Employment as a Key Strategy to End Homelessness
What Service Providers Can Do Now

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Upcoming trainings:

May 5: The evidence base for employment

May 12: Values and your system

May 19: Evidence-based employment models

May 26: Service delivery strategies
A brief review of the evidence... on homelessness & employment

- People experiencing homelessness want to work
- Employment is a key factor in preventing and exiting homelessness
- Employment supports health, wellbeing, and quality of life
- Employment supports recovery and mental health
- Employment improves relationships and builds self-worth
- Employment services for people experiencing homelessness are cost-effective.
Evidence-based models for connecting people experiencing homelessness to employment

- **Transitional Jobs:** combining time-limited wage-paid work with support services, skill building, and job development

- **Individual Placement and Support:** rapid job search for competitive employment coupled with multidisciplinary wrap-around supports
A word about the evidence-based models
What can we learn and apply from evidence-based models?

- Rapid attachment to paid work
- Very low barriers to entry (zero exclusion)
- Support services concurrent with employment
- Individualized job development
- Virtually everyone can work with the right supports!
What can providers **do now to** support the employment needs of people experiencing homelessness?
Start talking about employment on Day One
Include employment in therapeutic or case management conversations

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Operationalize “meeting people where they are”
Leverage motivation and build confidence using MI techniques.
View client responses through the lens of trauma
Create peer support opportunities
Maintain a focus on mitigating barriers
Build cross-system **partnerships**
No single entity can do it all
Hypothetical case for breakout groups:
Keith has been staying at an emergency shelter for 3 weeks. He is 23 years old, and prior to coming to the shelter he lived with his mother but was evicted after her death. Before moving in with his mother he had been incarcerated for 5 years. When his case manager asks about his justice system involvement or his family situation, Keith becomes either very agitated or withdrawn. When he first came to the shelter his case manager asked about employment, he agreed with some reluctance to visit the American Job Center, and actually showed up, but suddenly got up and left in the middle of completing his intake paperwork. Now when asked about employment he refuses to talk about it, other than saying every boss he has ever had was unfairly biased against him. He hints he’s been fired before for conflicts with his supervisors. Keith seems happiest when he talks about his hopes to reconnect with his young daughter, but says he is ashamed to see her until he has his own home.

Q1: What therapeutic approaches might be useful in helping Keith be successful in seeking work? 
Q2: What would your service plan look like for Keith?
Breakout!

Hypothetical case
Questions?
Please complete the evaluation!
Check out our (free!) toolkits

- WIOA Planning & Implementation Toolkit
- Opportunity Youth Employment Toolkit
- Employer Engagement Toolkit
- Working To End Homelessness Toolkit
- Transitional Jobs Programs Toolkit
- TANF and Transitional Jobs Toolkit

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