

Housing First and Employment II: Service design and delivery in a rapid rehousing approach



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April 9, 2018*



Federal Priorities

- Federal Strategic Plan (FSP) – “Opening Doors”
 - Retool the Homeless Crisis Response System
 - More Permanent Housing Options
 - Rapid Rehousing
 - PSH
 - Service Enriched Housing
 - Focus on Employment and Income
 - Use Mainstream Resources – income and services
 - Get Kids in School



Would More Families in Rapid Rehousing Be Better Off If They Were Employed?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe



My agency provides:

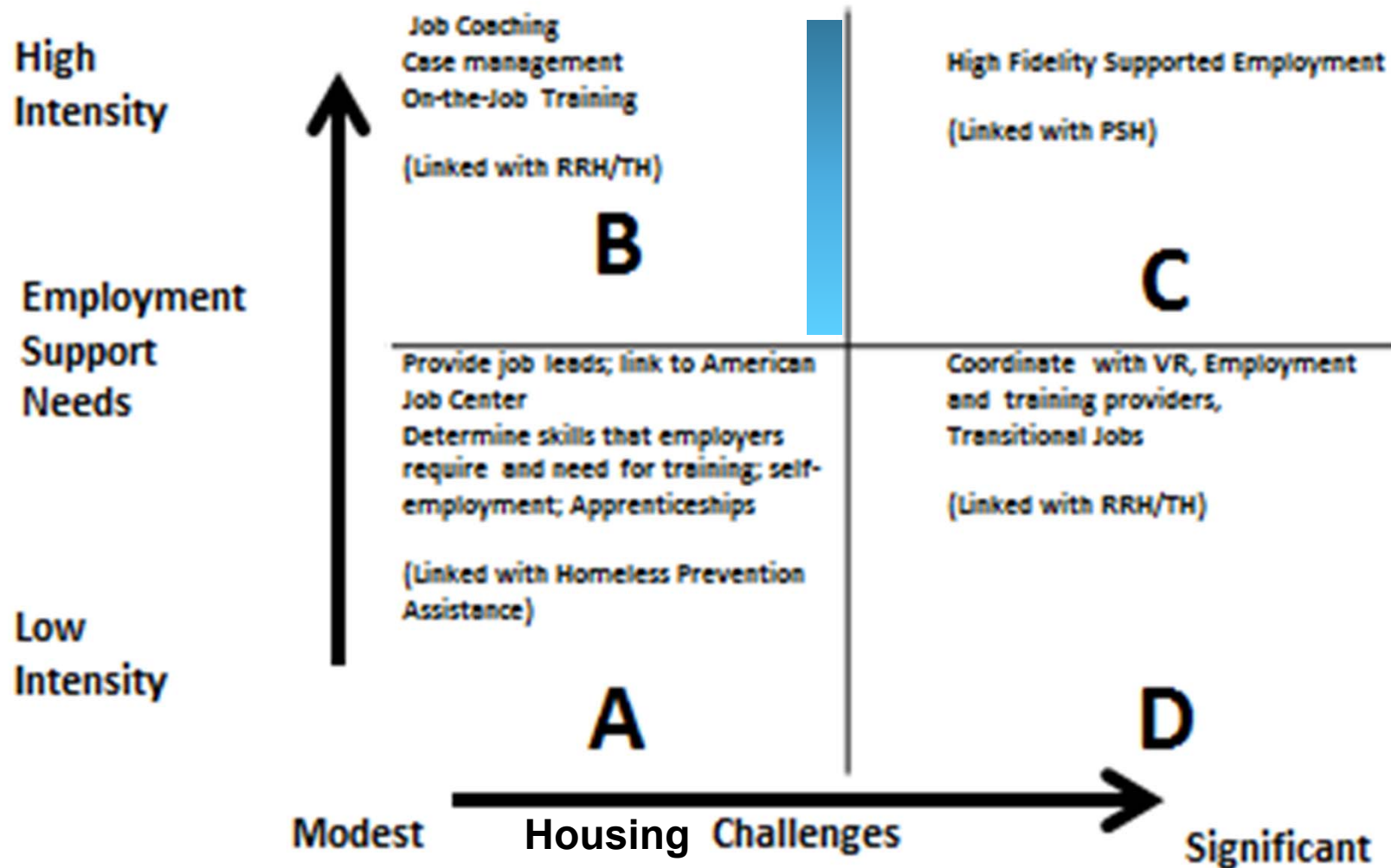
- ☐ RRH services only
- ☐ Employment services only
- ☐ Both RRH and employment services
- ☐ RRH services and partners with a community employment agency



Agenda

- RRH program designs
- Housing alone is not enough
- Adding Employment Services to the Mix
 - Directly operating employment services
 - Partnerships in employment services
- Employer Development
 - Engaging employers/sectors
 - Managing the partnership
- Examples of an integrated model
 - SSVF
 - Secure Jobs
- Resources

Service Needs of Job Seekers Experiencing Homelessness







Role of Unemployment in Homelessness

- Identified among the top five reasons for homelessness
- It's bad for your health
- Reliance on entitlements means no control over income
- Harder to get a job when you've been jobless for a long period of time
- When unemployed, any job looks like a good job



Tenants in Rapid Re-Housing

- Need income to pay rent when assistance ends ($X = 4$ months)
- Often need RRH because of income loss, typically job loss
- May
 - Experience long-term or chronic unemployment
 - Have personal challenges to employment
 - Lack credentials or talent that employers want
- Balance housing search and other activities simultaneously



The Problem

- Rapid re-housing helps families exit shelters and move into permanent housing.....
- The gains in earned income in RRH are modest but promising; some face the RRH cliff.
- The impact of RRH may not result in longer-term housing security and has little or no effect on employment and earned income for participating families.....
- Some RRH tenants need a long-term subsidy to remain stably housed.

Rapid Re-housing Philosophy & Design

- Coordinate with the broader homeless assistance system
- Serves anyone unable to exit homelessness on their own
- Should not attempt to screen out households based on income threshold, employment, absence of a criminal history, evidence of “motivation,” etc.
- Should have the rights and responsibilities of tenancy



Housing First

- Housing as a basic human right
- Respect, warmth, and compassion for all clients
- Commitment to working with clients for as long as they need
- Independent apartments
- Separation of housing and services
- Client choice and self-determination
- A recovery orientation
- Harm Reduction



Following HF Standards

- HF Standards Assessment Tool

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5294/housing-first-assessment-tool/>

Sample Standard “Choice”

A participant has, at minimum, choices in deciding the location and type of housing based on preferences from a range of housing types and among multiple units, as available and as practical. In project-based settings, participants should be offered choice of units within a particular building, or within the portfolio of single site properties. In projects that use shared housing, i.e. housing with unrelated roommates, participants should be offered choice of roommates, as available and as practical. Additionally, as applicable, participants are able to choose their roommates when sharing a room or unit.

Rapid Rehousing Core Components

- Housing Identification
- Rent and Move-in Assistance
- Rapid Re-housing Case Management and Services

Efficient programs typically re-house households in a couple weeks and in most cases in less than 30 days.



Housing is not enough...

Absent vocational intervention,
tenants will remain unemployed



Research says.....

- RRH alone is associated with modest increases in average income.
- Significant gains by select participants drive increases in average income.
- Failure to increase income diminishes the impact of RRH efforts.
- Households with employment income are better off financially.
- Combining employment supports with RRH lowers costs and improves outcomes.



Observations

1. If you don't devote adequate and appropriate employment services to people experiencing homelessness, you are unlikely to achieve employment outcomes.
2. Income from an entry level, fulltime, minimum wage job is inadequate to sustain a family in permanent housing.
3. Employment and housing outcomes are superior when housing and employment strategies are integrated and offered to every participant.



Principles of Integrating Employment in Rapid Re-Housing Programs

1. Ending homelessness is a shared goal.
2. Employment is a valued outcome for RRH & Employment programs.
3. Working enhances housing stability.
4. Interventions (e.g. MI, SE, CTI) can mitigate challenges facing RRH tenants.
5. Employment specialists and housing case managers must collaborate.

Pursuing better outcomes...

The combination of supportive housing and supported employment is more likely to achieve superior housing and employment outcomes than supportive housing alone,

Adding a vocational intervention to rapid rehousing will result in better outcomes than rapid rehousing alone



Question...

To what extent is an employment assessment conducted at RRH intake?

- ☐ A full employment assessment is done
- ☐ Somewhat, we ask if they are working or want to work
- ☐ Very little is assessed



RRH Employment Services Design



- **Direct Integration-** qualified employment services staff work in the RRH agency along with RRH case managers and housing locators



- **No intentional Collaboration -** employment services are as available in the community



- **Service Partnership-** qualified external organization provided employment services to people experiencing homelessness



Service Partnership-with an external employment service?

- Workforce CBO
- AJCs
- Workforce CBO with homeless experience
- Family Service Agency
- State VR agency
- SNAP E&T program
- SCSEP

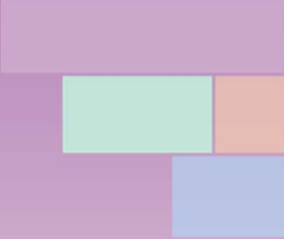


Ideal Partnership Features

- Employment specialists can co-locate with RRH team
- Joint intake into housing and employment service
- Job goal is written in the case management plan
- Employment staff are supervised by experienced employment service supervisor
- Desired outcomes are stated and regularly monitored
- Weekly team case conferences
- Regular management partner meetings
- Cross training for RRH and Employment staff

Three-way Partnership Example

| Housing | Workforce | TANF Agency |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client engagement: housing and employment goals • Rental Assistance • Barrier removal • Childcare, transportation & benefits • Housing search • Connection to mainstream services • Connection to community resources • Service coordination | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational assessment • Career plan • Subsidized work experience, internships • Job training, sector training, credentials • GED, ABE and ESL • Job search • Networking • Job placement/job leads • Employer outreach & development • Job retention services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TANF • Evaluation and IRP (work participation plan) • Work activities referral • Childcare assistance • Medical • Basic food • Social work services • Support services • Service Coordination |



What might be the benefits of
a Service Partnership
approach?



Question

Do you serve clients 55 years of age and over?

Do you make referrals to the Senior
Community Employment Services Program?

- ☐ Routinely
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Not usually
- ☐ Don't know what it is



Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP)

- A training program for older jobseekers
- Does not target homeless veterans but prioritizes veterans
- Participants can be co-enrolled in other housing and employment programs
- Paid work-based training in not-for-profit and government agencies known as Host Agencies
- Can be any type of occupation
- Up to 4 years cumulatively



Overview: SCSEP

- Every county in every state has funding for eligible, low income mature workers, with a few exceptions.
- Program participants are in training an average of 20 hours a week, and are paid the highest of Federal, State or local minimum wage, as a training stipend, by their service provider.

https://www.servicelocator.org/program_search.asp?prgcat=1&officeType_1=14



SCSEP Eligibility

- Low-income
- Age 55 or older
- Unemployed
- Would benefit from SCSEP
- Veterans preference



Co-enrolling in SCSEP

- You can co-enroll SCSEP participants with other employment-related programs and RRH - **if** you both provide **different** services leading to employment
- ALL get to count it as a successful placement!



Direct Integration – RRH & Employment Intake

- Determine eligibility for housing assistance
- Determine eligibility for employment services
- Income status and needs
- Housing history and preferences
- Establish housing plan
- Conduct job readiness assessment

Income Needs and Status

- Unearned Income
 - SSI
 - SSDI
 - Retirement Income
 - VA pension
 - Aid to needy & disabled
- Earned Income
 - Job
 - Paid training
 - Transitional jobs
 - Apprenticeship
- Protected Employment
- Social Enterprise



If income is not from employment:


- When did you last work for pay?
- Can you share with me your reasons for not working now?
- Are there things that make it difficult for you to work fulltime? Part-time?
- If you were to work, what kind of job would you pursue?
- How much monthly income do you need to meet your expenses?

Exercise-Employment Assessment in RRH

- Why work? Purpose? What kind of work do you want to do?not do?
- Where do you want to be in 3 years? Educational interests?
- Importance of relationship building before asking questions. Build rapport
- Job history physical limitations, motivation to work,.
Transportation, drug test, kids?,
- Skills, what do you like to do? Not do? Marketable skills?
references/?
- How much have you ever made?

Exercise-Employment Assessment in RRH

- Training to refresh skills, sobriety status, transferable skills from being homeless, myersbriggs, resume building, computer skills,
- After housing intake, after 3-14 days subsequent meeting with client about resource development, including possibly employment, some want to go down the disability path and volunteer opportunities. Housing First but not only housing!
- Are jobs and educational opportunities within geographic proximity – accessible?



“We value work over and above its economic rewards...because it is through work that we engage the world and become part of it, and through work we lay claim to membership in the larger community and in getting paid for our work, have that membership confirmed by others...work is a principal source of independence and self-respect.”

Elliot Liebow
Tell Them Who I Am
1993



Direct Integration - Job Readiness Assessment

- Satisfaction with being unemployed
- Commitment to change
- Wellness
- Job Market Awareness
- Self Awareness
- Timeline for Working
- Recent Job Search Efforts
- Top 3 Job Choices
- Use of Employment Help



Ready for job search...

- Has an occupational/career goal
- Has the needed skills and credentials
- Capable of managing an interview
- Has the needed tools for job searching
- The timeline is sequenced with housing search
- Needed supports and resources are readily available

If not, then...



Direct Integration of Employment Service Elements

1. Setting an occupational career goal with the client
2. Assessing client soft and hard skills
3. Determining client resource needs
4. Making and implementing the employment/career plan
5. Job searching
6. Job readiness development
7. Developing skills/training
8. Coordinating resources
9. Job retention services



What might be the benefits of
a Direct Integration
approach?



Optional Exercise

Mary has two children under 10 and is searching for an RRH assisted apartment. She has a GED, a work history and wants to get a fulltime job as a receptionist in an large office in the next 2 months. She has good typing speed, is familiar with Microsoft products and has a pleasant presentation with customers but has problems with co-workers.

Conduct an assessment of the skills and resources Mary needs to succeed on a job.



Customizing services for

- Justice involved career seekers
- Older adults
- Women jobseekers
- Millennials



Routine, regular case conferencing

- Are employment services staff at clinical/housing meetings?
- Is there a shared service plan?
- Do employment services staff raise questions/issues about veterans that have not yet been referred for employment services?
- Are housing case managers assigned employment support functions/tasks?



Employer Development



Employer Development

Relationship

- Mutual – you need each other
- Shared learning and goals
- Shared responsibilities, accountability and trust
- Strong and timely communication
- Relies on caring about all result



Job Development vs. Sector Development

What is the difference?

Which approach is good for residents
in Rapid Rehousing sites?



Job Development

- Emphasizes finding specific jobs for participants
- Process responds to immediate needs of participants and employers more than longer term planning
- Requires good understanding of current job market
- Relationships are important but may not be long-term



Sector Development

- Work with employers and participants to become a reliable source of potential employees
- Create and connect to vocational activities and resources that develop abilities and skills of residents
- Include employers in these activities – developing and implementing trainings, offering job shadows and internships, etc.
- Work together to support residents in the work environment



Constant evaluation

- Create a forum for having honest and consistent communication
- Commit to accountability and flexibility – develop a true partnership
- Be willing to make adjustments in the relationship and approach as needed
- Be aware of and discuss changing demands and dynamics for businesses/employers, participants and service provider, and community



Tools for Managing Employer Development

- [Employer Development Profile](#).
- [Salesforce](#)



SSVF Indianapolis and Secure Jobs in Springfield

■ Employment Focus in a Housing First World

<http://iasp.brandeis.edu/research/housing/securejobs.html>





SJI Tracks...

1. Job Readiness Training
2. Skills Training
3. Job Search
4. Job and housing retention

“Families have been able to maintain unsubsidized, market rate housing through gaining employment and increasing the household income and we have drastically reduced the need for a family to return to shelter.”



Secure Jobs @ WayFinders

- 2013-17
- 483 SJI participants
- Wages increased 19.4% to \$12.49
- 86% of participants maintain employment at 12 months



RRH for Veterans



https://www.nvtac.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/508_NVTAC_connections_between-SSVF_HVRP-final.pdf



Unemployment among Veterans receiving RRH services

- 86.7% of veteran families enter RRH without a job
- Of those veteran families exiting RRH, 24% exit with earned income
- The number of veteran families with earned income increased by 36%
- The most significant gains in income among exiters was employment income
- Timing is everything (or almost)
- Unemployed households likely face employment barriers (lack of child care, lack of credentials/skills, lack of transportation, etc.)

What do you think?

- ☐ There are no resources to help my clients get jobs
- ☐ If a client goes to work, it will jeopardize their benefits
- ☐ Clients with disabilities can't work
- ☐ Transportation is a problem
- ☐ My clients just don't want to work



Work talk and creating work supporting culture

- Changing and increasing purposeful conversations with veterans about the possibilities of employment and the veterans' experiences in the working world
- Providing structures and activities that encourage work
- Offering resources that support working veterans



Employment as a part of recovery

Employment offers:

- Income that is key to economic well-being and builds skills for future well-being
- Greater social interaction and connections that can reduce isolation and build social capital
- A valued social role
- A sense of personal efficacy and social integration that contributes to life satisfaction
- Greater life satisfaction and better adjustment than do people who are not employed.



Work Talk....

- Embraces and promotes change: employment as a possibility.
- Meets a person “where they are at”, asks why and how they plan to achieve employment (focused goal setting).
- Serves as a natural and continual “readiness assessment” based on self-determination.



Starting The Conversation...

- What activities do you do every day?
- Have you ever considered working?
- What job did you do most recently?
- What did you like about the job?
- What did you not like about the job?
- Why did you leave the job?



Outcomes for RRH

- How long are people spending homeless?
- How many are moving into permanent housing?
- How many entered employment?
- How many have adequate income (earned and unearned) to make the rent and associated costs?
- How many are returning to homelessness?
- Are people staying attached to the workforce?



Funding Employment Services

- Local Resources

- State VR
- CDBG
- SNAP E&T
- L/SWDB
- Philanthropy

- Federal Resources

- US DOL
- Commerce
- HHS



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- Costa, Mark; Baker, Michaela; Davidson, Larry; Giard, Julianne; Guillorn, Linda; Gonzalez Ibanez, Angels; Weitz, Dawn; and O'Connell, Maria. (2017). Provider perspectives on employment for people with serious mental illness. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 1-9.
- Poremski, Daniel; Stergiopoulos, Vicky; Braithwaite, Erika; Distasio, Jino, Nisenbaum, Roseane; and Latimer, Eric. (2016). Effects of Housing First on Employment and Income of Homeless Individuals: Results of a Randomized Trial. *Psychiatric Services*, 67:603–609.



Resources

- <http://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Performance-Benchmarks-and-Program-Standards.pdf>
- https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/HeartlandAlliance_RRH_and_Employment_2017.pdf
- <http://www.legalclinic.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Set-up-to-fail-FINAL.pdf>
- <http://iasp.brandeis.edu/research/Housing.html>
- <http://www.employmentreadiness.com/>



Questions and Answers

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