The Way Home
Income Initiatives
1. 2:00 – 2:05 pm
   Welcome and Open Remarks – Omar Martinez
2. 2:05 – 2:55 pm
   Houston Food Bank – Jolene Harrel, and Crystal Eloisa, Kelly Hernandez
3. 2:55 – 3:25 pm
   Income Programs – Income Team
4. 3:25 – 3:30 pm
   Q&A and End of Webinar
Helping people experiencing homelessness increase and stabilize their income is a primary goal of the homeless response system.
Community Assistance Program

State Benefits Application Assistance

Referral Partner Program

Data
HFB Collaborations:

Distribution, Educational Services, Food for Change, Government Relations, Health, Partner Services, and Senior Box Program
Referral Partner Program
# How can RPP help?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category Category</th>
<th>Possible Referrals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing/Shelter</td>
<td>• Rent&lt;br&gt;Mortgage&lt;br&gt;Utility Assistance&lt;br&gt;Home Modification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment Emploi</td>
<td>• Jobs&lt;br&gt;Resume&lt;br&gt;Interview Preparation&lt;br&gt;Interview Attire&lt;br&gt;Training programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food/Nutrition</td>
<td>• Food pantries&lt;br&gt;Meal Sites&lt;br&gt;Senior Box</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crisis/Emergency</td>
<td>• Shelters&lt;br&gt;Services for homeless clients</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>• Clothing&lt;br&gt;Furniture&lt;br&gt;Transportation&lt;br&gt;Baby items</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Aid/Victims</td>
<td>• Immigration&lt;br&gt;Eviction/Foreclosure&lt;br&gt;Fair Housing&lt;br&gt;Public benefits&lt;br&gt;Other - Please specify</td>
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<td>Health Care</td>
<td>• Medical Care&lt;br&gt;Medication&lt;br&gt;Mental Health - Therapy&lt;br&gt;Medical Equipment&lt;br&gt;Gold Card (Harris County)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Childcare/Education</td>
<td>• Day care&lt;br&gt;ESL / GED&lt;br&gt;Computer Literacy&lt;br&gt;Financial education&lt;br&gt;Home buyer courses&lt;br&gt;Summer programs for children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>• Toys - Holiday&lt;br&gt;Food - Holiday</td>
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</table>
Referral Partner Program
Client Journey

Day 1
Client consents to join RPP
Client signs consent form

Days 31 - 60
Complete the first follow up

Quarter 3
Complete follow up

Quarter 2
Complete follow up

Quarter 4
Complete follow up

End of 12 months
Client may re-enroll
Complete new consent form and needs assessment

Day 30
Complete needs assessment with client
Provide referrals

Referral Partner Program Client Journey
What is CAP and what do we do?

The Houston Food Bank’s Community Assistance Program provides application assistance for social, health, and personal services. CAP’s certified Community Resource Navigators help neighbors apply for benefits like SNAP, Medicaid, TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), MSP (Medicare Savings Program), and CHIP (Children’s Health Insurance Program) and can submit those applications electronically to the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC).
State Benefits we can help apply to:

**SNAP**
- SNAP food benefits (formerly known as food stamps) helps individuals with low incomes and resources buy the food they need for good health.
- SNAP benefits are given to a single person or family who meets the program’s requirements.
- For most adults between the ages of 18 and 50, who do not have a child in the home, SNAP benefits are limited to 3 months in a 3-year period.
- The benefit period can be longer if the adult works at least 20 hours a week, is in a job or training program or otherwise exempt from the work requirement.
- Some people may not have to work to get benefits, such as those who have a disability.

**TSAP**
- TSAP provides SNAP food benefits to Texas households where all household members are either age 60 and older or people with disabilities.
- The TSAP application is shorter, and recipients are certified for three years rather than six months.
- If a person is eligible, they don’t have to do an interview when it’s time to renew.

**To be eligible for TSAP, you must meet all of the following criteria:**
- All the members of your household are age 60 or older, receive disability payments no matter their age, or are a combination of both.
- The members of your household have no earned income, which is income received from working.

**TANF**
The goal for TANF cash assistance is to move families into work and self-sufficiency.

- Provides financial assistance for parents and children under 18 years old.
- You have to have a child under 18 living in the home.
- Monthly cash payments help pay for food, clothing, housing, utilities, furniture, and other basic household needs.
- Families approved for TANF receive payments for six months.
- HHSC provides TANF payments through the Lone Star Card.
SNAP benefits are given to a single person or family who meets the program’s requirements. Most benefit periods last for six months but some can vary from one month to three years.

For most adults between the ages of 18 and 59, who do not have a child under age 6 in the home, SNAP benefits are limited to three months in a three-year period. The benefit period can be longer if the adult works at least 20 hours a week, is in a job or training program or otherwise exempt from the work requirement. Some people may not have to work to get benefits, such as those who have a disability.

HHSC gives SNAP benefits through the Lone Star Card. This is a plastic card that is used like an ATM/Debit Card at the cash register to pay for purchases. Each month, the family’s approved monthly SNAP amount is placed in the card’s account.
Important information about SNAP:

• SNAP benefits do not expire at the end of every month.

• SNAP benefits roll over every month if there is a balance until its used

• You can submit a SNAP renewal 1 month before the last benefit month. Example: My last benefit month is in November therefore I can send my SNAP renewal as soon as October.

• To be considered a timely renewal you need to submit the SNAP renewal by the 15th day of the last benefit month

• You cannot withdraw money from the SNAP EBT card, it's only used to purchase food items (If you receive TANF then you can make withdrawals)

• You can only purchase food with the SNAP EBT card. You cannot purchase: Hot prepared meals (No-Grocery store Deli food). No Beer, liquor, toilet paper, toothpaste etc.

Example: I am at the grocery store, in my cart I have food, but I also have shampoo and toilet paper. After the cashier gives me the balance, I then use my SNAP EBT card first to pay the food items. Then the cashier will give me a balance that I will have to pay out of pocket for the non food items.
Documents needed for a process ready application:

- **Verification of Identity**-(ID with photo and full name of person applying)
- **Social Security Numbers for everyone applying**-(card not necessary-SSN only is acceptable)
- **Verification of income**- (earned/unearned) for everyone applying  (3 recent check stubs or letter from employer)
- **Verification of physical address**- (junk mail, car insurance card, bill, lease, or correspondence from HHSC with current address)

**Exception to verification of physical address:**
- If experiencing homelessness, verification of physical address is *not required* however, they need a mailing address to apply
- **Homeless letter from case manager** with company letterhead stating that their client is currently experiencing homelessness.
Able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) can receive SNAP for only *three months in a 3-year period* if they do not meet certain work requirements. This is called the ABAWD time limit.

To meet the SNAP ABAWD work requirement, a person must be working or participating in a specified work program an average of at least 20 hours per week in a month. A person may use a combination of work and participation in a work program to meet this requirement.

To meet the work requirement via *self-employment*, an individual must anticipate working an average of at least an average of 20 hours per week over the certification period. Earnings have to equal at least an average of 20 hours per week multiplied by the federal minimum wage.

**Exceptions:**

- Pregnant
- Have someone under 6 in your SNAP household
- Unable to work due to a physical or mental limitation that can be verified by a doctor
- Experiencing homelessness
- A veteran
- Age 24 or younger and in foster care on your 18th birthday.
Emergency SNAP benefits are also known as expedited SNAP because the benefits are given faster to those in an emergency situation, such as,

- An individual or family with resources (cash on hand or bank accounts) worth $100 or less, and monthly income less than $150.

- An individual or family with resources and monthly income that are less than the current monthly expenses for rent/mortgage and utilities. *Housing expenses combined are more than the total resources and income expected for the month

- An individual or family that includes a migrant or seasonal farm worker who has $100 or less in resources and very little income.

*We do not determine Emergency SNAP, HHSC will make the decision. If considered Emergency/Expedite HHSC will issue benefits within 1-2 business days.
After submitting your application, you will likely have a phone interview before you are approved.

If client did not document a phone number on their application then the state of Texas will need to speak to them for a phone interview before they can issue benefits.

HHSC Interview Line# 1 (844) 808-7712

1. Select Language
2. Zip Code (if homeless, use the mailing address zip code)
3. Are you currently receiving benefits?
4. Which program did you apply for?
5. The call will be transferred to a representative to conduct the interview.

*Clients experiencing homelessness can call this phone number within 2 days to have an interview with a case worker from HHSC and see if they are eligible to receive benefits.
Lonestar Help Desk

Lonestar is 3rd party vendor*

What does a representative at Lonestar help desk have access to see?
- Client Name, Social security number, and clients address on file with HHSC

How to get a hold of a representative:
1. Select language of choice
2. Select Card benefit status
3. You will be prompted to put in the 19 digit card number
4. After you get the 2nd message, you will hear a prompt: “if your card has been lost or stolen”
5. You will then be routed to a live representative to verify client information
6. Once verified, you card will be cancelled and a new one will be sent with same pin and balance will transfer to new card.

*The importance of keeping information up to date with HHSC!
List of Agencies we visit in efforts to support and assist individuals and families transitioning:

- Salvation Army - Young Adults Resource Center
- Bristow Path Center
- HOPE Impacts
- Star of Hope Women’s Shelter
- Main Street Ministries

*These agencies are not open to the public for direct referrals to us, each one has their specific requirements and referral process for its program*
Step by step on Agency Locator

1. Go to [houstonfoodbank.org](http://houstonfoodbank.org)
2. Locate the “Find Help” tab and dropdown to “Find a Location Near You”
3. Once the map pops up, type in either a full address or zip code to filter the closest agencies
4. Select “Site Type” to view the specific service you are looking for
   a. Food Distribution or CAP Agency
Q & A!
Income Programs
PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS AMONG UNSHELTERED

- Other: 11%
- Illness: 12%
- Alcohol Use: 7%
- Eviction: 21%
- Lost Job/Lack of Income: 5%
- Mental Health: 33%

N=797

FIGURE 9
Evidence of the value of employment for people experiencing homelessness

- People want to work, can work, and do work
- Associated with shorter durations of homelessness
- Supports recovery of mental illness and addiction
- Builds self-worth and instills purpose
- Improves family functioning and well being
- Cost-effective for our region
Applying Housing First Model to Employment

Adapted from Norcross, Krebs, & Prochaska (2010)
System Performance Measure 4: Employment and Income Growth

- Collecting income information throughout project stay:
  - Supports plans to link clients with all income sources and benefits for which they are eligible
  - Helps CoCs improve system design and partnerships by analyzing cross-systems connections to ensure access to additional income sources
  - Increases overall CoC NOFO Score

*** Scored against our previous year’s performance

- SPM #2 at a glance showed 13% Income Growth
For clients who cannot work due to Age or Disability

- SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR)
  - For individuals who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and have a serious mental illness, co-occurring substance use disorder, or other physical disabilities
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Disability
- SSI Aged (65 and Over)
- Social Security Disability (SSDI)
- Social Security Retirement Benefits (62 and Over)
- Social Security Widow’s Benefit (60 and Over)
HMIS: Referral To SOAR Counselor
Referral Recipient: Coalition for The Homeless SOAR
For clients who need employment

• Income Now
  • Workforce Solutions
  • Scholarships for training and education
• Work Based Learning
• Job search, resume assistance, interviewing prep
• Work support (uniforms, tools)
• Transportation (bus pass, gas card)
• Financial aid for childcare and education
**HMIS: Adult (25+) Referral to WFS**

Referral Recipient: Select Career Office closest to client

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<td>Coordinated Access Provider</td>
<td>Workforce Solutions - Northeast (Income Now)</td>
<td>Income Now Referral</td>
<td>Referral Made</td>
<td>Unable to contact</td>
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<tr>
<td>04/19/2022</td>
<td>Coordinated Access Provider</td>
<td>SEARCH Homeless Services (RRH)</td>
<td>Coordinated Access Rapid-Rehousing Referral</td>
<td>Referral Made</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
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<td>07/07/2021</td>
<td>Coordinated Access Provider</td>
<td>CCHP Br CoH RRH</td>
<td>Coordinated Access Rapid-Rehousing Referral</td>
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For clients who need added employment support

- CCHP 2 CRR Income Support Program
  - Career and Recovery Inc.
  - Individualized employment and training case management
  - Employment placement
  - Work support (uniforms, ID’s)
  - Job Coaches and Sober Coaches
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**HMIS: Referral to CCHP CRR Income**
**Referral Recipient: CCHP 2 CRR Income**
For veterans who need employment

- The Houston Launch Pad HVRP
  - Must have a DD214 (Anything other than dishonorable is accepted)
- State ID/Driver’s License
- Social Security Card
- Letter of Homelessness or Self-Attestation
- Refer vets before receiving housing intervention services
CA: Add HVRP Referral

Referral Recipient: Houston Launch Pad
For Youths who need employment

- Youth Income Now
  - Workforce Solutions
  - Work Based Learning
  - Scholarships for training and education
- Job search, resume assistance, interviewing prep
- Work support (uniforms, tools)
- Transportation (bus pass, gas card)
- Financial aid for childcare and education
HMIS: Youth (<25) Referral to WFS
Referral Recipient: Select Career Office closest to client

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Workgroup Partners
HMIS Income Data Entry

• Collected at Project Start, Update, Annual Assessment and Project Exit
• Recording income in HMIS is not the same as evaluating income for program eligibility or rent calculation
• Any income associated with a minor used for HH expenses & support should be included in HoH's 'Income and Sources' record
• Income data should be only recorded for sources of income that are current as of the information date. Client can give estimate.
• Clients are not required to provide documentation of income and benefits.
• People receiving benefits from Social Security and VA receive an annual increase
CFTH Income Team

• Assistance with Referrals, Training, or Information contact us cfthincome@homelesshouston.org

• Visit our Website Income & Employment (homelesshouston.org)
Questions?
Thank You for Attending!

The Way Home