Housing and Employment Navigator

An innovative cross-system model to increase employment, improve the economy and reduce family homelessness in our communities.

The **Housing and Employment Navigator** model is designed to help heads of homeless families **find a job**, **keep a job** and **secure stable housing**. It aligns regional workforce councils, local housing providers, the state Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and other systems that directly serve homeless families.

The model is driven through **direct service** and structured around **teamwork**.

A **Navigator** works one-on-one with families to assess their individual circumstances and address specific barriers to employment within the household. The Navigator convenes and coordinates a **Team** that lines up employment, housing and social services. Experts from each of the systems work together with the families to develop a tailored action plan for securing **steady employment** and **stable housing**.

Better service. Greater impacts.

The Housing and Employment Navigator model aims to:

- **Improve the state's economy** by placing more people in jobs with skill and wage advancement opportunities.
- **Reduce reliance on public benefits** by increasing household income.
- **Impact homelessness in our communities** by placing more families in stable housing.

WORKFORCE

DSHS HOUSING

Services become streamlined and are delivered seamlessly.

"*The Housing and Employment Navigator model is raising the bar on cross-system partnerships in the state of Washington. By operating in a coordinated and collaborative environment, we maximize limited resources, achieve outcomes more efficiently and strengthen relationships.*"

– Linda Nguyen, Chief Executive Officer, WorkForce Central (Pierce County, Washington)

Deeper workforce. Stronger economy.

The Housing and Employment Navigator model seeks to coordinate the delivery of services for a population that faces multiple barriers to employment. Our economy benefits when the *entire workforce* is engaged in productive and meaningful employment, making our business community more competitive and prosperous.

Steady income provides a foundation for families to secure stable lives.

"*When you are going through hard times and relying on resources such as housing programs and DSHS, it can be overwhelming with all the requirements and meetings. But everyone made it so easy for me. Not only did they arrange it so I could meet with all my case managers at the same time and same place, but they also made sure I was able to use every resource available to make me successful. There were plenty of bumps in the road and every time I hit one and didn't know what to do, all I had to do was reach out and I had help. Because of this program, I have completed my associate degree in accounting and I just began my bachelor's in accounting. I have a great job with medical benefits and a 401(k)!*"

–Heather, Housing and Employment Navigator participant

Early Results Show Real Promise in Assisting Families with Multiple Barriers

Heads of homeless families participated in the project based on their interest to either get a job or improve their income through a better job. About **25 percent** had some level of employment at the start of the project.

FIND A JOB:	**KEEP A JOB:**	**SECURE STABLE HOUSING:**
58 percent	**67 percent**	**48 percent**
Project participants who either have become newly employed or have been hired in a new job earning higher income. *Exceeds project goal of 41 percent.*	Those employed who have retained their new job six months after hire.	Project participants who went from homelessness to stable housing. *Exceeds project goal of 35 percent.*

Source: WIF Performance Outcome Report, 3-31-16. Data pulled by WorkForce Central from SKIES, a computer-based information system that tracks employment and training services in Washington state. Stable housing data from HMIS system managed by the Washington State Department of Commerce.

System Partners / Team Members

- **Regional Workforce Councils**
  - WorkForce Central (Pierce County)
  - South Central Workforce Council (Yakima County)
  - Northwest Workforce Council (Whatcom, Skagit and Island Counties)
- **23 different local housing providers**
- **DSHS, Community Services Offices**

Project Partners

- **U.S. Department of Labor / Workforce Innovation Fund**
  - Five-year research study grant
- **Building Changes**
  - Training and technical assistance
- **Marc Bolan Consulting**
  - Evaluation

A full evaluation of the pilot, scheduled for release in summer 2017, will compare outcome data of project participants vs. a control group, including employment rates, stable housing rates, wages, and reliance on sources of public assistance.

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