job placements for PEH (and the newly housed). The lessons learned from the pilot implementation suggest important enhancements that can strengthen the work and ensure the approach can be expanded to other organizations throughout Los Angeles County.

**More fully integrate employment services into care planning.** While ESPP staff recognized the importance of meeting participants' immediate needs for housing, healthcare and behavioral health supports, they were also limited in their ability to help participants when employment needs were treated as an afterthought. Employment needs and preferences should be assessed and planned for from the beginning of client outreach. ESPP agencies should be supported to integrate employment goals into care planning. There are ample resources and PEH serving agencies who do this well that could provide training and peer mentoring to ESPP agencies. Two that we are familiar with include Downtown Women's Center and Exodus Recovery. In addition, The Promise Enterprises, LLC has developed an employment readiness assessment tool for reentry populations that could be readily adapted for this context. This tool clearly identifies stages of employment readiness and issues/skills need to progress to full employment readiness.

**Create success metrics that better reflect the unique and individual nature of progress.** Throughout the initiative, ESPP staff felt tremendous pressure to meet the numbers and benchmarks set out for them in the contracts with LAHSA, which created a great deal of stress in their day-to-day work. During our interviews with staff, it was apparent that they worked hard to tailor services to the preferences and level of readiness of individual clients. This type of work takes time and a job placement may not occur despite tremendous efforts by staff and participants. Some clients come to their employment specialist with minimal needs, while others have complex situations. Measures of progress should be sensitive to where clients begin and milestones other than the final job placement should be utilized to better reflect ESPP efforts.

**Ensure manageable caseloads for Employment Specialists to allow for the intensive levels of service that some clients need and prevent burnout.** As shared throughout the report, Employment Specialists worked intensively with each participant to ensure that their unique employment needs and goals were met. Employment Specialists shared that keeping caseloads at a manageable number (20-25) allows them to provide this intensive support to participants including life skills coaching, navigating transportation challenges, access to licensure and certification programs, and advanced skills training. Although not a focus of this study, we became aware of the high levels of staff turnover among agency staff throughout the course of the research. Subsequently, researchers from RAND recently (May 2023) released a study of the workforce serving PEH in Los Angeles, and noted that most front line staff do not make a living wage (Abraham et al., 2023). Low wages, coupled with large caseloads that require intensive efforts, leads to staff burnout and turnover. High staff turnover amongst staff has a myriad of negative consequences for PEH, including increased rates of return to homelessness. Stable and consistent relationships with staff increase the odds of positive outcomes, including stable housing, for PEH.

**Strengthen connections to the larger employment services system via robust MOUs.** One goal of the pilot was to establish connections and a referral

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**"[We need] better coordination with housing. So instead of waiting until the 25th hour, your last day is in the next two weeks. Instead of waiting to the last moment, let's refer them at the beginning for employment services so we can start working with them. They can start saving. So when it is time for them to move out and be placed, they're ready, they're financially ready to do that."**

**-Program Manager**

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process to efficiently connect participants to America's Job Centers of CA (AJCC or "one-stops"). Staff made clear that these relationships need further strengthening. ESPP staff appreciated introductions that LAHSA made to some public sector agencies and would like more support to build working relationships with other agencies. They also would benefit from training to more fully understand the breadth of resources available to meet their participants' needs.

ESPP sites would benefit from formal MOU's with workforce system agencies that specify the way their organizations will work together and prioritize services for ESPP participants. More ambitiously, if LAHSA could convene all public sector employment resources to support collaboration in an ongoing fashion, that could have a lasting impact on coordination and leverage public resources to ensure PEH and the newly housed have the greatest support to obtain employment. Ultimately this would also help agencies better meet the mandate of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIO) to serve people experiencing homelessness.

Furthermore, while the County of L.A. has traditionally held a "No Wrong Door" approach to coordinating service delivery, existing systems coordination tends to be generic and designed for a broad service population, without navigating or linking the multiple systems within the county that a single individual may be involved with. This leaves a lot of room for different interpretations of how partners will work together, coordinate with each other, and, most importantly, hold themselves and each other accountable to performance metrics that are most appropriate for vulnerable populations.

Therefore, we suggest that MOUs should be detailed and explicit, and include a plan that is based on a deep understanding of establishing an integrated services delivery system, labor market growth areas, the needs of employers in growth areas, and where labor workforce skills gaps currently are. For example, the Employment Development Department hosts a CalJOBS tool that offers labor market analyses. This valuable data is often underutilized and can be a powerful tool for designing workforce development plans that both respond to local employer needs and serve at-risk or high-need populations with an access point to growth jobs that offer a living wage and a strong career horizon. In short, for ESPP to reach its full potential, agencies need training on and access to the full complement of tools and resources available in Los Angeles County.

**Continue to provide flexible funding that can be used for material resources to meet participant needs.** Clients often need material resources, such as work boots, interview clothing, identification cards, certifications and licenses, tools and transportation vouchers to obtain and retain employment. The ability to use some ESPP funding flexibly to meet these emergent needs has been critical to the program's success. Program staff openly worry about how they will continue to meet these needs after this program ends. If LAHSA is aware of other funders that can cover these types of material expenses related to employment, ESPP staff would welcome those connections and resources. But in their experiences, the lead time required to secure other resources has posed a barrier to using those funding sources.

**Enhance HMIS and align with data collection systems from the employment sector.** LAHSA and each funded organization has been able to support clients not only with employment services but connecting them other resources such as training, transportation, mental health, education, etc. HMIS has been used to capture details about client enrollment, acuity level (VI-SPDAT), demographics and exit reason. However, the ability to pull that data from HMIS at the client level to support more nuanced analysis was limited. Although some providers were tracking more detailed client data on their own, we know that requiring multiple data reporting mechanisms can be time consuming and can take

away from direct client services, further burdening staff and contributing to burnout. It is essential that any new processes are not duplicative.

To that end, we recommend that LAHSA work with employment providers (both CBOs and County agencies) to assess opportunities for data integration. WIOA-funded providers are mandated to collect and report a host of data, if this data could be leveraged for ESPP participants who also receive services through these agencies, that would reduce data collection burden. In cases where ESPP participants are not receiving additional services outside of the funded agency, it would still make sense to align the types of information and indicators collected across systems to allow for more reliable comparisons of the types of services received and the outcomes of various services. Ultimately, this will support service improvement and allow for a more coherent narrative about employment services for PEH to be shared with funders, policy makers and the community.



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