

SECURE JOBS

by Community Teamwork

Region 1 • Lowell, Massachusetts
www.commteam.org



Unemployment • Homelessness • Job Training • COVID • Housing • Transportation

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Secure Jobs provides intensive case management to clients who live in a shelter and/or receive RAFT (Residential Assistance for Families) and need to secure and maintain employment. Case management includes, but is not limited to, job readiness, job skills training, job search help, employment retention programming, and resources that address barriers to employment.

LOCAL NEED ADDRESSED BY INITIATIVE

Homeless families face barriers to employment including, but not limited to, the ability to access training and employment services, childcare vouchers and slots, and transportation services. More deliberate efforts to link the housing/homelessness and workforce development fields are needed in order to help families obtain work and achieve economic security. This has been increasingly critical in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and the unemployment and housing insecurity it has exacerbated. The Secure Jobs Initiative assists low-income unemployed or underemployed individuals in gaining job skills training and employment, helping them become self-sufficient and avoid the risk of homelessness due to lack of income.

ROLE OF CSBG FUNDS

Funds from CSBG have been used to support the salary of the staff providing financial coaching and the education of Secure Jobs program participants.



TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT

When a community member enrolls in the program, they learn multiple skills that lead to permanent change:

- Job readiness skills help the participant learn how to be “work ready,” how to advocate for oneself, and how to write a winning resume and cover letter.
- Job skills training helps the participant build professional competencies that yield a job with a living wage.
- Job search help teaches participants how to use job search engines and apply for positions online.
- Labor market research helps participants understand what job is right for them.
- Financial coaching and education provide insight into personal finance management.

EVIDENCE-BASED OUTCOMES

On a monthly basis, the Secure Jobs program must report the data to the funding source. We report on the

number of clients engaged and the number employed. We also provide a success story and anecdotal information. In FY 2020, a total of 35 individuals found employment. A total of 91 clients received intensive case management, including job readiness, job search, and skills training. The Department of Transitional Assistance has recognized the impact of the Secure Jobs program through increased funding and advocacy for the program on a state level. In 2021, the Department of Transitional Assistance piloted a state-wide Secure Jobs Section 8 lottery for participants who have maintained employment for at least six months.

EQUITY LENS

The program aims to assist unemployed or underemployed participants living in a shelter or receiving Rental Assistance for Families in Transition while finding and maintaining employment. By providing employment services coupled with financial coaching, program clients have the ability to increase income while learning how to manage personal finances: skills paramount to being able to advance and become self-sufficient.

CUSTOMER VOICE

An agency-wide annual survey is provided to all clients, as well as a short program survey. Both surveys drive at what is working and what can be improved. We take the feedback from the survey and do our best to implement changes. For example, one barrier we learned about through a survey was access to transportation, especially in the evening, when public transportation was not operating. We addressed client feedback by signing up for a Lyft corporate account to be used for interviews, short training programs, and transport to and from retention events and workshops. Our attendance at retention events, prior to COVID-19, increased from just a few attendees to over 20 due to increased access to transportation.

Contact

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