Employment Strategies in Rapid Re-Housing

Liza Burell, Building Changes
Why focus on employment?

RRH Assumptions/Values revisited:

• Families need earned income to sustain housing past their subsidy

• Families have the ability to get and keep jobs within a career pathway which support the financial needs of the family (rent, childcare, food and transportation)
How to...

• Address employment from the beginning

• Create partnerships across systems and areas of expertise to work together with families to support their access, retention and success in employment.
  • Identify opportunities to pair RRH with short term employment strategies
  • Attachment to mainstream workforce system for ongoing career development
Address employment: **Vocationalized** RRH Services

_Vocationalizing_ – integrating an employment lens within housing and case management services; staff have the skills and resources to engage, prepare and connect families with workforce providers, employment opportunities and services.

- Employment is incorporated into intakes, assessments and services plans
- Agency may offer on-site job readiness/training opportunities classes and workshops
- May include in-house employment specialist or designated employment focused staff
Mainstream Workforce Services

WorkFirst
- Community Jobs – subsidized employment
- College and technical training – sector training
- Employment Security – Career Scope/job search

WorkSource – “America’s Job Centers”
- Open-access, general employment services and some intensive svcs
- Numerous agencies co-located focused on employment
- Connection to employers/business

Workforce Development Councils (WDCs)
- Located in every county and provide workforce planning for the community
- Implement WIA and provide individualized employment services
Mainstream Workforce Services, cont’d

Community and Technical Colleges
- Tuition support for training available through WorkFirst, Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET), Federal/State Financial Aid, Workforce Investment Act (WIA).
- Career/employment centers on campus

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
- Individualized employment services and counseling to people with disabilities

Community based employment and training services
- Includes some housing providers and agencies that specialize employment services
- Serve specific populations, skills training, employment case management
Employment Approaches

1. Embedded/co-located employment services within housing

2. Assigned homeless employment specialist located in mainstream workforce system

3. Cross-Systems team approach: Housing & Employment Navigator

All these approaches involve cross system work and are most effective when housing providers are *vocationalized*
Elements of Cross-Systems Team

Alignment
- Common plans and goals
- Leveraged resources
- Coordinated services

Role Clarity
- Problem-solving focus
- Varied expertise
- Accountability
- Flexible and mobile

Communication
- Joint client staffings
- Releases of information
- If possible, MOUs
Housing and Employment Navigator Team Roles

This partnership promotes service coordination through alignment, roles and communication

**Workforce**
- Vocational assessment
- Employment; career plan
- Subsidized work experiences, internships
- Job training; credentials
- GED, ABE & ESL
- Job search; resumes, cover letters, interviews
- Networking
- Job placement/job leads
- Employer outreach/job development
- Service coordination

**Housing**
- Housing support & referral
- Barrier removal
- Parenting
- Budgeting/financial
- Health and safety
- Legal issues
- Connection to mainstream services; mental health, drug/alcohol treatment
- Connection to community resources
- Service coordination

**DSHS**
- TANF
- Comprehensive evaluation and IRP
- WorkFirst referral
  - Commerce work experiences
  - Education/training
  - Job search
- Childcare assistance
- Medical
- Basic Food
- Social work services
- Support services
- Service coordination
WFF Pierce Co. Housing and Employment Navigator Panel

Linette Davis, Housing and Employment Navigator
  System: Workforce
  Agency: Workforce Central

Shavana Howard, WorkFirst Case Manager
  System: DSHS
  Agency: Pierce North CSO

Kristine Parrick, Case Manager
  System: Homeless Housing
  Agency: Catholic Community Services/Phoenix Housing Network
Panel Question

1. How does this partnership make a difference in service delivery? Employment outcomes?

2. What works about the team?

3. How does this team approach support goals of RRH?
Thank You

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