

**WORKGROUP TO REDUCE RELIANCE
ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE**

**REPORT TO GOVERNOR JOHN R. KASICH
AND THE OHIO GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

APRIL 15, 2015

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LETTER FROM THE WORKGROUP

Governor Kasich,

Thank you for the opportunity to work on behalf of you and the citizens of Ohio on this critical topic. Your leadership on this issue is much needed and greatly appreciated.

The workgroup recognizes the unique challenges facing many Ohioans who are not yet thriving in our recovering economy. However, we also recognize that even in the best times, citizens throughout the state may struggle to escape the grips of poverty and dependence on public assistance. This sad reality lies at the heart of this report and serves as the foundation for the recommendations of this workgroup.

The workgroup has a keen understanding that people do not “leap out of poverty.” Instead, with the proper assistance, support, and sometimes push, people can take incremental steps out of a life reliant on public assistance toward a life of work, personal responsibility and productivity.

When individuals are impacted by infrastructure limitations, such as jobs that do not pay a sustainable wage in their community or the inability to access reliable transportation to and from work, we need to collectively work to eliminate those barriers. If they face something more insidious, like substance abuse, mental health issues, or lack of the will or hope to thrive, we need to provide guidance to get them on the path to productivity and prosperity. This help needs to come from the combined effort of county departments of job and family services, our many community partners, businesses, the General Assembly and you.

To begin to put the pieces in place, we must ensure that opportunities exist in all parts of Ohio. The workgroup feels a need to make significant investments to improve transportation availability, enhance economic vitality, and address substance abuse issues. At the same time, we must support efforts to address the educational and work experience gaps that plague many across the state.

Additionally, to ensure that individuals receive the guidance and support they need regardless of where they live, the workgroup strongly endorses a much more personalized system of case management for citizens who need and want it.

None of this will come easily, quickly, or without additional resources. It is our sincere hope that this report will assist you and the Ohio lawmakers in taking the difficult but necessary steps needed to address this complex issue and change many of the circumstances that currently contribute to public assistance reliance. While the workgroup officially ceases to exist with the issuance of this report, each member is committed to continuing to assist the administration in tackling this difficult but worthwhile task.

Sincerely,

Members of the Workgroup
to Reduce Reliance on Public Assistance

BACKGROUND

Section 751.37 of House Bill 483 of the 130th Ohio General Assembly established the Workgroup to Reduce Reliance on Public Assistance. The language instructed the governor-appointed workgroup to develop proposals to help individuals to cease relying on public assistance programs administered by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) and county departments of job and family services. The workgroup consisted of representatives serving the three most populous counties, three rural counties and three additional counties. Section 751.37 also instructed the workgroup to issue a report of its proposals to the governor and General Assembly.

MEMBERSHIP

Tim McCartney (Chair), Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services
Kate Offenberger, Carroll County Department of Job and Family Services
David Dombrosky, Clark County Department of Job and Family Services
Eileen Dray-Bardon, Columbiana County Department of Job and Family Services
David Merriman, Cuyahoga County Department of Job and Family Services
Shancie Jenkins, Delaware County Department of Job and Family Services
Anthony Trotman, Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services
Beth Rubin, Greene County Department of Job and Family Services
Jody Walker, South Central Ohio Job and Family Services (Hocking, Ross, Vinton)

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES SUPPORT

Cynthia C. Dungey, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
Douglas Lumpkin, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

SCHEDULE

The Workgroup to Reduce Reliance on Public Assistance met on the following dates:

December 18, 2014
January 8, 2015
February 5, 2015
February 26, 2015
March 11, 2015
March 30, 2015

The workgroup's agendas and meeting minutes can be found in Appendix A.

RESOURCES

The workgroup relied on earlier research, reports and recommendations as the context and foundation for its discussions on the topic of public assistance reliance. The following list is not exhaustive but includes background material the workgroup identified as important and informative:

Youth Data Review Findings, ODJFS (Appendix B)

- American Community Survey, 5-year estimate, 2008 - 2015
- Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Annual Report, SFY 2013
- Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities FFY 2014, ages 14 - 25
- Mental Health and Addiction Services, via Ohio Medicaid, FFY 2013
- US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Situation, Household Data, Table A, October 2014
- Current Population Survey estimates, historical tables, October 2014
- US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Atlas of Rural and Small Town America, December 2014
- Ohio Department of Health, Live Birth Data, Custom Report, November 2014
- McKernan and Ratcliffe, The Urban Institute, Brief 14, June 2010 Childhood Poverty Persistence: Facts and Consequences
- Ohio Criminal Justice Service, OCJ Statistics, 2012
- Coalition on Homelessness and Housing, March 2014
- National Center for Education Statistics, Public High School Graduation tables, 2011 – 2012

Resource Bibliography (Appendix C)

County Department of Job and Family Services Director Survey (Appendix D)

Stakeholder Survey (Appendix E)

Focus Group Summary (Appendix F)

Workgroup Guiding Topics (Appendix G)

DEFINITIONS

The following are a few of the key programs highlighted or mentioned in this report:

Food Assistance Employment and Training (FAET) Program – The Food Assistance Employment and Training program provides work experience, training, education or a job search program, as described in the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, for required Food Assistance participants. FAET services are designed to help participants move promptly into unsubsidized employment. The program is administered locally at county departments of job and family services.¹

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program – The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program is designed to help needy families achieve self-sufficiency. States receive block grants to design and operate programs that accomplish one of the purposes of the TANF program. The four purposes of the TANF program are to:

¹ ODJFS: FACH 5101:4-1-03

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes;
- Reduce the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage;
- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies;
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.²

Ohio Works First (OWF) Program – Ohio Works First is the financial assistance portion of the Ohio’s Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. It provides time-limited cash benefits to eligible low-income families. Eligibility is contingent upon household composition, household income, and (for work-required adults) participation in prescribed activities designed to improve the recipient’s self-sufficiency.

Prevention Retention and Contingency (PRC) Program – Ohio’s Prevention, Retention and Contingency program provides work supports and other services to help low-income parents overcome immediate barriers to employment. It is funded through the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. PRC services vary between counties based on community needs and local resources. PRC provides non-cash benefits and services that individuals need to overcome immediate barriers to achieving or maintaining self-sufficiency and personal responsibility.³

Work Activity Program – Work-required recipients of OWF cash benefits are required to actively participate in a work activity program to gain job skills, training and experience designed to improve their employability and self-sufficiency, with a goal of employment and improved household income before time-limited benefits are exhausted.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) – The Workforce Investment Act was passed in 1998 to reform federal job training programs and create a new, comprehensive workforce investment system that is customer-focused and helps Americans access the tools they need to manage their careers through information and high-quality services. It also is intended to help U.S. companies find skilled workers.

The following are the seven principles of the Workforce Investment Act:

1. Strong Role for Boards and Private Sector
2. State and Local Flexibility
3. Streamlined One-Stop Services
4. Universal Access
5. Empowering Individuals
6. Increased Accountability
7. Connections Between School and Work.

In Ohio, WIA local control and decision-making are maximized through effective state and local partnerships that foster continuous improvement of the workforce development system. WIA services are offered through OhioMeansJobs Centers. WIA provides the framework for a workforce development system that is designed to meet the needs of employers, job seekers and current workers who want to advance their careers. The goal of WIA is to increase participant employment, job retention, earnings and occupational skill attainment. In Ohio, the WIA program is administered by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.⁴

² HHS: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/programs/tanf/about>

³ ODJFS: <http://jfs.ohio.gov/factsheets/PRC.pdf> and CAM 5101:1-1-01

⁴ ODJFS: <http://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/wia/index.stm>

Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) – The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act was signed into law in 2014. It supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and amends the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. The enactment of WIOA provides opportunity for reforms to ensure that the national employment system is job-driven, responds to the needs of employers, and prepares workers for jobs that are available now and in the future.⁵ WIOA affirms Ohio’s coordination of workforce and TANF programs.

PROCESS

ODJFS provided youth data review findings to help inform the workgroup’s discussion on target populations and barriers. The agency’s findings can be found in Appendix B. The workgroup further researched and reviewed numerous reports and studies on welfare reform history, strategies and outcomes. This background material can be found in the resource bibliography in Appendix C. The workgroup also reached out to all 88 county departments of job and family services to solicit their experience and expertise on the barriers to economic independence that are most prevalent in their counties. The county director survey results can be found in Appendix D. A stakeholder survey was conducted to solicit the experience and expertise of community partners. These results can be found in Appendix E. In addition, two focus groups were conducted with OWF cash assistance recipients. A summary of the focus group results can be found in Appendix F. The workgroup’s report initially began with several key topics to guide the development of priority areas for the report’s recommendations. A compilation of these topics and the workgroup’s responses can be found in Appendix G.

KEY FINDINGS

The following is a description of key findings resulting from a variety of studies, reports, and research over the past twenty years on the topic of reducing reliance on public assistance. These key findings provide support for person-centered case management and evaluations of strategies. However, they also highlight that success in reducing reliance on public assistance is **modest** and **incremental**.

1. ***National Evaluation of Welfare to Work Strategies***

This study, conducted in the mid-1990s and finalized in 2001 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, was subtitled *Evaluating Two Approaches to Case Management: Implementation, Participation Patterns, Costs, and Three Year Impacts of the Columbus Welfare to Work Program*. It looked at two types of case management: traditional and integrated. The findings revealed the following:

- A. Integrated case managers provided more personalized attention than traditional case managers and more closely monitored participation in program activities.

⁵ DOL: www.doleta.gov/wioa/

- B. The integrated program (providing both eligibility and work participation) engaged more people in welfare-to-work activities than the traditional program.
- C. Sanction rates in the programs were similar and very high.
- D. The integrated program had somewhat higher two-year costs for employment-related services than the traditional program.
- E. The Columbus programs increased earnings.
- F. Both programs reduced welfare receipt and payments, but the effects of the integrated program were somewhat larger.
- G. Neither program increased sample members' average combined income from earnings, cash assistance and food stamps.
- H. For sample members who did not have a high school diploma or GED when they entered the study, the integrated program produced larger earnings gains and welfare reductions than the traditional program.

It is important to note that Columbus had sufficient program services and an uncommon degree of administrative and clerical support. Integrated case managers found balancing employment services with income maintenance to be demanding even with these supports; without them, they may have found the work to be overwhelming.⁶

2. *Increasing Employment Stability and Earnings for Low-Wage Workers*
Lessons from the Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA) Project

This study was funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and conducted in 16 program areas across eight states, including Ohio. The purpose of the ERA project was to identify and determine the effectiveness of different program strategies designed to promote employment stability and earnings growth among current or former welfare recipients and other low-income individuals.

The report highlighted the following results:

- A. Supporting employment stability – in which participants stay employed in the same job – is likely to be a more effective strategy than encouraging job stability.
- B. Earnings supplements – tied to job retention and ideally coupled with job coaching – can promote sustained employment and advancement.
- C. By themselves, counseling and referrals to services to help people stay employed do not appear to increase employment retention and advancement.

The majority of the programs tested did not improve participants' retention and advancement, and most sample members remained poor or near-poor at the end of the study.⁷

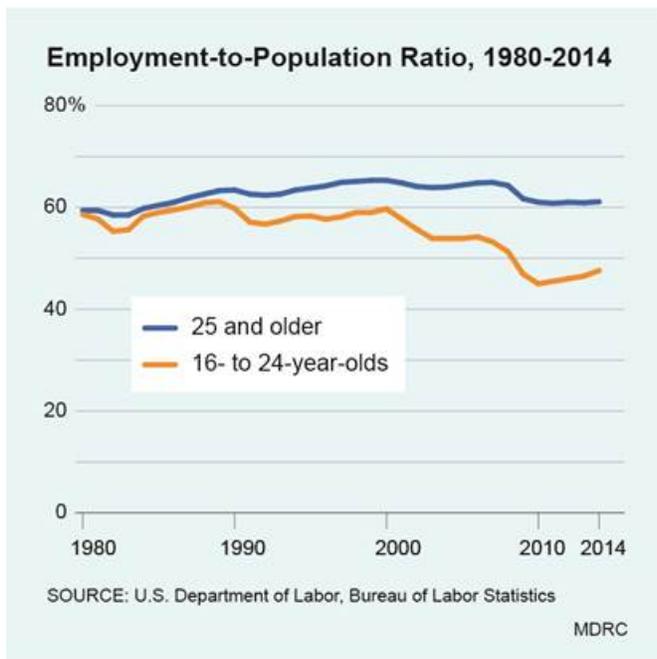
⁶ <http://www.mdrc.org/publication/evaluating-two-approaches-case-management>

⁷ <http://www.mdrc.org/publication/increasing-employment-stability-and-earnings-low-wage-workers>

3. *Increasing Employment Opportunities for Disadvantaged Young Adults*

This study, conducted by the nonprofit research organization MDRC, looked at the issues affecting work opportunities for 16- to 24-year-olds. According to the study, only about half of young people ages 16 to 24 held jobs in 2014, and about one in five people in this age group were neither working nor in school. The problem was most severe for disadvantaged groups, including less educated, low-income and minority young people, especially young men of color.

The following graph highlights the disparity in the 16-to-24-year-old workforce over the last 34 years.



Key findings of the study were as follows:

- A. Employers are a heterogeneous group with diverse needs, goals and preferences.
- B. Employers may respond to financial incentives, but incentives are not likely to be the only force motivating their decisions. Furthermore, wage subsidies have been shown to stigmatize groups of workers.
- C. Employers are more likely to engage in youth employment efforts if it is easy for them to do so and if they believe it is a positive opportunity for their businesses.
- D. Employers' growing use of third parties to recruit and screen new employees has significant implications for efforts to increase the hiring of disadvantaged young adults.
- E. Widespread adoption of computerized applicant tracking systems also has changed the way employers interact with job seekers.

- F. In the face of these changing practices, disadvantaged young workers need assistance communicating their skills and experience. Credentialing mechanisms could help.
- G. Simple forms of support in entry-level jobs can put young adults on the path to success.
- H. To address the issue of youth unemployment on a transformative scale, demand-driven approaches can take on whole geographic areas or whole industries.

The findings support the importance of integrating programs that connect job seekers with employment opportunities and emphasize the significance of strong business relationships within communities.⁸

4. *Improving Employment and Earnings for TANF Recipients*

This study, released by the Urban Institute in 2012, highlights successful strategies for improving employment and earnings for TANF recipients. Ohio was part of the study.

The report suggested several areas for further exploration:

- A. *Adopting a career pathways framework.* Programs using this framework generally offer academic, occupational and life-skills training valued by employers, as well as financial and supportive services and defined links to employment opportunities, with a goal of moving individuals along career pathways.
- B. *Combining into a single program several features already shown to be effective.* Such a program might include financial incentives (to promote work, as well as skill-building), sector-focused training and strong connections to employers in specific industry sectors.
- C. *Providing longer-term subsidized employment, combined with sector-focused skills training.* Testing would indicate whether lengthened subsidized employment paired with skills training could better position individuals to transition into unsubsidized employment and retain such employment longer. Financial incentives and strong employer connections might be helpful. Apprentice programs would benefit from rigorous evaluation, as well.
- D. *Providing services to TANF recipients through different institutions.* While difficult to mount, evaluations assessing the effectiveness of service providers — TANF agencies, workforce development agencies, community colleges, community-based organizations, for-profit groups and others — could shed light on operational issues.⁹

5. *Alternative Employment Strategies for Hard-to-Employ TANF recipients*

Final Results from a Test of Transitional Jobs and Pre-employment Services in Philadelphia

This study looked at two approaches to working with hard-to-employ TANF recipients in the Philadelphia area.

⁸ <http://www.mdrc.org/publication/increasing-employment-opportunities-disadvantaged-young-adults>

⁹ <http://www.mdrc.org/publication/improving-employment-and-earnings-tanf-recipients>

The first approach tested was a transitional jobs model operated by the Transitional Work Corporation (TWC). TWC quickly placed recipients who were referred by the welfare agency into temporary, subsidized jobs, provided work-related supports and then helped participants look for permanent jobs. The second model, called “Success Through Employment Preparation” (STEP), assessed and addressed participants’ barriers to employment — such as health problems or inadequate skills — before they went to work.

Key findings of the study were as follows:

- A. Early in the follow-up period, the TWC participants had significantly higher employment rates than the control group members. Beyond the first year, however, the difference faded, and the groups had similar outcomes. The TWC participants also received significantly less welfare assistance in the first year and a half of follow-up, but these impacts did not last.
- B. Recipients who were assigned to the STEP program did not work or earn more, or receive less welfare, than the control group. The results may have been affected by the fact that many people who were assigned to STEP did not participate in the program for long periods.

The STEP program was an intensive case management model, and it faced some implementation challenges. Some of those challenges may have been typical start-up issues; others may have been related to features of the program model. STEP offered an array of services, including barrier assessments, life skills classes, basic education classes, counseling services and job-readiness activities. The program lacked a clear structure, however, and staff said they struggled to assign sample members to enough activities to meet the weekly 30-hour participation requirement. A large proportion of sample members participated in activities at some point during their time in the program, but the average number of hours was relatively low. The program was intended to begin with assessments to identify employment barriers so that appropriate services could be offered. Some participants took a long time to complete the assessments, however, both because they failed to report to the program consistently and because the team designated to analyze the results was small and unable to keep pace. In the end, many clients participated in other activities at STEP without completing barrier assessments.¹⁰

6. *Serving TANF and Low-Income Populations through WIA One-Stop Centers*

This U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) study, conducted by an outside firm, looked at TANF and WIA mandates and how they connect and work in different states. The report highlighted some issues that affect the goal of reducing reliance on public assistance.

In all of the study sites except the Edgecombe-Nash Job Link Career Center, it was found that many TANF clients required intensive, relatively long-term educational and vocational skills training even to qualify for many entry-level positions.

¹⁰ http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/full_18.pdf

The study found that the following factors promoted WIA/TANF coordination:

- A. When management oversight for the WIA and TANF programs was combined in the same local agency, there was a greater potential for effective cross-program coordination.
- B. In general, WIA and TANF program communication and coordination were enhanced when eligibility and employment workers shared the same caseloads, when both types of workers were employed by the same agency, and/or when both types of workers shared the same facility.
- C. At some of the study sites, regularly scheduled meetings of WIA and TANF supervisors and line workers to discuss cases and policies promoted cross-program coordination.
- D. One of the study sites established an employment and career services liaison position to improve communication and coordination between programs.

The study found that the following factors inhibited WIA/TANF coordination:

- A. Employment services agencies and welfare agencies can have bureaucratic cultures that undermine WIA/TANF coordination and performance. Agencies that have a longer history of collaboration are more likely to have overcome these differences and to have devised effective ways of working together.
- B. In many states, legislation has shifted primary responsibility for employment services for TANF clients to state and local employment agencies, including WIBs. In this study, the sites in which the responsibility for TANF employment services was removed from the TANF agency experienced initial resentment and mistrust across agencies.
- C. Effective cross-program coordination and communication may be compromised when WIA and TANF administrative data systems do not interact, or when workers at one agency do not have convenient access to the other agency's data systems.
- D. Changes in TANF caseloads and resource constraints on state agencies can undermine effective case management and cross-program coordination.

The HHS study found that local WIA agencies had varying philosophies regarding the use of WIA training resources for TANF clients. For example, at one study site, managers committed nearly all WIA training funds to TANF clients to maximize resources aimed at reducing dependence. Another study site took the opposite approach, limiting TANF clients' access to WIA training because they had other (TANF-funded) training resources. The following factors were found to promote WIA participation among TANF clients and other low-income populations:

- A. One study site imposed income eligibility limits for WIA intensive and training services to ensure priority service to TANF clients and other low-income populations.
- B. Ongoing client participation was greatly enhanced at study sites where education and training services were delivered on site at employment centers.

- C. Some of the study sites used labor market surveys to link training services to local needs for low-income, entry-level workers.

Factors inhibiting WIA participation among TANF clients and other low-income populations included the following:

- A. Most of the study sites assigned non-exempt TANF clients to an initial job search, indicating a general work-first policy approach. At sites where the work-first orientation was particularly strong, employment service workers tended to stress immediate job placement over education and training services.
- B. Some aspects of WIA performance standards and TANF work participation rules may affect decisions to enroll TANF clients in WIA training. Specifically, WIA standards for post-program employment and job retention and federal restrictions on the percentage of a state's TANF non-exempt caseload that may be engaged in education and training are thought to limit TANF client access to WIA-funded or other training.
- C. Many of the study sites developed employment services designed specifically for TANF clients that may have diverted them from WIA intensive and training services.¹¹

COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES DIRECTOR SURVEY

The workgroup surveyed the directors of Ohio's 88 county departments of job and family services to solicit their experience and expertise on the barriers to economic independence that are most prevalent in their counties, as well as the most effective methods to help public assistance recipients overcome those barriers. The survey focused on OWF cash assistance recipients. Along with requesting basic demographic information about their counties, the survey asked the directors to do four things:

- Rank a list of barriers commonly associated with public assistance recipients;
- Identify the job-readiness status of their OWF work-required population by percentage;
- Identify the most effective method of working with OWF work-required recipients;
- Provide any other instructive thoughts or comments for working with this population.

Ninety-five percent (95%) of the counties responded to the survey. Results were compiled collectively, as well as by county size (small, medium, large, small metropolitan, medium metropolitan and metropolitan) and county type (rural, semi-metropolitan and metropolitan). Complete comparative data can be found in Appendix D, along with numerous respondent comments.

Among all counties, the following were the top five barriers:

1. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test;
2. Lack of transportation;
3. Lack of high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED);
4. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success;
5. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level.

¹¹ <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/WIA-centers-site-visits04/report.pdf>

The survey indicated that substance abuse issues and inability to pass a drug test were significant barriers to reducing reliance on public assistance, particularly in rural counties and those with populations below 200,000. This was illustrated by a comment from a director at a large, semi-metropolitan county outside Columbus: “We believe the major item is substance abuse . . . Many folks can ‘adjust’ to pass a test but cannot maintain being drug-free and maintain long-term employment.”

Lack of transportation was cited as a significant barrier in counties of all sizes and types *except* large metropolitan counties. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill levels were noted to be significant barriers in counties of all sizes and types. This barrier ranked no lower than sixth in all county- type categories. Both of these issues were reflected in a comment from a director at a small, rural county in southeast Ohio: “Our county is very small and has limited work placements and no public transportation. Also the few placements we have are not stepping stones to better employment.”

Lack of a high school diploma or GED tended to rank higher as the size of a county increased; it was the number-one barrier in large metro counties. In addition, many expressed the concern that working toward a GED should be a countable activity for the receipt of OWF cash benefits: “We would like to see changes in the federal regulations which would allow all GED classes as a countable work activity. This helps a person be employable when they achieve their GED.”

Lack of client motivation and commitment to success ranked high in all county sizes and types *except* in the three large counties surveyed. One county representative lamented, “I see a great need for 'motivational techniques' to get the OWF population to recognize, and truly understand, their current situation and how it can be improved by becoming self-sufficient. A 'light at the end of the tunnel,' if you will. But this effort is often clouded by the multiple barriers they possess. The life of an OWF client, and public assistance clients in general, is always in a state of chaos.”

Lack of child care, domestic violence issues, lack of stable housing and limited English proficiency were ranked as less prevalent barriers in counties of all sizes and types. None of these barriers ranked higher than 12th in any county size or type. Being a product of generational poverty ranked highest in small, rural counties and large metropolitan counties. It tended to rank as the least significant barrier, or at least out of the top ten, in counties of other sizes and types. Mental health issues ranked in the top ten in counties of all sizes and types *except* large metro counties. Chronic physical health challenges that do not yet qualify for a disability were consistently in the top ten regardless of county size or type; however, they typically ranked toward the bottom of the top ten. Legal issues did not rank in the top ten in counties of any size or type *except* large metropolitan counties.

Lack of vocational or other post-secondary education was cited more often as county size increased; it ranked third in large metro counties. Lack of work experience ranked in the top ten barriers in counties of all types and sizes. Lack of a personal support system tended to rank at the lower end of the top ten in counties of all sizes and types, except in metropolitan counties, where it ranked 11th.

In addition to ranking barriers, county directors were asked to estimate the percentage of their OWF work-required clients who fell into the following categories:

- **Job Ready** – Clients have a few minor barriers to employment. They will likely become self-sufficient with little intervention.
- **Nearly Job Ready** – Clients have several or significant barrier(s) to employment but will likely overcome them with assistance within 12 months.

- **Not Job Ready** – Clients have multiple or significant barrier(s) to employment that they will be unlikely to overcome within 12 months. However, long-term assistance in barrier removal may lead to eventual employment.
- **Unemployable** – Clients have significant barriers, possibly including medical issues, that make it extremely unlikely that they will ever be capable of full- or part-time employment, regardless of the amount or length of assistance in barrier removal.

All counties, regardless of their size or type, indicated that the highest percentage of their OWF work-required clients fell into the **Not Job Ready** status. Percentages ranged from 30.57 percent in large counties to 43.33 percent in medium metro counties. All counties, with one exception, indicated that the second highest percentage of their OWF work-required recipients fell into the **Nearly Job Ready** status. Percentages ranged from 25.71 percent in large and small metro counties to 33.33 percent in large metro counties. The exception was small metro counties, which ranked the **Unemployable** category as second highest. **Job Ready** and **Unemployable** percentages varied according to county size. **Unemployable** percentages were higher in six of the 10 county sizes and types. Percentages ranged from 11.67 percent in medium metro counties to 26.70 percent in small counties. **Job Ready** percentages ranged from just 10.50 percent in small counties to 18.33 percent in both medium and large metro counties.

County directors were asked to select what they felt was the best method to engage OWF work-required recipients. The four choices were as follows:

- **Immediate labor force attachment** – This method focuses on job search assistance, volunteer work experience and/or short-term education or training.
- **Human capital development** – This method allows work-required clients to engage in skill-building and/or education and training activities prior to actively seeking employment.
- **A hybrid of both models above** – This method directs work-required clients to one of the above models based on the individual’s circumstances (education, skills etc.).
- **Sanctioning** – This method removes benefits for failure to comply with program requirements.
- **A hybrid of all** – This method uses all of the above strategies – immediate labor force attachment, human capital development and sanctioning – based upon the individual’s circumstances.

All county directors, regardless of their county size or type, selected “A hybrid of all” as their top choice. This supports the view that person-centered case management should be used to assess and direct individuals in appropriate ways. A respondent from a large metropolitan county expressed views shared by many: “A structured plan, consistent guidance and a positive support system are needed to help our consumers to become self-sufficient. An in-depth assessment is needed when the individual walks in the door. This would provide the type of information needed to develop a structured and meaningful plan. Goals should be well-defined, broken down into small manageable steps and build upon one another. Achieving and experiencing incremental successes creates hope and momentum. A case manager who has the time needed to guide, push or drive the consumer towards meeting these steps is equally important. Our consumers get lost in the process and overwhelmed when life events occur; they can get a job but struggle to keep it; and they can get into training programs or college but struggle to complete the goal. Consequences are discovered and continue to be a barrier long after the fact and make it that much harder to move forward. Intensive case management can help our consumers to address challenges that arise, stay focused on their goals and stay on track. A positive role model, mentor or support system to cheer the individual along the way and act as a sounding board helps to make it personal. The individual owns the goals.”

All county directors, regardless of their county size and type, selected “A hybrid of both methods above” as their second choice. “Immediate labor force attachment” ranked third in three of the 10 county types. “Human capital development” ranked third in two of the 10 county types. “Sanctioning” tied for last in all county types and sizes. It received zero selections in more than half the counties.

The survey found that county size and type play a significant role in how county directors view client barriers. County size and county type do not play a significant role in how county directors view the job readiness status of their OWF work-required clients. County size and type do not play a significant role in what county directors believe are the most effective methods of working with OWF work-required clients.

STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

The workgroup surveyed community stakeholders to solicit their experience and expertise in the barriers to economic independence that are most prevalent in their communities, as well as the most effective methods to help public assistance recipients overcome those barriers. The survey focused on OWF cash assistance recipients. Along with asking basic demographic information about their communities, the survey requested that the stakeholders do four things:

- Rank a list of barriers commonly associated with public assistance recipients in their areas;
- Identify the job readiness status of their county’s OWF work-required population by percentage;
- Identify the most effective method of working with OWF work-required recipients;
- Provide any other instructive thoughts or comments for working with this population.

The workgroup received 250 responses to the survey. Results were compiled collectively, as well as by county size (small, medium, large, small metropolitan, medium metropolitan and metropolitan) and county type (rural, semi-metropolitan and metropolitan). Complete comparative data from the stakeholder survey can be found in Appendix E, along with numerous respondent comments.

Respondents ranked the following as the top five barriers to employment:

1. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level;
2. Lack of transportation;
3. Lack of child care;
4. Lack of high school diploma or GED;
5. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test.

Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level and lack of transportation were ranked highest; stakeholders in counties of all sizes and types ranked them as either first or second. Describing the lack of available jobs, one stakeholder commented: “No question, the biggest barrier facing our hungry neighbors is the lack of a sustainable wage. The majority of the folks receiving assistance cobble together 2 or 3 jobs and still can't make ends meet due to low per hour wages. Additionally when they are allowed part-time hours only, it prevents them from receiving life-critical benefits like healthcare.”

Stakeholders also cited lack of child care as a more significant barrier than county directors did. Lack of child care ranked fourth in stakeholder responses but 13th in county director responses. This difference in perception should be evaluated.

Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test ranked in the top ten of stakeholder responses regardless of county type or size. Lack of a high school diploma or GED ranked in the top five of stakeholder responses regardless of county type or size. Stakeholders ranked lack of stable housing significantly higher as a barrier than county directors did. Lack of stable housing ranked eighth among all stakeholders and 14th among county directors. This difference in perception should be further evaluated.

Stakeholders ranked domestic violence issues and limited English proficiency” as the least significant barriers regardless of county type or size. This mirrored the responses of the county directors, who also consistently ranked them at the bottom of the list.

Being a product of generational poverty ranked as the 10th most significant barrier among stakeholders and county directors alike. Lack of a high school diploma ranked as the third most significant barrier among both stakeholders and county directors. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success ranked significantly higher as a barrier on county responses (fourth) than in stakeholder responses (12th). This also is an area that may need analysis to determine reasons for differences in perception.

Lack of work experience ranked seventh in county responses and ninth in stakeholder responses. County directors ranked chronic physical health challenges that do not yet qualify as a disability as a significantly higher barrier (eighth) than stakeholders (14th). Stakeholders ranked lack of vocational or post-secondary training as a greater barrier (sixth) than county directors did (11th).

Both groups ranked mental health issues similarly: sixth for county directors and seventh for stakeholders. They ranked legal issues similarly: 12th for county directors and 13th for stakeholders. And they ranked lack of a personal support system similarly: ninth for county directors and 11th for stakeholders.

In addition to ranking barriers, stakeholders also were asked to estimate the percentage of their OWF work-required clients who fell into the following basic categories:

- **Job Ready** – Clients have a few minor barriers to employment. They will likely become self-sufficient with little intervention.
- **Nearly Job Ready** – Clients have several or significant barrier(s) to employment but will likely overcome them with assistance within 12 months.
- **Not Job Ready** – Clients have multiple or significant barrier(s) to employment that they will be unlikely to overcome within 12 months. However, long-term assistance in barrier removal may lead to eventual employment.
- **Unemployable** – Clients have significant barriers, possibly including medical issues, that make it extremely unlikely that they will ever be capable of full- or part-time employment, regardless of the amount or length of assistance in barrier removal.

Overall, there was little difference in perception of job readiness of OWF work-required clients between stakeholder and county respondents. Both groups ranked the largest percentage of clients as **Not Job Ready**, with all stakeholders identifying 33.90 percent in this category and all county respondents 36.05 percent. **Nearly Job Ready** percentages varied even less, with stakeholders identifying 26.09 percent in this category and county respondents identifying 27.39 percent. The **Unemployable** percentages were also quite close (20.13 percent among county respondents, 20.04 percent among stakeholders). **Job Ready** percentages were slightly farther apart, with stakeholders identifying 19.97 percent in this category and counties identifying 16.43 percent.

Stakeholders were given the choice of selecting what they feel is the best method to engage OWF work-required recipients. The four choices were as follows:

- **Immediate labor force attachment** – This method focuses on job search assistance, volunteer work experience and/or short-term education or training.
- **Human capital development** – This method allows work-required clients to engage in skill-building and/or education and training activities prior to actively seeking employment.
- **A hybrid of both models above** – This method directs work-required clients to one of the above models based on the individual’s circumstances (education, skills etc.).
- **Sanctioning** – This method removes benefits for failure to comply with program requirements.
- **A hybrid of all** – This method uses all of the above strategies – immediate labor force attachment, human capital development and sanctioning – based upon the individual’s circumstances.

Overall, stakeholders, like counties, identified the preferred method as “A hybrid of all,” but at a significantly lower overall percentage (36.10 percent for stakeholders, 52.44 percent for all counties). Overall, both groups ranked “A hybrid of both models above” similarly, with stakeholders choosing it 38.17 percent of the time and counties 31.71 percent of the time. “Human capital development” alone ranked higher among stakeholders (16.18 percent) than counties (6.10 percent). “Immediate labor force attachment” alone and “Sanctioning” alone each scored similarly among both groups.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

On March 23, 2015, and March 25, 2015, the workgroup conducted two focus groups with OWF recipients. All were participating in a work activity as a condition of receiving benefits. The full summary can be found in Appendix F.

The purpose of the focus groups was to obtain recipients’ perspectives on the challenges that lead people to apply for assistance, their individual plans to become self-sufficient, challenges to attaining their goals, and ways they think the current system could be modified to help them meet their goals.

All participants stated that a “one-size-fits-all” program does not work. They indicated that they need personalized attention and that the system should work with people differently depending on “where they are in their life.” Most could not articulate a clear path off assistance, and most stated that they simply needed employment. The priority of caring for one’s children was a common theme regarding the choice to apply for public assistance benefits. As one participant expressed, “I am doing what I have to do to take care of my children. They are the most important thing.”

Participants were mixed in their views of the system in its current state. Some expressed that the system is designed to keep people in poverty. Others felt that people need to follow the rules and be personally responsible for their lives. Collectively, the group reserved their strongest comments for public housing clusters. They believe that the public housing environment traps people into generational poverty without teaching them to be independent. One frustrated participant commented: “Public housing has too many people living in one square . . . If you plant a flower and it grows...you can’t put ten more seeds on top of it and expect them to grow too.”

Most agreed that there should be time limits for people to receive public assistance. Additionally, most agreed that during the time they receive assistance, they should be engaged in real efforts (education, training, life skills) to move off public assistance.

Many participants expressed frustration with other recipients who appear not to suffer consequences for inaction or lack of personal responsibility. Some expressed frustration with the current service delivery system because it does not give individuals the personal attention they need. Most felt that people must be “pushed” to strive harder to get the things they want.

Most participants expressed that employment opportunities should be created and that those opportunities must be in jobs that pay a living wage. Virtually all expressed significant frustration with life in poverty. They indicated a desire for more effective programs, such as therapy sessions for public assistance recipients, information about programs and services in neighborhoods, life skills classes in middle school and high school, and help with criminal records.

The focus groups also expressed a desire for intensive case management. They said caseworkers should spend more time getting to know those served while providing help with goal setting, structured steps to obtain goals and support. The group stated that people want to work and be successful. They felt that the system should do a better job of informing individuals about available services and how to access them. Participants also indicated the need for more immediate and robust help in finding a job, as well as more time to find a job. They cited the work participation requirements as an obstacle to finding a job.

The groups emphasized the need for life-skills training for adults on assistance and for students throughout their school years. One participant vocalized strongly: “IF A PERSON WAS DROPPED IN A FOREST AFTER HIGH SCHOOL, THEY WOULD DIE. THEY DO NOT KNOW LIFE SKILLS. BASIC SKILLS NEED TO BE TAUGHT IN SCHOOL.” In general, the groups indicated that people are not opposed to participating in activities to get assistance, but they feel that the system needs to do a better job helping them move toward self-sufficiency.

FURTHER STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

The workgroup conducted focus groups of current, participating clients. However, it is critical that the voices of those who are *not* actively participating are heard to learn *why* they are not engaged. It is recommended that the ODJFS Office of Human Services Innovation conduct focus groups and/or surveys of the following groups:

- OWF work-required individuals serving sanctions;
- Individuals who exceeded their 36-month OWF time limit and received hardship extensions to continue receiving benefits;
- Individuals who exceeded their 36-month OWF time limit and were not given hardship extensions but still receive other forms of assistance;
- Individuals who declined OWF cash benefits (though they may be otherwise eligible) because they did not want to comply with child support requirements and/or did not want to participate in a work activity;
- Families receiving child-only OWF cash benefits to identify the circumstances that led to the child-only cases (typically, these are cases in which grandparents or other relatives are caring for children);

- Families who live in concentrated areas of poverty (public housing) to learn what they believe they need to successfully move out of poverty.

PRIORITY AREAS

In compiling and refining their recommendations, the workgroup identified the following six high-priority areas:

1. **Person-Centered Case Management: A Strategy to Begin Reducing Reliance on Public Assistance**
 - *Defining person-centered case management*
 - *Standardized tools, flexible delivery*
 - *Utilizing existing research and demonstrated best practices*
2. **Strategy Implementation: A Starting Point**
 - *Defining targeted populations*
 - *Acknowledging demographic differences*
 - *Expanding on demonstrated success*
3. **Resources Needed for Implementation**
 - *Financial resources and funding stream complications*
 - *Human resources*
 - *Technology and data-sharing*
 - *Local social service network infrastructure*
4. **Performance Measures**
 - *Individualized goals for individualized case management*
 - *Success: A long and complicated path*
 - *Piloting the strategy for future standards*
5. **Competing Performance Metrics and Legislative Advocacy**
 - *Existing compliance requirements*
 - *Funding implications*
 - *Opportunities to impact rule change*
6. **Public Messaging: Poverty is a Community Conversation**
 - *Partners in improving the lives of all Ohioans*

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below are intended to be used as a starting point for developing initial strategies, analyzing progress and refining future projects based on demonstrated outcomes, with the goal of addressing long-term reliance on public assistance programs in Ohio.

Priority 1: PERSON-CENTERED CASE MANAGEMENT: A STRATEGY TO BEGIN REDUCING RELIANCE ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Research shows, and evidence confirms, that a good-paying job is the surest way to reduce reliance on public assistance. Hand-in-hand with this is the fact that each public assistance recipient is unique. Some individuals may have very temporary barriers to gaining economic independence; others may have more serious barriers. A strategy to reduce reliance on public assistance and support one's path toward economic independence should be based on a person-centered case management model.

Person-centered case management is a collaborative process of assessment, planning, facilitation, care coordination, evaluation, and advocacy for options and services that lead to reduced reliance on public assistance and greater economic independence. It must involve a robust assessment of the skills, abilities, mental health, work experience, goals and barriers of program participants using a proven, comprehensive assessment tool. The assessment should result in the development of a comprehensive case plan, which can be an Individualized Employment Plan (IEP), Self-Sufficiency Plan (SSP) or Independence from Public Assistance Plan (IPAP).

Steps out of Poverty

The public assistance recipient's unique plan should set forth a variety of steps and activities designed to lead to independence through barrier removal, work experience and stability achievement. Steps in the individualized plan may involve engagement in supportive services that address the participant's needs. General Educational Development (GED) attainment, soft- and hard-skill employment training, and specific job search activities may be appropriate activities. Many other activities designed to meet the individual's needs and goals are possible and should be recognized and valued as important components of a comprehensive, long-term plan to eliminate reliance on public assistance.

Proactive steps caseworkers can take to help participants resolve issues and secure services may include scheduling and attending appointments, arranging transportation, conducting home visits, and other intensive interventions. Along this continuum of progress, supports must be provided to work through the barriers to employment while teaching problem-solving skills and strategies for long-term, sustainable economic independence.

Person-centered case management should employ a common assessment tool utilized by all 88 counties to consistently capture data on the many variables that affect public assistance recipients, regardless of where they reside. For effective and efficient service delivery, this standardized assessment tool should be available electronically in a statewide system that can facilitate reporting, monitoring, performance measurement and data collection. The ongoing assessment process should include direct recipient input so caseworkers can learn first-hand the impact and perceived value of services. Mobile applications for this would be forward-thinking and helpful for maintaining engagement with clients.

To be effective, person-centered case management should give all those addressing the recipients' barriers and circumstances the ability to share information and coordinate services, including community partners. This will necessitate the development of a universal release of information form that can be signed by the individual and readily accepted across systems. In collaborating with internal programs and community partners, the person-centered case manager should aim to create a culture of resolution.

Ohio's 88 counties cover several diverse communities and regions. Flexibility is needed to adapt to the needs, conditions and resources of our communities. While there are common themes to the employment barriers most often faced by people in poverty, the ways in which those barriers are expressed or resolved differ greatly in different parts of the state. Transportation is one example – a bus token is irrelevant in some counties, as no bus systems exist in many areas of the state. A standardized assessment must be followed by a flexible, individualized and comprehensive case management plan that addresses the needs and goals of the public assistance recipient in their local community.

Key Considerations

Because of the life experiences of many recipients, person-centered case management may often be a long-term commitment involving multiple steps over time to address the barriers discovered during the assessment and plan development process. Incentives and short-term rewards will likely enhance compliance with the process, reinforce the concept of a strong work ethic, and lead to success. According to the OWF recipient focus groups, most public assistance recipients would like person-centered case management. Members of one focus group universally indicated that the "system" needs more case management, more connection to jobs, more job placement and more personal contact.

The workgroup recognizes that the full-scale implementation of such a program will be an arduous task. However, the workgroup strongly recommends that entities involved in administering a person-centered, comprehensive case management program be required to serve **all** who are ultimately required to participate. Current proposed legislation identifies 16- to 24-year-old OWF cash assistance and WIOA recipients, and later all OWF cash assistance work-required recipients. Since the implementation of the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) training program in 1988, and later the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, the world of workforce development has seen more than its share of programs and providers who wish to serve only those who are likely to be successful. Many restrict participation in their programs to individuals who can pass a drug test and who have no significant criminal history. As noted in the surveys of counties and stakeholders, both of these issues are significant barriers to economic independence and affect a large number of those individuals who are determined to be "Not Job Ready." If we are serious about our desire to move the needle to reduce reliance on public assistance, we must focus a significant effort on those who have the most significant barriers to employment so that we do not condemn them, and perhaps their children, to a life in poverty.

Rather than work to create a new, untested case management design, existing case management models that are evidence-based with proven strategies and positive outcomes should be identified by the state for utilization by counties. The services of a university could be procured by the state to research effective models already in use throughout the nation.

Numerous evaluations of welfare-to-work models and case management strategies designed to increase personal responsibility and earnings of public assistance recipients have been conducted over the past several years. These should be consulted before any model or strategy is adopted.

Lastly, while the workgroup recommends a person-centered case management approach for those actively receiving public assistance, it also recommends that additional resources be dedicated to programs that successfully **prevent** people from needing public assistance initially. The workgroup recommends that the ODJFS Office of Human Services Innovation engage in a review of programs (current or historical) that have successfully helped people avoid the need for public assistance.

Priority 2: STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION: A STARTING POINT

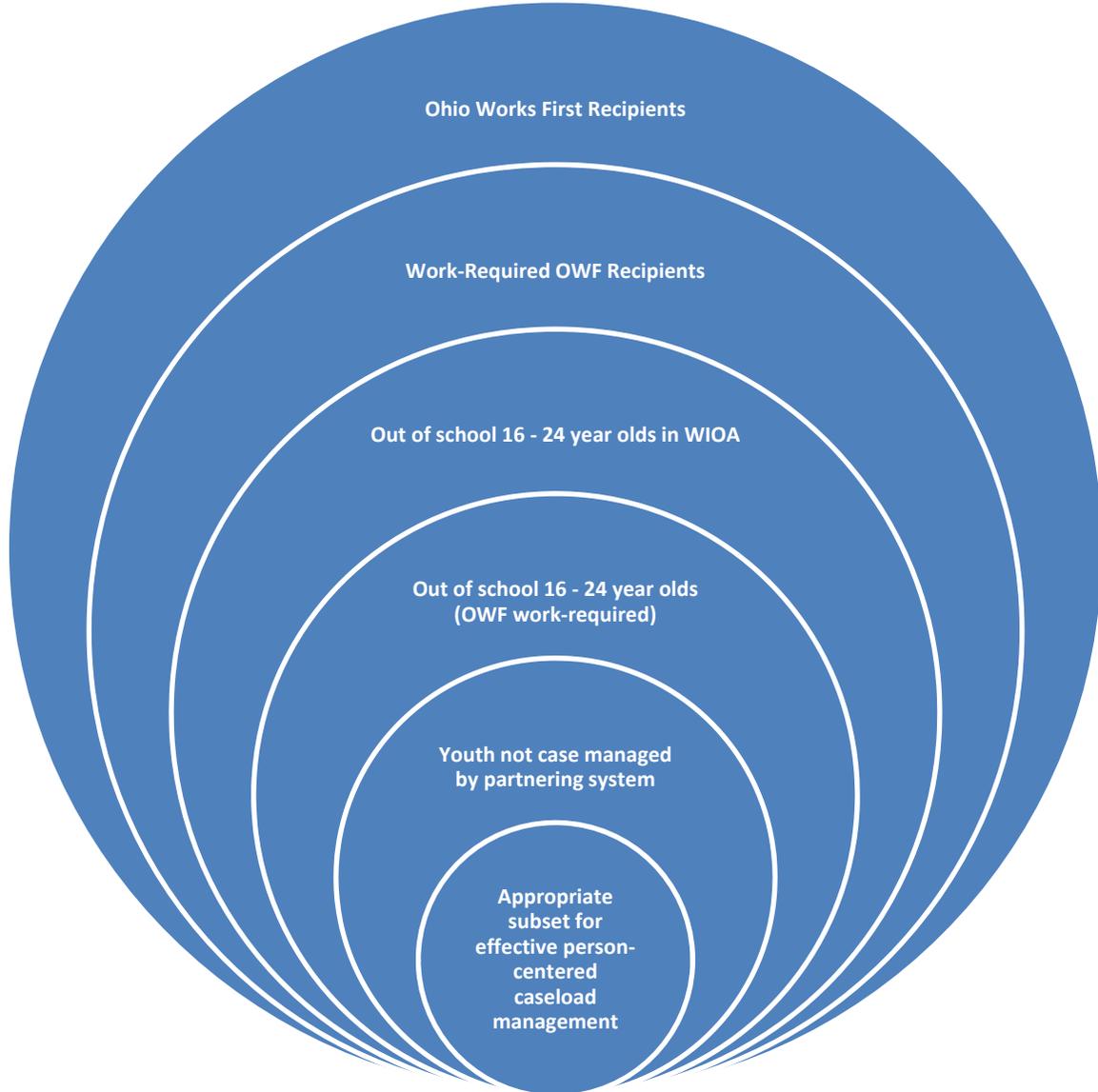
Aside from the identification and development of an appropriate common assessment tool and a comprehensive, evidence-based case management design, the strategy for initial implementation requires a specified population to be served. This strategy must be informed, targeted, and considerate of demographic differences. To create a long-term culture shift and support the sustained economic independence of the next generation of Ohioans, the person-centered case management strategy should focus on young adult recipients of public assistance. The goal is to connect with individuals who are on the path to a more economically-independent adulthood earlier in their journey, to reinforce the value of a work ethic and emphasize the positive experience of work.

The workgroup recommends targeting a subset of 16- to 24-year-old work-required OWF recipients: namely, those who no longer attend high school and who do not have diplomas or GEDs. Some of these individuals may be enrolled in the WIOA youth program. This would make it easier for them to access services and programs that could address their barriers.

The workgroup also recommends that individuals in this subset who are already receiving specialized case management in order to receive other services – such as behavioral health services, development disability services, housing, treatment for chronic health conditions or assistance for youth transitioning from foster care – maintain that case management to avoid duplication of effort. In these instances, the county department of job and family services case manager should coordinate assessments and employability plans in concert with the primary case manager from the partnering system.

The workgroup recommends that county departments of job and family services work in partnership with ODJFS to develop and refine system reports and tools for easy identification of the eligible target population. Figure 1 (next page) shows the recommended process for targeting the initial population.

Figure 1. Subset for Initial Implementation



The necessity of identifying and accounting for regional demographic differences cannot be emphasized strongly enough. Large metropolitan counties generally have more concentrated poverty and also serve more refugees and those with limited English proficiency (LEP). For example, Franklin County’s interpretation contractor can provide interpretation services in 187 different languages. Small, rural counties have no bus systems and few (if any) child care centers. All regions of the state have distinctive employment opportunities and economic climates. Although public assistance recipients may share similar barriers no matter where they live, the context in which those barriers arise and resolve varies, often because of regional demographic differences. ***Issues are similar; solutions are custom-built.***

After person-centered case management has been implemented with this subset population, and after outcomes have been measured, processes refined and resources identified, expansion of the strategy to additional individuals may be considered. Demonstrated success would justify the request of additional resources for an expansion to other populations.

Priority 3: RESOURCES NEEDED FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The success of any comprehensive case management model will be dependent upon communities having the resources and infrastructure in place to fully support the movement of public assistance recipients to full-time employment at a wage that will eliminate dependence on public assistance programs. Such resources include accessible jobs, an information technology (IT) system that supports cross-system coordination, fully trained staff, a comprehensive local social service network with the capacity to provide the needed continuum of services, funding to accomplish this work, and maximum local flexibility. The full development and implementation of the comprehensive case management program requires significant up-front investments to fully realize the intended outcomes. These investments include accessible jobs, staff development, local social services system capacity-building, and an IT system that allows for effective coordination and data analysis. These investments further the work of county and state partners who aim to break down silos and provide person-centered, comprehensive services. Such investments are expensive, time-consuming and worthwhile.

The most basic requirement for successful economic independence is the availability of jobs paying wages sufficient enough to allow people to leave public assistance. It is estimated that a family of one adult and two children would need an annual income of \$27,644 (\$13.30 per hour) to achieve independence from OWF, Food Assistance and Medicaid. This same family would need to earn \$60,320 annually (\$29 per hour) to transition to full independence from the subsidized child care program (at the proposed exit criteria of 300 percent of the federal poverty guidelines).

Employment Pipelines

Communities should focus their economic development efforts on attracting and supporting employers with good-paying jobs. Additionally, analyses should be conducted to determine gaps between employers' workforce needs and the skill sets of work-required individuals receiving public assistance. This will help public assistance and workforce development systems develop training and employment pipelines for recipients with barriers.

To create employment pipelines, county agencies should develop and maximize partnerships with local community colleges and other vocational education programs to create short-term education and career pathways that lead to employment in high-wage, high-growth industries. Engagement also will be needed from both business leaders and from state policymakers to maximize the flexibility of TANF and WIOA funds. It should be noted that several trade industries (construction, electrical, welding, etc.) report they are struggling to find workers to fill critical occupations. Ohio should consider providing incentives to programs that produce viable candidates for employment in these fields and also better market these occupations to younger generations.

Once an employment pipeline is in place, it can be continued with the following strategies:

- Utilizing industry-specific core training with local community colleges and other providers;
- Providing hands-on work experience, co-ops and internships with local employers;
- Offering On-the-Job Training opportunities that lead to increased wages as recipients gain skills and experience;
- Working with local employers to guarantee the hiring of public assistance recipients at the completion of core training.

Intensive Case Management

Person-centered case management relies on the time, resources and expertise of county staff to complete many activities: effectively assess each recipient whose goal is long-term employment, employ proven initial engagement strategies (and re-engagement strategies when necessary), wrap appropriate services around the entire family, and monitor participation in necessary initiatives/steps to overcome barriers. Accomplishing this work will require a much higher level of social work than is generally available in the eligibility-determination-driven public assistance program that has been emphasized over the last several years in Ohio. It also will require a large-scale culture shift, with extensive training and appropriate compensation. Funding and training resources must be available to counties to effect this change.

It has been estimated that a reasonable person-centered case management caseload would consist of approximately 12 to 15 cases, similar to child welfare. Existing public assistance caseloads far exceed that number, and staffing levels are inadequate to reduce caseload sizes. Additional staff, whether hired by the county or contracted, will be needed. Implementation schedules must include adequate time to on-board and train staff. Altering duties and position qualifications may be impacted by collective bargaining agreements, as well. Great care must be taken in the implementation of such a program. Up-front planning and resource/infrastructure development will be critical for a consistent implementation and streamlined, effective delivery system statewide.

Local Flexibility

Local demographic and resource differences must be considered when identifying county networks of social service providers. Many communities do not have broad networks in place. The workgroup recommends that, during the planning stage, communities identify any needed investments in local service capacity. These may include, but are not limited to, the following: transportation to employment; mental health services, trauma-informed care, substance abuse programs and rehabilitation services; educational programs to address adult basic literacy needs; housing programs; and other various supportive programs for barrier removal and skill enhancement. After service gaps are identified, resources should be allocated to build local capacity. Although this analysis and capacity-building may be time-consuming, they are key to this effort and should be allotted sufficient time in the planning schedules.

Additional financial resources should be allocated strategically and in a manner that allows for maximum local flexibility. Local agencies must be able to align and realign funding in the manner deemed most cost-effective and appropriate based on local capacity-building efforts. Currently, flexible TANF, PRC and WIOA funding is available, within state guidelines. Any loss of this flexibility would be counterintuitive and detrimental to the goals of a person-centered case management program.

WIOA funds are allocated in three streams: for dislocated workers, adults and youth. Local areas may redistribute funds between the dislocated worker and adult funding streams, if needed. Although some may advocate for combining WIOA youth and adult funds with TANF funds, in fact doing so would restrict local flexibility. It would compromise counties' ability to redistribute WIOA adult and dislocated worker funds and pose potentially significant problems to local service delivery and economic development opportunities. As a result, the workgroup does not recommend combining WIOA youth and adult and TANF funds.

Data-Sharing

Once accessible jobs, human resources and a comprehensive social services network are in place, a robust, coordinated and comprehensive data system will be needed to manage and evaluate the daily work of a person-centered case management program. Current IT policies and statewide systems do not allow for the transfer of information between programs. County agencies use all of the following to administer public assistance, child welfare, child support and workforce services:

- Client Registry Information System–Enhanced (**CRIS-E**) – Used for eligibility determination and case documentation for OWF, PRC, Food Assistance and Medicaid;
- Ohio Benefits, or Ohio Benefits Worker Portal (**OBWP**) – Used for eligibility determination and case documentation for some Ohio Medicaid programs; future iterations are planned to include additional Medicaid programs for the Aged, Blind and Disabled, OWF and Food Assistance;
- Medicaid Information Technology System (**MIT**) – Used for Medicaid eligibility verification and provider claims billing for all Ohio Medicaid programs, regardless of which system the eligibility determination originated from;
- Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (**SACWIS**) – Used for comprehensive case management for county child welfare caseloads;
- Support Enforcement Tracking System (**SETS**) – Used for child support case management and for the collection and distribution of child support funds;
- Ohio Workforce Case Management System (**OWCMS**) - Used by workforce professionals to link job seekers and employers and to gather data for workforce development programs.

Modifications and enhancements are necessary to support data-sharing across these systems. This would include the following:

- Permission for caseworkers and other designated county staff to access CRIS-E, Ohio Benefits, MIT, SACWIS, SETS and OWCMS;
- Development of a statewide case management data system, ideally as a component of Ohio Benefits. This system would track assignments, goals and case management activities; facilitate robust reporting for data management and outcome measurement; transfer data to eligibility systems if participation affects ongoing eligibility; and allow for statewide information sharing to accommodate family mobility and case transferring. The workgroup recommends that non-JFS service providers be allowed to enter data without county staff intervention, both for contracted providers and partnering systems.

Priority 4: PERFORMANCE MEASURES

For public assistance recipients, the process of moving out of poverty and into economic independence is a marathon, not a sprint, which often takes many years. Even the most engaged individuals will have setbacks. As a result, it can be difficult to measure the success of long-term goals. At the same time, the performance of both individuals and the system as a whole must be measured in order to gauge progress and make necessary adjustments. A successful performance management strategy will value the achievement of incremental steps on the way to reaching long-term goals.

Thoughtful consideration must be given in developing performance measures for a person-centered case management program. Each required public assistance recipient must participate in a standardized and comprehensive assessment of their strengths and barriers, and it is critical that they be engaged in defining their own goals and objectives. Timely assessments are the basis for individualized plans that take into consideration the available services and jobs in each county. Each custom-built employment plan should be designed to meet the unique needs of the recipient and should contain measurable activities that are mutually agreed upon, with reasonable timeframes. Recipients' input will improve their perceptions of their successes and motivate them during difficult times. "Cookie-cutter" plans with activities that the individual does not value will result in frustration and unmet goals.

As detailed in the survey results in Appendix D and Appendix E, many public assistance recipients have significant barriers that prevent them from successfully achieving and maintaining long-term employment. Lack of education, unstable housing, unreliable transportation, limited access to child care, drug and alcohol dependence, prior criminal history, mental health issues, the lasting impact of trauma, and poor physical health are some of the most commonly documented barriers. Evidenced-based practices for working with "hard-to-serve" individuals should be researched and implemented in a community-wide effort to achieve successful outcomes with proven strategies.

Strategies will require long-term case management that is coordinated with a variety of community partners who will help move recipients along a continuum toward economic independence, or an "incremental ladder" (see Figure 2). Along this path, recipients will experience a variety of successes that may include avoiding benefit sanctions, applying for permanent disability benefits, securing housing, joining the military or obtaining safe housing. Each success should be valued and highlighted as a step toward a more promising future.

In their survey responses, multiple stakeholders noted that Ohio should do more to help recipients avoid “cliff issues,” when they abruptly lose benefits when their incomes rise. As one stakeholder wrote, “There should be a gradual decrease in benefits to those who finally find stable employment. Many get discouraged when food stamp benefits or other benefits stop within a month of working and some say they were better off not working.”

Once implementation is achieved and the necessary resources are in place, county agencies should be held accountable to their own performance metrics that evaluate the performance of the agency, rather than the performance of the recipient, as ***personal responsibility is at the core of success***. Public assistance recipients must be engaged in the process of assessment and goal-setting, and they must be committed to meeting those goals by working to reduce the various barriers they may have. Person-centered case management implementation should include an evidenced-based evaluation of the success of the program. The workgroup members have expressed interest in continuing to provide input and assistance in developing a more detailed program design with specific performance measurements.

Priority 5: COMPETING PERFORMANCE METRICS AND LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

Many public programs – such as TANF, WIOA and FAET – include workforce development activities as core services (WIOA) or as requirements to receive benefits (TANF, FAET). These three programs have existing performance measures in place. Program goals differ and many times conflict with each other.

Figure 3 (next page) provides examples of program requirements and performance metrics for TANF, WIOA and FAET.

Figure 3. Program Requirements and Performance Metrics

| TANF Program | WIOA Program | FAET Program |
|---|--|---|
| Job search/job readiness activities - restricted to 6 to 12 weeks per year | Job search/job readiness activities - available to all job seekers without time limits | Job search/job readiness activities - available to all job seekers without time limits |
| Vocational education training activities - restricted to a 12-month lifetime limit and must be directly related to preparation for employment | Provides occupational, basic, and soft skills training as well as counseling, individual employment plans, and career planning for all customers without restriction | No restriction on using vocational education or any other training |
| GED programs - not considered a core activity in meeting work participation requirements (lack of GED or high school diploma is a common barrier to employment) | Obtaining a GED or high school diploma is considered a valid and successful performance measure | Preparing to obtain a GED or high school diploma is considered a valid activity |
| ESOL - not a core activity in meeting work participation requirements (creating a barrier to employment for Limited English Proficiency customers) | There is no restriction - ESOL can be used as skill attainment | ESOL classes can be used as a valid activity |
| Mandatory federal work participation requirement for recipients who are at least 18 years of age with a child under the age of 18 | Voluntary program with performance measures that are focused on workforce preparation and placement for both youth and adults | Mandatory measure for work-required recipients to participate in the employment and training program in order to receive nutrition assistance |

TANF’s main performance measure is the work participation rate. Federal guidelines dictate the activities customers must perform. Unless exempted, both TANF and FAET customers must comply with work requirements to receive assistance. Although there are similarities between the TANF, FAET and WIOA programs, WIOA is a voluntary program that focuses exclusively on workforce preparation and placement for a broader population of job seekers. This population includes adults, out-of-school youth (ages 16 to 24) and in-school youth (ages 14 to 21). WIOA performance measures track employment, earnings and credential outcomes.

Failure to meet performance goals for these programs could result in financial penalties to the state. These penalties likely would be shared with counties and would affect the delivery of services to customers.

Need for Alignment

Many public assistance recipients are also involved with other public systems, such as child support enforcement and child welfare. These systems focus on family supports, stability and unification, and they often require strong ties to the workforce to achieve success. Obligor who have jobs are better able to meet child support payment responsibilities. Child welfare families are often required to participate in soft skills development such as parenting and counseling in order to succeed in their case plans, which can compete with public assistance work requirements. Foster youth transitioning from the child welfare system are more successful when they gain employment or further their education. It is imperative that alignment and coordination of activities expand to include other key systems that interact with and affect participants.

Fatherhood and re-entry-focused services are also valuable programs for coordination and alignment, as they can support full family engagement and reunification. Interagency initiatives such as fugitive safe surrender, expungement clinics and drivers' license reinstatement encourage families to move into documented employment and formal career pathways, as well as address transportation barriers.

A person-centered case management initiative creates an opportunity to improve customer service and long-term outcomes by aligning program requirements and outcome measures among the programs that impact public assistance recipients. Through individualized goal-setting and barrier removal, participants stand to gain valuable tools and opportunities for life-long earning and community contribution. Person-centered case management is not a one-size-fits-all proposition. Yet, currently, the programs discussed above measure performance as if all agencies and recipients are alike.

Person-centered case management relies upon continuums of self-sufficiency and economic independence. Individualized Employment Plans (IEPs) are developed that set goals for the best and highest level that public assistance recipients can achieve along the continuum. Both the agency and the recipient have the responsibility to use their resources to reach the goals outlined in the IEP. This approach recognizes that some individuals have too many barriers to attain complete economic independence and that the local community may not have the resources to help some individuals beyond a certain point. Program performance measures should gauge whether and how both parties meet their responsibilities. They must be developed in a manner that separates the accountability of the agency to meet objective performance standards from the personal accountability and responsibility of the recipient to meet their performance goals.

Developing a person-centered case management system across these programs will be difficult if programmatic performance measures and compliance requirements are not aligned. While acknowledging the dual responsibilities of the agency and the recipient, overall programmatic success should be evaluated on outcomes. These outcomes should be tied to measures of self-sufficiency along the continuum of economic independence and must be defined in a way that individualized plans are accommodated.

Opportunities to align programmatic definitions, requirements and performance expectations should be explored at the state level. However, the workgroup recognizes that most of this alignment will need to be pursued through waiver requests and sustained lobbying efforts at the federal level. Advocacy efforts should inform state and federal policy makers about current and proposed system structures and reiterate Ohio's desire for a plan that emphasizes education, training and work to effectively and efficiently help public assistance recipients become economically independent.

Priority 6: PUBLIC MESSAGING: POVERTY IS A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

Public messaging is integral to any community-wide effort to effect change and progress. Key components of a public message in Ohio's effort to reduce reliance on public assistance should include an emphasis on a comprehensive community partnership of citizens and systems, a strong connection between education and employers, and strategically coordinated economic and workforce development activities. Poverty is a community conversation, worth the time and involvement of the entire community.

In order to make a difference in helping individuals move out of poverty, the messaging must emphasize a comprehensive community partnership. No single entity can provide the full array of needed resources for individuals in poverty to progress toward economic independence. This is a community-wide effort, which requires strong partnerships between the recipient, government initiatives, faith-based programs and community resources.

As noted previously, the availability of a job is the key to moving individuals out of poverty. Emphasizing an enhanced linkage between employers and public assistance recipients is paramount. Some communities do this very well, and it is recognized that a successful partnership between employers and job seekers is contingent upon the skills needed to meet employer's needs. Exploring career options, identifying the level of education or advanced skills required for specific vocations, and setting realistic goals are basic requirements of any individualized employment plan and employer relationship. To strengthen this linkage, community partners must provide the necessary skills training. An emphasis on trade work would be beneficial for 16- to 24-year-old recipients. Coordination with the K-12 system, vocational education providers and post-secondary educational institutions to improve academic success and access to sufficient wages will be critical to obtaining employment that creates economic independence and ends – or even prevents – reliance on public assistance.

Coordination with city and county economic development and planning departments to improve employment opportunities also is vital. Promotional activities can include subsidized employment so recipients can gain hands-on experience while earning income and provides incentives for employers to hire public assistance recipients. County departments of job and family services may offer pre-screening, interviewing and training opportunities; local government may offer tax abatement, incentives and infrastructure grants. The message must be loud and clear: Ohio is looking for employers that offer jobs to help residents attain economic independence.

It takes a community and its resources to chip away at barriers to economic independence. Poverty is a community conversation, ripe with opportunities for support and partnership that can lead to community solutions. Figure 4 provides a sample list of community partners in the mission to enhance economic independence and reduce reliance on public assistance.

Figure 4. Community Partners in Reducing Poverty



A core statewide message must be positive and strong, highlighting personal responsibility and opportunities for success that promote the value and benefits of work and a solid work ethic. Promoting and sustaining individual change is not easy or quick; this is a marathon, not a sprint, which will have moderate and incremental successes. Societal expectations must be managed, with the acknowledgment that not all public assistance recipients will be able to obtain and keep employment that eliminates their eligibility for all types of assistance. Some level of poverty will remain for some individuals.

Stories of individuals who have achieved successes on their paths to economic independence should be shared with a variety of stakeholders, community partners and legislators. These personal journeys demonstrate the complexity of poverty and the great things that can be achieved by engaged individuals who seek a better future for themselves and their children. Such examples can help inform state partners and legislators about the multi-faceted barriers faced by individuals who have touched or been touched by numerous public systems.

For example, “N” is a 33-year-old woman who needed an array of services over the course of nine years before she was able to move completely off public assistance. She has two children and overcame multiple barriers to economic independence, including chemical dependency, legal problems, child welfare involvement, and lack of transportation, child care, child support and social support. Despite her motivation to become self-sufficient, she had numerous public assistance sanctions as she experienced setbacks on her path forward. During this nine-year period, she attended school, improved her employability skills and obtained a degree while receiving an extension of OWF cash assistance beyond the 36-month time limit due to her hardship situation. “N” is now gainfully employed in a social service arena that allows her to give back to the community and help others with similar barriers. In response to a request for her input, “N” identified the top five most significant barriers for OWF recipients as lack of client motivation and commitment to success, lack of transportation, lack of child care, lack of work experience, and lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs at the appropriate skill level. She furthermore said she believed the most effective method of assisting recipients was a hybrid of immediate labor force attachment, human capital development and benefit sanctioning, based on each individual’s circumstances. Her success and subsequent contributions have been monumental.

In contrast, “B” is a 22-year-old woman who received OWF cash assistance as a child, from age 6 to age 18. Her father’s paternity was never established. She had her first child at age 16 and a second child at age 20. She began receiving OWF as an adult when she was 18. The highest level of schooling she completed was the eighth grade. She has been unable to succeed in passing the GED exam despite multiple attempts. Her other barriers to success include unstable housing, food insecurity, lack of child care, mental health issues, chemical dependency, and legal problems such as eviction and drug possession. Through the OWF program, “B” had a variety of work experience opportunities but also served six different sanctions for noncompliance with her self-sufficiency contract. Assistance with child care, GED preparation, and emergent needs such as food and utility payments were provided. Additional referrals for housing, mental health and transportation assistance were coordinated. “B” applied for numerous jobs, but her lack of work history and inability to pass a drug screen were significant barriers. Neither absent father has ever paid support, and orders have not been established because the men cannot be located. A few months ago, she reported that she had no permanent housing and that shelters were full. Three months ago, she exhausted her 36-month time limit for OWF and is no longer eligible for cash assistance. She continues to receive supplemental food assistance and Medicaid. She also has an open child welfare case because of an alleged incident of physical abuse.

CONCLUSION

In this report, the workgroup provided a framework of recommendations for initiating a person-centered case management strategy that begins to reduce reliance on public assistance. The framework includes recommendations for defining person-centered case management, using standardized tools within a flexible delivery system, and utilizing existing research and demonstrated best practices to develop Ohio's model. The report further identifies a practical starting point and initial target population for strategic implementation. The workgroup strongly recommends evaluating the initial implementation before expanding the program to additional populations.

This report outlines the various resources needed to implement an initial strategy, including financial resources, human resources, technological resources and local infrastructure. It emphasizes the importance of local flexibility in using available resources to meet community needs.

The report further contains recommendations for establishing and evaluating performance to gauge the progress of both recipients and county agencies and to make adjustments, when necessary. The roles of both recipients and county agencies will be clearly stated, with an emphasis on personal responsibility. These recommendations highlight the individualized nature of person-centered case management, with unique goals for each participant. They further acknowledge that, because of the number and severity of recipients' employment barriers, successes may be modest and incremental.

The workgroup provided examples of competing performance metrics for existing programs and identified opportunities for legislative advocacy to align the metrics for programs with similar goals. The competing metrics have significant funding implications that must be considered in any statewide initiative.

Lastly, the workgroup has emphasized that poverty is a community conversation and that many partners must work in concert to improve the lives of all Ohioans. Continued, enhanced dialogue and coordination are necessary.

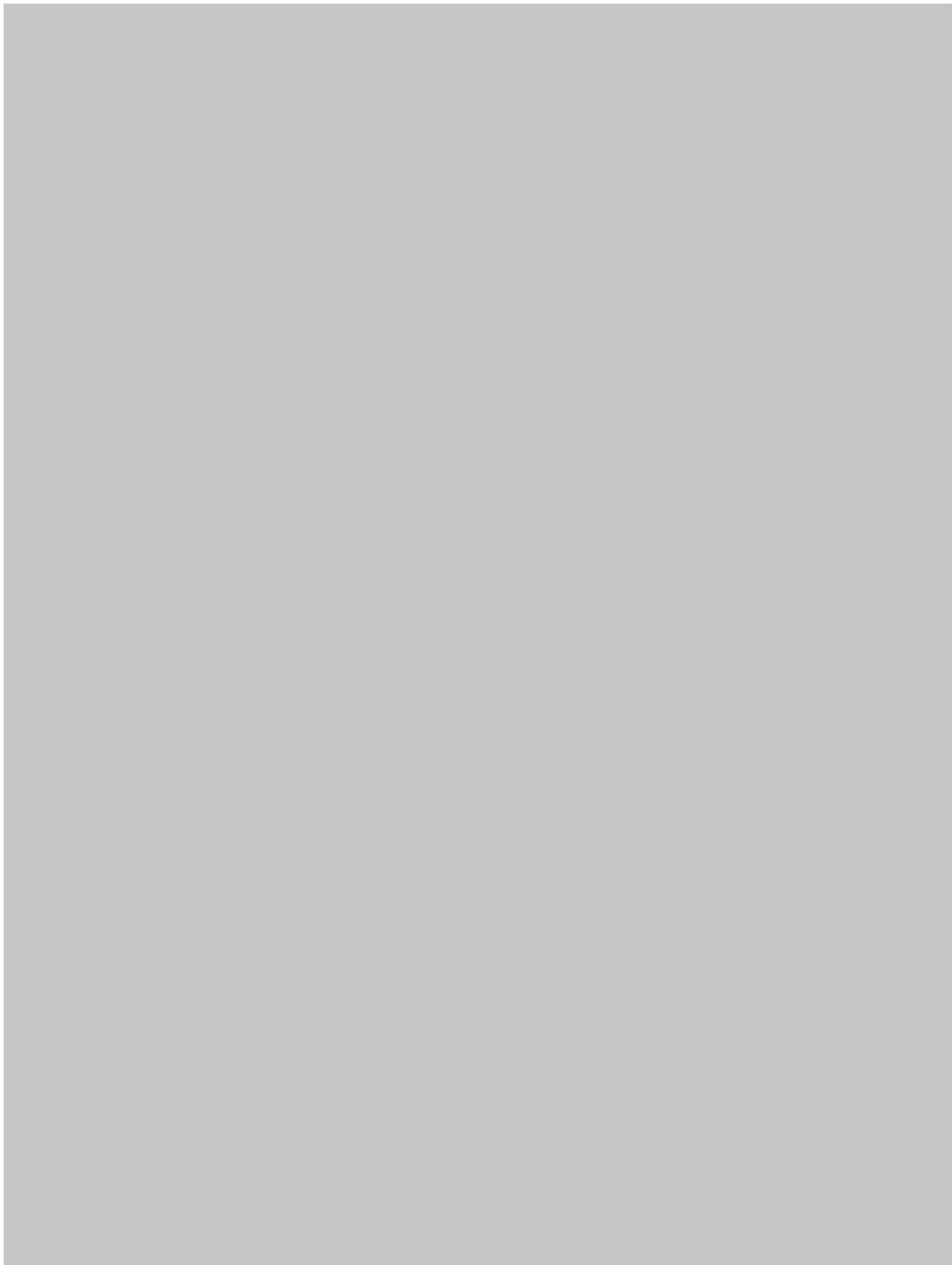
The recommendations included in this report are a starting point for an effort to address long-term reliance on public assistance in Ohio. The workgroup recommends that this outline be used to develop initial strategies, analyze progress and refine future projects based on demonstrated outcomes. Additional work should include the input of public assistance recipients, county agency staff, community partners and various other stakeholders identified throughout this report.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The workgroup would like to recognize the tremendous cooperation and assistance of several individuals who contributed their time and expertise to this process. Sincere thanks to ODJFS Director Cynthia C. Dungey for providing meeting space and staff support to make this report possible; Doug Lumpkin, director of the Office of Human Service Innovation, for his leadership, facilitation and coordination of this effort; all county directors and stakeholder organizations who took the time and care in completing surveys; ODJFS staff members Shelly Hoffman, Jamie Carmichael, Angela Terez and Cheryl Vincent, who worked diligently to coordinate, edit and distribute this report; Joel Potts, executive director of the Ohio Job and Family Services Directors Association, for his never-ending support of this process. We give special thanks to Ohio Governor John Kasich and the General Assembly for establishing this workgroup and allowing us the opportunity to provide guidance on such an important issue. We extend a very special and sincere thanks to the OWF recipients who took part in focus groups and willingly shared their honest and often moving reflections of their lives and the current state of the public assistance system.

Sincerely,

Members of the Workgroup
to Reduce Reliance on Public Assistance



**WORKGROUP TO REDUCE RELIANCE
ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE**

APPENDICES

APRIL 15, 2015

APPENDIX A
WORKGROUP AGENDAS AND MEETING MINUTES

WORKGROUP TO REDUCE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RELIANCE

PUBLIC MEETING

December 18, 2014

9 a.m. until 11 a.m.

The Rhodes Tower, 32 floor, Performance Center Meeting Room

AGENDA

- Welcome
- Purpose of the workgroup
- Overview of barriers to employment
- Brainstorm short- and long-term solutions to reduce public assistance reliance
- Best practices
- Wrap up and next steps
 - Meeting schedule
 - Workgroup chair

WORKGROUP TO HELP INDIVIDUALS TO CEASE RELYING ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE MEETING

December 18, 2014

9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

32 floor Rhodes State Office Tower

IN ATTENDANCE: Doug Lumpkin (ODJFS); Jody Walker (Vinton Co.), Shancie Jenkins (Delaware Co.), Eileen Dray-Bardon (Columbiana Co.), Kathryn A. Offenberger (Carroll Co.), Anthony Trotman (Franklin Co.), Timothy A. McCartney (Hamilton Co.), David Merriman (Cuyahoga) and David Dombrosky (Clark)

PURPOSE OF THE WORKGROUP:

- Reduce reliance on public assistance
- Report due end of March 2015

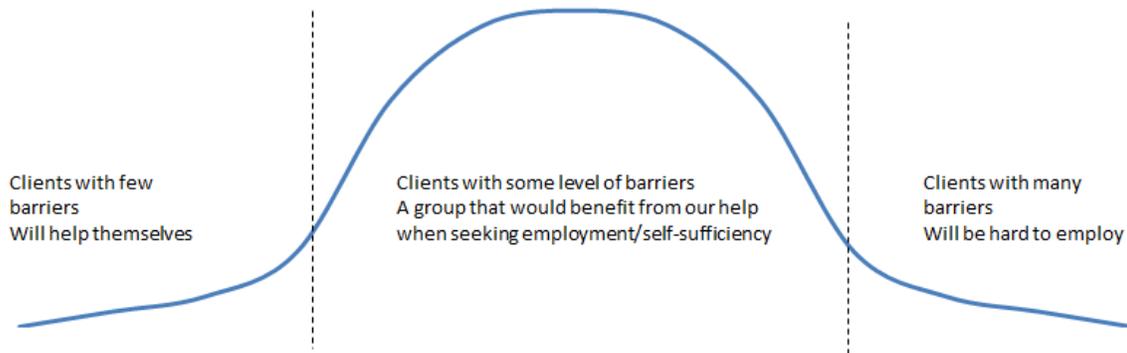
GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING:

- Six meetings – two times a month
- Will need to do homework
- OHSI office will support the workgroup as needed
- OHSI office will bring SMEs as needed
- OHSI office will supply any briefing materials
- Notes will be sent out and posted online

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

- What might counties want to do to reduce reliance on public assistance?
- What public assistance programs: Medicaid, SNAP, TANF, option to explore others. Workgroup discussed and decided to take Medicaid off the table.
- One goal of OHSI is to get more people employed. We know there are many barriers to employment, i.e. drug addiction, lack of housing, etc.
- This workgroup may want to address barrier removal
- What are the Governor's and/or legislature's expectations? Nothing specific.
- Should the focus be on current reliance or future reliance?
- Counties have already been reducing the reliance on public assistance (except food stamps). Need to focus on future reliance – focus on youth. Go from welfare to education to work.
- Need a job that makes you self-sufficient
- Difficult to use funds for economic development activities
- Need input from beneficiaries
- Solutions need to be data-driven
- Need a job to be self-sufficient
- Barrier removal

DEFINING THE POPULATION:



IDEAS:

- Expunging records for small crimes
- Help customers pass drug screening/test
- Possibly focus on short-term solutions focused on able bodies, folks with less barriers
- Address the GED issue – why charge – cost is a barrier
- Fix WEP – work participation activities create barriers
- Start with new applicants, people that have not been in the system before
- Focus on TANF and WIA youth, also kinds aging out of foster care
- Focus on the education of the children whose parents are receiving services

WORKGROUP FOCUS:

- Tentatively, looking at youth aged 24 and below in WIA, TANF, aging out of foster care
- Forward thinking
- Barrier prevention and removal
- Career opportunities – pathway to self-sufficiency

NEXT STEPS:

- Share benefits cliff with workgroup and other homework OHSI is currently working on – OHSI
- Lots of good work going on, need to research best practices – workgroup members
- WIOA – Need to know the specifics – May help our future focus – OHSI
- TANF/WIA youth data – OHSI
- What's going on in behavior health and drug addiction – OHSI
- Employment data by county – OHSI
- (# of clients with low level offenses that could be expunged) – OHSI
- (# of statewide expungements) – OHSI
- Any GED data – High school drop-out rate – OHSI
- Kids aging out of foster care – OHSI

NEXT MEETINGS:

January 8, 2015, 9:30 to 11:30 Rhodes Tower, 32 Floor, Performance Center Meeting Room

January 29, 2015, 9:30 to 11:30 Rhodes Tower, 32 Floor, Performance Center Meeting Room

WORKGROUP TO REDUCE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RELIANCE

PUBLIC MEETING

January 8, 2015

9:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.

The Rhodes Tower, 32 floor, Performance Center Meeting Room

AGENDA

- Welcome
- Changes/approval of notes from 12-18-14 meeting
- Review of background data
- Person-centric case management
 - Sub-group
 - Purpose
 - How this group can help
- Behavioral health update
- Wrap up and next steps

WORKGROUP TO HELP INDIVIDUALS TO CEASE RELYING ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE MEETING

January 8, 2015

9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

32 floor Rhodes State Office Tower

IN ATTENDANCE: Doug Lumpkin (ODJFS), Jody Walker (Vinton), Shancie Jenkins (Delaware), Eileen Dray- Bardon (Columbiana), Kathryn A. Offenberger (Carroll), Anthony Trotman (Franklin), Timothy A. McCartney (Hamilton), Jacquelon Ward (Cuyahoga), David Dombrosky (Clark) and Beth Rubin (Greene)

MEETING AGENDA:

- Changes/approval of notes from 12-18-14 meeting
- Review of background data
- Person-centric case management
 - Sub-group
 - Purpose
 - How this group can help
- Behavioral health update
- Wrap up and next steps

CHANGE/APPROVAL OF NOTES FROM 12-18-14 MEETING:

- One minor change made
- Notes will be placed on website

REVIEW OF BACKGROUND DATA:

- Data shows that 16- to 24-year-olds have high arrest rates, high homeless rates and are low earners. This data confirms our tentative focus on transition – teenage youth and young adults.
- Can we get education data on 16- to 24-year-olds? OHSI will work on this.
- What is the HUD definition of homeless? Does it include couch surfers? No they do not include couch surfers in their count of homeless.

PERSON-CENTERED CASE MANAGEMENT:

- OHSI is looking into Person-Centered Case Management models and has pulled a small team together to define what person-centered case management means. This small team will send drafts to the workgroup for feedback. The team is also looking to add county participation.
- Workgroup thoughts and ideas:
 - Use predictive analytics to help better understand long-term issues/what services lead to success. We have a ton of data that hasn't been mined. To help with this effort OHSI is adding Performance Center staff members to the Benefits Ohio BI group; working with agencies to pull and share data; leveraging the relationship ODJFS has with Ohio State to address data issues and needs; beginning to research predictive analytics.
 - Need to define "success" - a job, a livable wage?
 - Need to share data across systems
 - Need advocacy to the federal government around work requirements
- Don't talk about caseload, look at workload instead. Currently we have disparate case management systems that don't track cumulative time spent on an individual or family. Consider a risk assessment and assign work based on complexity. Look for a national case system/model.
- Focus on implementation issues:
 - What costs are associated with this focus on person-centered case management for 16- to 24-year-olds?

- o Systems need to work together
- o Looking at getting the client to give access to their own data
- o Cuyahoga has a data sharing - will send to Doug
- There have to be jobs for clients to move into. Economic development will be an important partner in meaningful job placements.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

- Is there anything the workgroup can do to help with economic development?
- Needs to be a bigger conversation with the Governor's office, economic development and counties
- Can we affect the issue/can we be of any help?
- TANF does support economic development
- Need a strong workforce for economic development

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND DRUG ADDICTION:

- Shancie will be will be actively working with OHSI to lead an effort to identify opportunities and develop strategies around this issue
- She will develop a strategy
- OHSI staff will support Shancie's efforts

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

- Need to align policy, process and technology.
- We could have a more in-depth technology discussion at a future meeting.
- Need to add resources to the policy, process and technology model.
- How would you get non-profit data into the system?
- What current resources are being used/needed to meet demand? How do we know if demand is larger than available resources?
- How do we provide program-specific data to counties to know what is available to meet clients' needs? Counties need to know community capacity (outside of those they contract with) versus resources needed. Some counties use United Way. Doug mentioned Mapping Ohio's Compassion as a possible tool.
- We currently have a culture of referral and we need to move to a culture of resolution.
- The issue is resources.
- Success will need to move along a continuum and include measures of education, skills, employment and employment retention.
- Person-centered case management is similar to the child welfare model we are currently using.
- If we focus on 16- to 24-year-olds and our work participant rate dips, will there be an acceptable threshold; room for declining numbers?

NEXT STEPS:

- Add education data to the youth data paper
- Collect data on case management workload measurements from other states or agencies
- Send out case management models two-pager
- Cuyahoga County will share their data sharing strategy with their FCFC
- Add technical discussion to an upcoming agenda
- Send out the link to Sagamore database: Mapping Ohio's Compassion

NEXT MEETINGS:

January 29, 2015, **Canceled**

February 5, 2015, 1 to 3 Rhodes Tower, 32 Floor, Performance Center Meeting Room

February 26, 2015, 9:30 to 11:30 Rhodes Tower, 32 Floor, Performance Center M

WORKGROUP TO REDUCE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RELIANCE

PUBLIC MEETING

February 5, 2015

1:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m.

The Rhodes Tower, 32 floor, Performance Center Meeting Room

AGENDA

- Welcome
- Changes/approval of notes from 1/8/15 meeting
- Budget update
- Youth Program Workgroup update
- Mental Health and Addiction Services meeting update
- Wrap up and next steps

WORKGROUP TO HELP INDIVIDUALS TO CEASE RELYING ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE MEETING

February 5, 2015

9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

32 floor Rhodes State Office Tower

IN ATTENDANCE: Doug Lumpkin (ODJFS); Jody Walker (Vinton), Shancie Jenkins (Delaware), Eileen Dray- Bardon (Columbiana), Kathryn A. Offenberger (Carroll), Anthony Trotman (Franklin), Timothy A. McCartney (Hamilton), David Merriman (Cuyahoga), David Dombrosky (Clark) and Beth Rubin (Greene)

MEETING AGENDA:

- Changes/approval of notes from 1/8/15 meeting
- Budget update
- Youth Program Workgroup update
- Mental Health and Addiction Services meeting update
- Wrap up and next steps

CHANGE/APPROVAL OF NOTES FROM 1/8/15 MEETING:

- One minor change made
- Notes will be placed on website

BUDGET UPDATE:

- Direction is to align Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and some Ohio Works Incentive Program (OWIP) funds
- Combine TANF and WIOA youth programs into one year-round program
- New youth program for 16- to 24-year-olds will begin December 2015
- Will need to address how to run current programs, and start the new youth program, since the current youth programs end in October 2015
- County performance metrics will be required, and this workgroup will participate in developing metrics

YOUTH PROGRAM WORKGROUP UPDATE:

- Initial core member team members were introduced:
 - Amiee Bowie, Franklin County JFS, Deputy Director of Supportive Services
 - Angela Carnahan, Licking County JFS, Workforce Development Administrator
 - Tamara Goniea, Perry County JFS, Executive Assistant to the Director
 - Beth Brannigan, ODJFS, Workforce Development, Bureau Chief, Employment & Training Programs
 - Betsy West-Suver, ODJFS, Family Assistance, Section Chief, Cash and Food Assistance Policy
 - Patricia Clements, Policy Analyst, ODJFS Director's Office
 - Lawrence Parson, Policy Analyst, ODJFS Director's Office
 - Jamie Carmichael, Policy Analyst, ODJFS Director's Office
- Initial Partners and Experts:
 - Successful Non-Profit Providers
 - Mental Health and Addiction Services
 - Department of Education
 - Opportunities for Ohioans with Disability
 - Department of Health

The team also will be adding county and SME participants. It was recommended to add case workers and child case management specialists to this team, and Clark, Franklin, Delaware and Vinton counties volunteered to have staff participate. This small team will check in with the workgroup for feedback.

- New program to combine TANF and WIOA Summer Youth Programs
 - Combine both programs into one comprehensive case management program
 - Mapping out current processes
 - Determining what an ideal program would look like
 - What are the pain points in a unified system (i.e. sharing information)
 - Suggestion was made to look at the counties that are already combining youth programs successfully
- Key model characteristics
 - Discussion of case plan based on strengths and needs
 - Intensive track/case management to deal with multiple or severe barriers
 - Discussion about service availabilities and county expectations/accountability

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

- This is a new territory and the counties need to be able to set up the system, but the counties need the opportunity to fail without losing county money
- Person-centered case management will not be perfection in one year
- Need to have consistent dialog of reality of our clients' situations and capabilities
- Leverage the Family and Children First Councils (FCFC)
- Ensure system metrics match realistic expectations

WHAT IS THIS WORKGROUP'S RESPONSIBILITY?

- Must submit report by 3/31/2015
- The group needs to figure out its responsibilities
- Address and communicate concerns
- Identify metrics to show success
- Group nominated and confirmed Tim McCartney from Hamilton County as chairperson for the workgroup

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES MEETING UPDATE:

- Initial meeting with Mental Health and Addiction Services presentation on agency and current initiatives
- Discussion about the process of mental health with drug addiction issues with employers
- Need mental health services and job supports to work in tandem with treatment to support the individual throughout the treatment process
 - Think of it as an Employee Assistance Program
 - Job as part of recovery

NEXT STEPS:

- Complete workgroup report
- Work to shape outcome measures
- Better define case management
- Define what "success" looks like at a higher level
- Elevate prevention conversations (i.e. teen pregnancy, infant mortality)

NEXT MEETINGS:

February 26, 2015, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., Rhodes Tower, 32 Floor, Performance Center Meeting Room

March 11, 2015, 1 to 3:00 p.m., Rhodes Tower, 32 Floor, Performance Center Meeting Room

March 26, 2015, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., Rhodes Tower, 32 Floor, Performance Center Meeting Room

WORKGROUP TO REDUCE RELIANCE ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE MEETING AGENDA

PUBLIC MEETING

February 26, 2015

9 a.m. until 11 a.m.

Rhodes Tower, 32 floor, Performance Center Meeting Room

AGENDA

- Welcome
- Office of Human Service Innovation update
- Committee/workgroup assignments

WORKGROUP TO HELP INDIVIDUALS TO CEASE RELYING ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE MEETING

February 26, 2015

9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

32nd floor Rhodes State Office Tower

IN ATTENDANCE: Doug Lumpkin (ODJFS); Jody Walker (Vinton), Shancie Jenkins (Delaware), Eileen Dray- Bardon (Columbiana), Kathryn A. Offenberger (Carroll), Anthony Trotman (Franklin), Timothy A. McCartney (Hamilton), David Merriman (Cuyahoga), David Dombrosky (Clark) and Beth Rubin (Greene)

MEETING AGENDA:

- Approval of notes from 2/5/15 meeting
- Office of Human Service Innovation update
- Committee/workgroup assignments

APPROVAL OF NOTES FROM 2/5/15 MEETING:

- Notes will be placed on website

OHSI UPDATE

Budget Update:

- Direction is to align Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and some Ohio Works Incentive Program (OWIP) funds
- Combine TANF and WIOA youth programs into one year-round program
- New comprehensive case management approach for 16- to 24-year-olds will begin December 15, 2015
- Remainder of the eligible population will begin comprehensive case management in July 1, 2016
- County performance metrics will be required, and this workgroup will participate in developing metrics

YOUTH PROGRAM WORKGROUP UPDATE:

- Model and framework nearly complete
 - Broken down into four areas:
 - Assessment and application
 - Case planning standardization
 - Case management
 - Exit
 - Goals to include:
 - Educational attainment
 - Job advancement
 - Wage increase
 - Military service
 - Enrollment in education
 - Working to frame-up and create verbiage for group review and feedback.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- A preliminary meeting was held
- High level discussion around metrics
- Conversation is tabled until all interested parties are identified

GENERAL DISCUSSION ON GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR:

- Refugee and immigrant populations
- Variation of counties from metro, medium and rural/small
- Information Technology system to support the work will be developed

WORKGROUP REPORT

- Must submit report by 3/31/2015
- Beth Rubin was nominated and confirmed as chairperson for the report subgroup
- Group was provided a list of 12 items that have been discussed thus far:
 - How can counties work to reduce public assistance reliance
 - What age group
 - Solutions be data-driven, evidence-based
 - Person-centered case management
 - Moving people out of poverty is long and costly
 - Define success, families may have success continue
 - What are metrics
 - Caseload size
 - Who are the other partners
 - That economic development and availability of living wage critical
 - How do we help those in this generation
 - Need to utilize technology to enhance data sharing
- Group members will review the list, make any additions and respond to any topics by COB, Monday, March 2, 2015

NEXT STEPS:

- Draft workgroup report
- Discuss how to share information from agency to agency in the new system
 - Individual release?
 - Agency release?
 - Costs involved?
- How is electronic data shared/housed?
 - How do we leverage Ohio Benefits Bank and ohiojobs.com?

NEXT MEETINGS:

March 11, 2015(Wednesday), 1 to 3:00 p.m., Rhodes Tower, 32 Floor, Performance Center Meeting Room

March 26, 2015 (Thursday), 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., Rhodes Tower, 32 Floor, Performance Center Meeting Room

WORKGROUP TO REDUCE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RELIANCE

PUBLIC MEETING

March 11, 2015

9 a.m. until 11 a.m.

The Rhodes Tower, 32 floor, Performance Center Meeting Room

AGENDA

- Welcome
- Office of Human Service Innovation update
- Review/discuss responses to bullet point items from last meeting
- Survey discussion
- Report progress update

WORKGROUP TO HELP INDIVIDUALS TO CEASE RELYING ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE MEETING

March 11, 2015

1pm-3pm, 32nd floor Rhodes State Office Tower

IN ATTENDANCE: Doug Lumpkin (ODJFS); Jody Walker (Vinton), Shancie Jenkins (Delaware), Eileen Dray- Bardon (Columbiana), Kathryn A. Offenberger (Carroll), Anthony Trotman (Franklin), Timothy A. McCartney (Hamilton), David Merriman (Cuyahoga), David Dombrosky (Clark) and Beth Rubin (Greene)

MEETING AGENDA:

- Welcome
- Office of Human Service Innovation update
- Review/discuss responses to bullet point items from last meeting
- Survey discussion
- Report progress update

APPROVAL OF NOTES FROM 2/26/15 MEETING:

- Notes will be placed on website

OFFICE OF HUMAN SERVICES INNOVATION UPDATE:

- Introduction of Cheryl Vincent, new program director for Office of Human Services Innovation
- Call with Health and Human Services – Proactive call regarding shared budgets around TANF and WIOA integration
- Call with Department of Labor – Proactive call regarding fiscal issues that have been raised by the WIBs
- House testimony

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

- Standardized assessment that can be used statewide
- Group would like to keep proposal broad while including elements (i.e. comprehensive case management)
- Identify similarities/differences in county sizes and demographics and show small successes

REPORT:

- Shelly Hoffman was identified as point of contact for report support
- Responses to 12 points have been received and are being reviewed
- Group concerned about fast-approaching deadline
- Doug will have conversations regarding deadline compliance

NEXT STEPS:

- Create and distribute survey
- Survey will be sent and compiled by state
- Define appropriate caseload and salaries
- Create sub-workgroup to define comprehensive case management

NEXT MEETING:

Monday, March 30, 2015 1-3 p.m., Rhodes Tower, 32 Floor, Performance Center Meeting Room

WORKGROUP TO REDUCE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RELIANCE

PUBLIC MEETING

March, 30, 2015

1 p.m. until 3 p.m.

The Rhodes Tower, 32 floor, Performance Center Meeting Room

AGENDA

- Welcome
- Draft survey results (OWF work-required and stakeholders)
- Draft research review
- Draft performance measure review
- Next steps for report finalization

WORKGROUP TO HELP INDIVIDUALS TO CEASE RELYING ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE MEETING

March 30, 2015

1 p.m.-3 p.m., 32 floor, Rhodes State Office Tower

IN ATTENDANCE: Jody Walker (Vinton), Shancie Jenkins (Delaware), Eileen Dray- Bardon (Columbiana), Kathryn A. Offenberger (Carroll), Timothy A. McCartney (Hamilton), David Merriman (Cuyahoga), David Dombrosky (Clark) and Beth Rubin (Greene)

MEETING AGENDA:

- Welcome
- Draft survey results
- Draft research review
- Draft performance measures review
- Next steps for report finalization

APPROVAL OF NOTES FROM 3/11/15 MEETING:

- Notes will be placed on website

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

- Surveyed all county directors, with a response rate of 90 percent
- Received 64 responses from stakeholder survey
- Stakeholder survey will remain open until report is complete
- Rough analysis of results was distributed to group – draft has not been vetted
 - Transportation was identified as a top barrier across all counties
 - Small counties identified generational poverty as one of the top-five barriers
 - The issue of high school diploma/GED is more prevalent in larger counties
 - Counties were asked to assess job readiness of current OWF caseloads. Counties reported: 17percent of population is job-ready; 35 percent not job-ready; 27 percent nearly job-ready; 20 percent unemployable.
- Suggestion was made to make the survey available to consumers
- Recommendation was made to utilize focus groups for consumer input
- Consumer mobility was identified as a complicating factor. Consumers should be tracked as they move from county to county, so they don't have to start over every time they relocate. Members agreed this was the last meeting.

REPORT:

- A two-week extension has been granted
- Fourth draft in progress

NEXT STEPS:

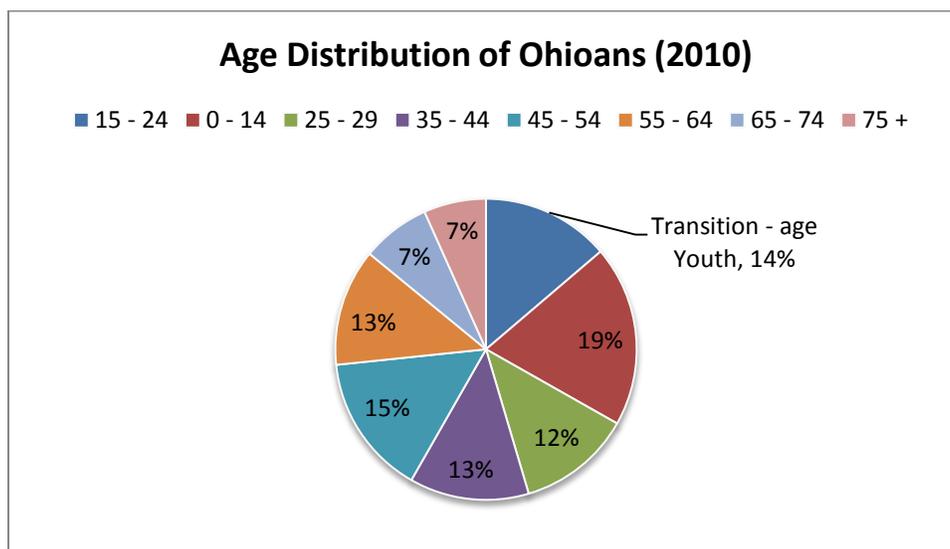
- Circulate drafts, raw survey data and research
- Finalize report

APPENDIX B YOUTH DATA

OHIO TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH DATA REVIEW FINDINGS (ODJFS 2015)

TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH IN OHIO, OVERVIEW

There are an estimated 1.5 million people between the ages of 16 and 24 living in Ohio. ¹ This age group, also known as transition-age youth, makes up approximately 14 percent of Ohio's total population. This number is expected to hold steady through the year 2020.



A statewide snapshot of transition-age youth shows that more than 200,000 were receiving some sort of ODJFS-administered public assistance benefit. In addition, many of young people receive supportive service from other state agencies.

Ohio's Transition-Age Youth, By Services Received in October 2014

| Service | Count |
|---|-------------|
| SNAP | 206,407 |
| SNAP and employed | 58,977 |
| OWF, as ABAWD and work-required | 18,541 |
| OWF | 17,694 |
| OWF, as the adult on the case | 7,505 |
| Subsidized child care | 21,676 |
| *Child welfare placements ² | 10,075 |
| *Foster Care Emancipations ³ | 1000 - 1400 |
| *OOD services ⁴ | 11,412 |

¹ ACS five-year estimate, 2008 - 2015

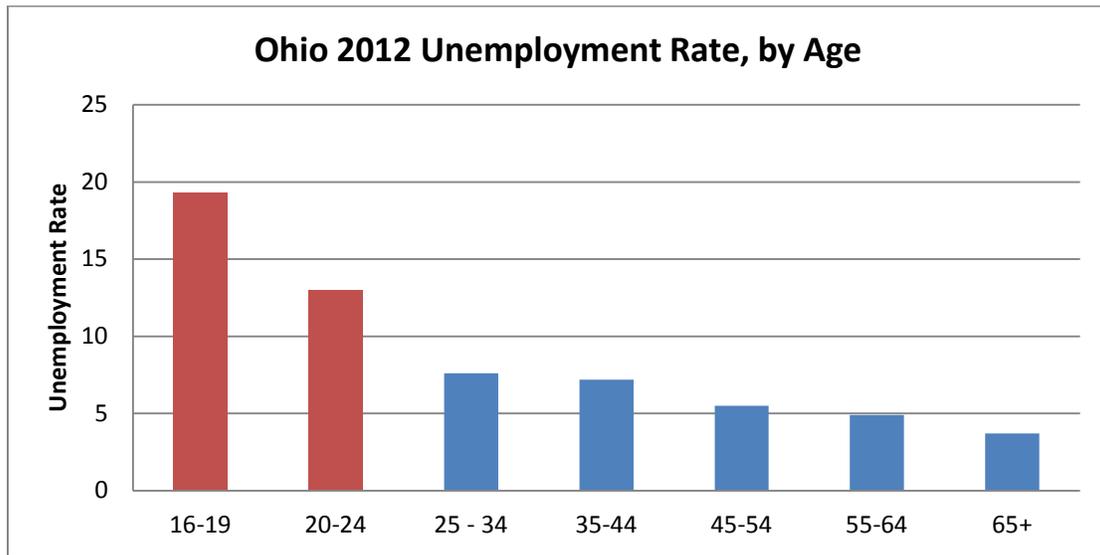
² CY 2013 cumulative, ages 13 - 18+

³ ODJFS Annual Report, 2013

*annual data

UNEMPLOYMENT PREVALENCE AND TRENDS

Overall, across the state, unemployment is trending downward for all age groups. However, the unemployment rate in Ohio is much higher for transition-age youth than for any other age group. In 2013, 43.9 percent of 16- to 19-year-olds were participating in the labor force, through employment or job search. Of those, 19.3 percent were unemployed but actively seeking work. Seventy-seven percent of 20- to 24-year-olds were also participating in the work force. Of those, 13 percent were unemployed but actively seeking work. The combined unemployment rate for ages 16-24 was 14 percent.⁶ This number is twice the rate of unemployment for any other age group.



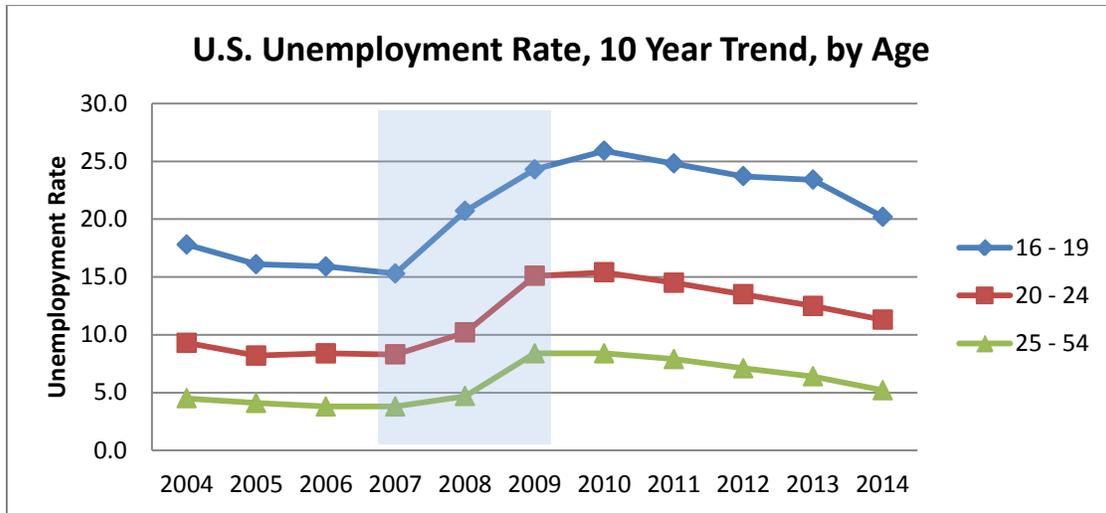
During the most recent recession, younger youth were disproportionately impacted by high unemployment.⁷ This resulted in many of these youth not having early work experience afforded their predecessors.

⁴ Opportunities for Ohioans with Disability FFY 2014, ages 14 - 25

⁵ Mental Health and Addiction Services, via Ohio Medicaid, FFY 2013

⁶ All data taken from US DOL, BLS Employment Situation, Household Data, table A. October 2014

⁷ Based on the Current Population Survey estimates, Historical tables. October 2014

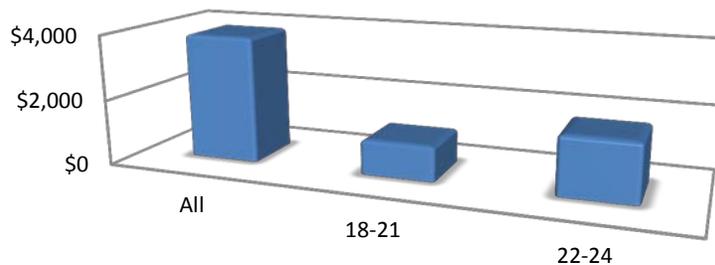


EMPLOYMENT PICTURE

Young workers are unlikely to retain employment with the same employer over an extended period and are more likely to have low-paying jobs.⁸ The U.S. Department of Labor reports that young adults born in the early 1980s held an average of 6.2 jobs from age 18 through age 26. In addition, in 2013, Ohioans aged 18 to 24 made up 21.9 percent of Ohio’s workforce.⁹ Despite representing one in five workers in Ohio’s labor force, this group had significantly lower wages than older age groups.

The difference in wages can be attributed to youth having less work experience, but the low average wage of young people also is impacted by high unemployment rates and the concentration of employment in traditionally low-wage industries. The large majority of employment for 18- to 24-year-olds is concentrated in two of the lowest-wage industries of all Ohio industry.¹⁰

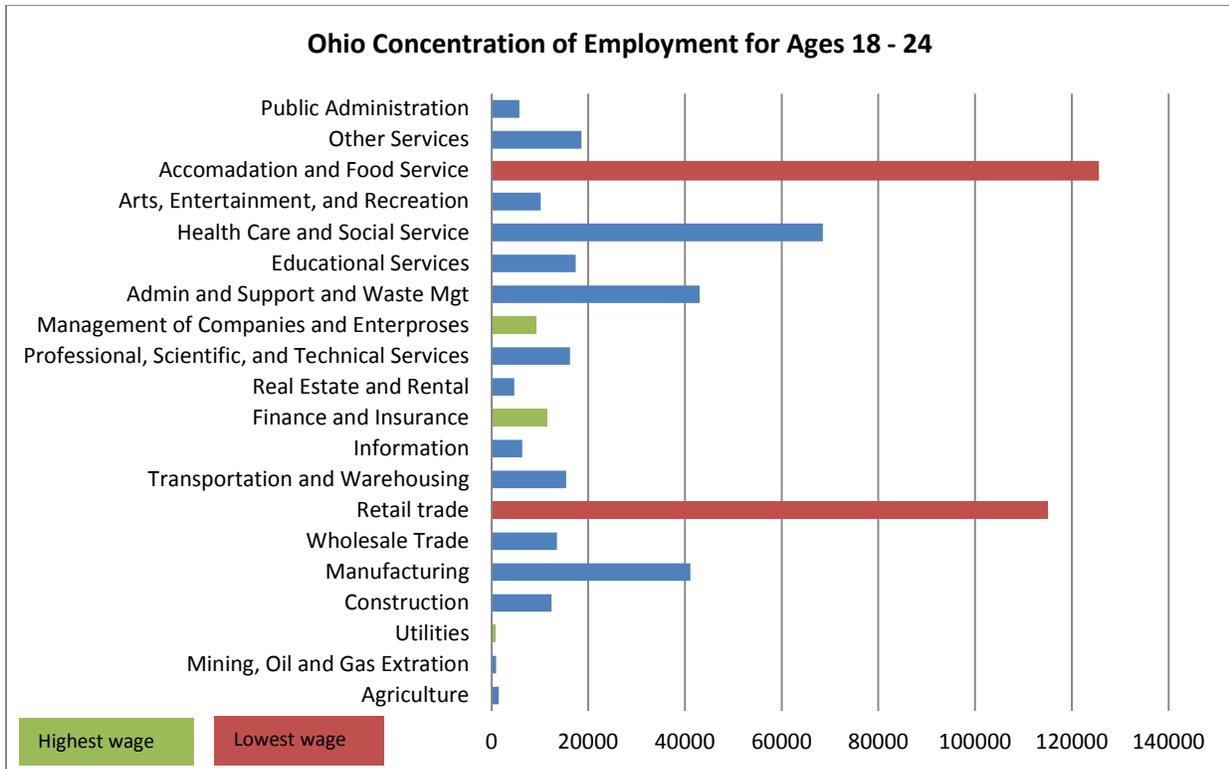
2013 Q1 - Average Earnings in Ohio, by Age



⁸ US DOL America’s Youth Adults at 27: Labor Market Activity, Education, and Household Composition Longitudinal Survey Results. March 2014

⁹ Current Population Survey, Employment status of the civilian non-institutional population. 2013 annual averages

¹⁰ US Census, Longitudinal Employment Dynamics, Custom Report. 3rd Quarter 2014



In addition, one in four U.S. farm workers were under the age of 25. However, in Ohio only Monroe, Harrison, Holmes, Belmont and Mercer counties have a concentration of employment of greater than 5 percent in agriculture.¹¹

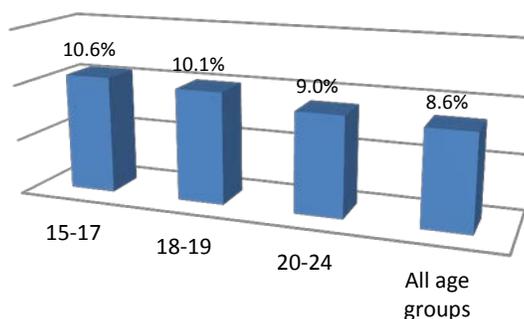
LIVE BIRTH OUTCOMES¹²

Households headed by those under age 25 are significantly more likely to become poor.¹³

In addition, children born to young mothers are less likely to be born healthy. More than 44,000 women under the age of 25 gave birth in 2013. Of those, more than one in 10 delivered low birth weight babies.

Overall, birth rates in Ohio declined during the recession. The number of young women having babies continued to decline through 2013, with mothers aged 15 to 24 having more than 20 percent fewer babies in 2013 than in

2013 Low Birth Weight Rate, by Age of Mother

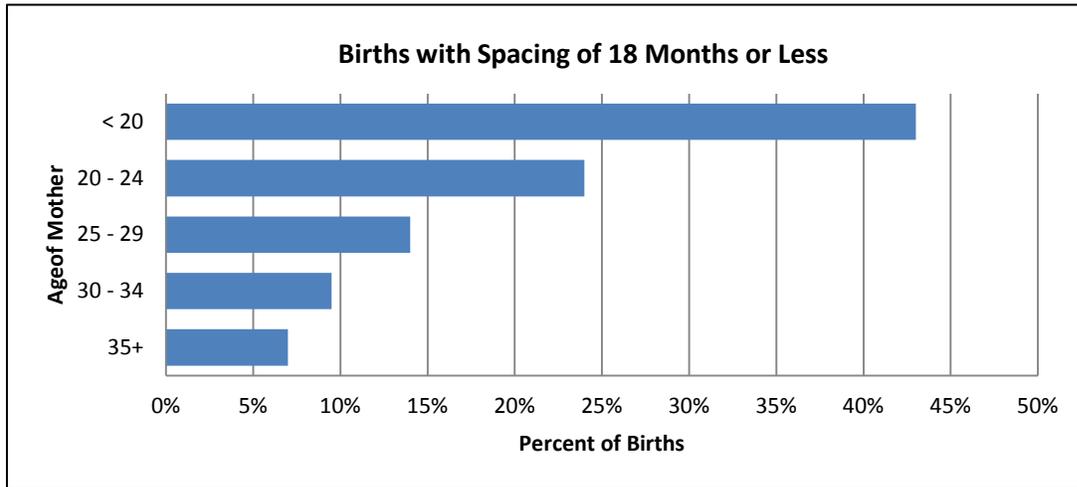


¹¹ USDA, Economic Research Service, Atlas of Rural and Small Town America. December 2014

¹² All birth data taken from Ohio Department of Health, Live Birth Data, Custom Report. November 2014

¹³ McKernan and Ratcliffe 2002

2006. However, close birth spacing, which is a significant poverty risk factor, continues to be most prevalent for transition-age youth.



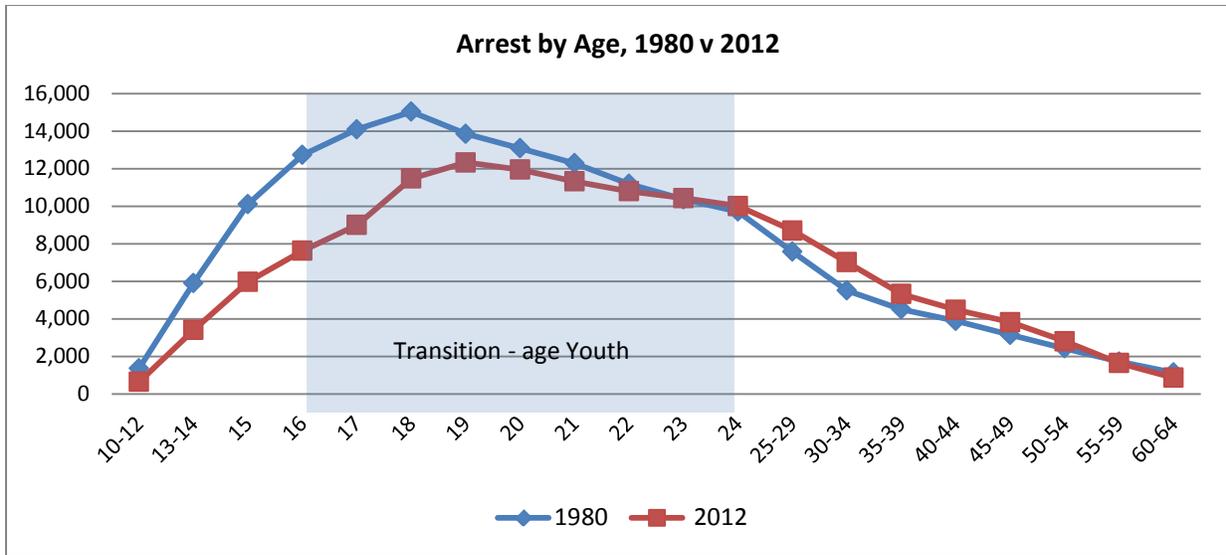
CHILD SUPPORT OBLIGATIONS

As of September 30, 2014, there were 17,109 non-custodial parents between the ages of 16 and 24 who have some type of order (i.e. financial, providing medical insurance, or both). Of those, 92 percent, or 15,762, were in arrears on their obligations. Of those in arrears, 86 percent, or 13,683, were considered to be in default.

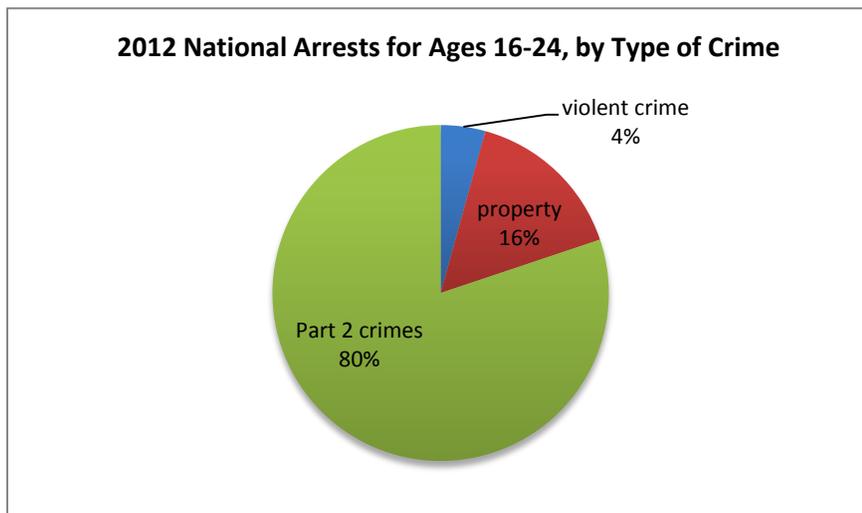
ARREST RATES AND INCARCERATION

Of all Ohio prison inmates in 2010, the median age of first arrest was 18 for men and 20 for women.¹⁴ Nationally, more than 3.2 million transition-age youth were arrested in 2012. Despite a continued decline in rate of arrest for transition-age youth, they continue to represent the highest number of arrest among all age groups.

¹⁴ Ohio Criminal Justice Service, OCJ Statistics. 2012

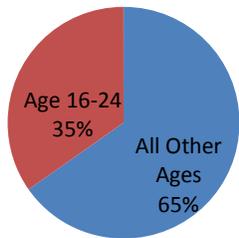


The large majority of crimes committed by youth ages 16 to 24 were categorized as Part II crime. Part II crimes are considered less serious and include offenses such as simple assaults, forgery and counterfeiting, receiving stolen property, vandalism, possession of weapon, driving under the influence, prostitution, and drug abuse violations.

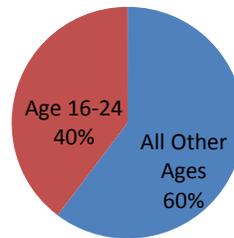


While arrests for Part I crimes are low in comparison to Part II arrests, transition-age youth accounted for 35 percent of all Part I violent crime and 40 percent of all Part I property crime.

**2012 National Part I Violent Crimes,
by Age**



**2012 National Part I Property Crimes,
by Age**



Part I crime consists of the seven most severe categories of offenses collected by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program, including violent crimes (murder, forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault) and property crimes (burglary, larceny/theft, motor vehicle theft and arson¹).

In addition to high arrest rates, Ohio's transition-age youth were the most likely of all age groups to be victims of violent crime. Nearly six (5.9) per 1000 of Ohio youth ages 18 to 20, and nearly 4 (3.7) per 1000 persons ages 21 to 24 experienced violent crime in 2012.¹⁵

HOMELESSNESS AND TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH

According to HUD's most recent congressional Point-in-Time report to Congress, the number of homeless youth has been declining over the past two years. At the most recent count in 2013, transitional age youth made up 10 percent of the nation's homeless population.

In December 2014, the U.S. Conference of Mayors published the findings of a 26-state survey on homelessness, which found that for families with children, the single leading cause of homelessness cited by city officials was lack of affordable housing, followed by unemployment, poverty and low-paying jobs. For unaccompanied individuals, lack of affordable housing also topped the list of causes of homelessness, followed by unemployment, poverty, mental illness and lack of needed services, and substance abuse and lack of needed services.

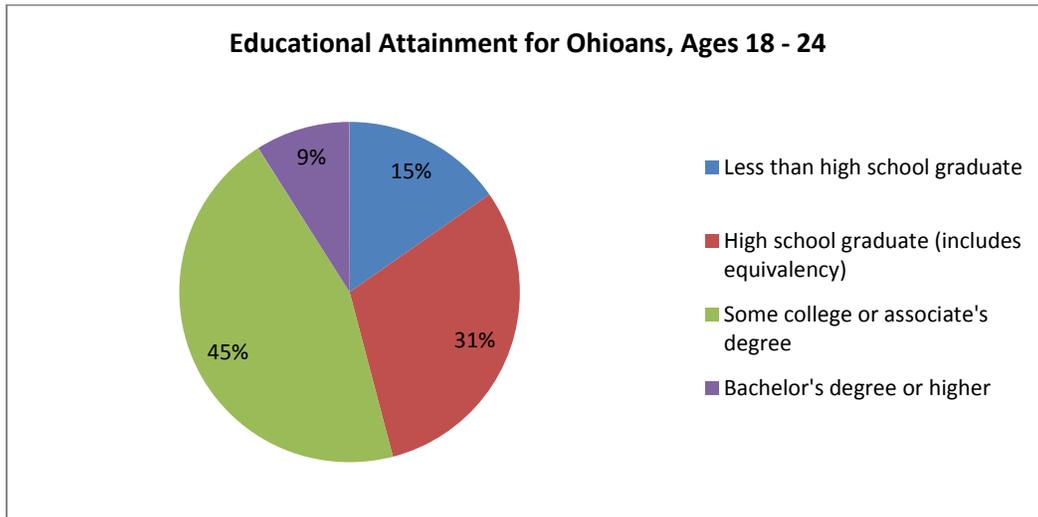
According to the Ohio Coalition on Homelessness and Housing, in order to afford a modest, two-bedroom apartment at Fair Market Rent in Ohio, renters need to earn \$13.84 per hour.¹⁶

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

¹⁵ Ohio Criminal Justice Service, OCJ Statistics. 2012

¹⁶ Coalition on Homelessness and Housing, March 2014

Nearly half (45 percent) of Ohio's young adults ages 18 to 24 have at least a high school degree or GED and some college. Fifteen percent have not completed high school and have no GED.



According to the national center for Education Statistics, Ohio's 2011 to 2012 four-year graduation rate is 81 percent, with an overall graduation rate of 84 percent. Ohio's event dropout rate in the same year was 4.6 percent, a full percentage point above the national rate.¹⁷

¹⁷ National Center for Education Statistics, Public High School Graduation tables. 2011 – 2012

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APPENDIX D
County Department of Job and Family Services Directors Survey

SUMMARY

Between March 17 and April 1, 2015, the Workgroup to Reduce Reliance on Public Assistance surveyed county job and family service directors on the challenges faced by Ohio Works First (OWF) work-required participants and the most effective methods to assist them. The workgroup chose to survey directors, as their departments are the entities primarily responsible for working with OWF work-required recipients. Along with providing basic demographic information about their county, the survey requested that the directors do four things:

- Rank a list of barriers commonly associated with this population;
- Identify the job-readiness status of their county OWF work-required population by percentage;
- Identify the most effective method of working with OWF work-required recipients;
- Provide any other instructive thoughts or comments for working with this population.

The workgroup received 82 responses representing 84 counties (95 percent of Ohio counties). Below is a summary of the results by category of counties:

ALL COUNTY RESULTS (84 counties)

Responding counties listed their county size as:

- 24.39% - small (40,000 or less)
- 42.68% - medium (40,000 to 100,000)
- 17.07% - large (100,000 to 200,000)
- 8.54% - small metro (200,000 to 400,000)
- 3.68% - medium metro (400,000 to 600,000)
- 3.66% - large metro (600,000 and above)

Responding counties indicated their county type as:

- 71.95% - rural
- 19.51% - semi-metropolitan
- 8.54% - metropolitan

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

1. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (11.89)
2. Lack of transportation (11.72)
3. Lack of high school diploma or GED (10.78)
4. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (10.78)
5. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (10.73)
6. Mental health issues (9.78)
7. Lack of work experience (9.70)
8. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (9.32)
9. Lack of personal support system (9.13)
10. Product of generational poverty (8.57)
11. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (7.91)
12. Legal issues (7.22)
13. Lack of child care (6.00)

14. Lack of stable housing (5.71)
15. Domestic violence issues (5.01)
16. Limited English proficiency (1.56)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 36.05% - Not job ready
- 27.39% - Nearly job ready
- 20.13% - Unemployable
- 16.43% - Job ready

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 52.44% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 31.71% - Hybrid of both methods
- 7.32% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 6.10% - Human capital development
- 2.44% - Sanctioning

Sample comments from all counties

- “Based on the history of many of our OWF customers, person-centered case management will need to be a long-term commitment that will require funding in order to truly address the barriers of our customers.”
- “A structured plan, consistent guidance and a positive support system are needed to help our consumers to become self-sufficient. An in-depth assessment is needed when the individual walks in the door. This would provide the type of information needed to develop a structured and meaningful plan. Goals should be well-defined, broken down into small, manageable steps and build upon one another. Achieving and experiencing incremental successes creates hope and momentum. A case manager who has the time needed to guide, push or drive the consumer towards meeting these steps is equally important. Our consumers get lost in the process and overwhelmed when life events occur; they can get a job but struggle to keep it, and they can get into training programs or college but struggle to complete the goal. Consequences are discovered and continue to be a barrier long after the fact and make it that much harder to move forward. Intensive case management can help our consumers to address challenges that arise, stay focused on their goals and stay on track. A positive role model, mentor or support system to cheer the individual along the way and act as a sounding board helps to make it personal. The individual owns the goals.”
- “Customers would benefit from more flexible work activity assignments that made considerations for individual barriers of families. Immediate attachment to the labor market may assist some, but too often the jobs have low wages and are high-turnover positions. Skill building may address this churning of jobs, but takes time and investment. Other barriers include physical, mental and substance abuse, which again take time to assess, diagnose and treat in order for the customer to be successful with employment and self-sufficiency.”
- “We believe the major item is substance abuse...many folks can ‘adjust’ to pass a test but cannot maintain being drug-free and maintain long-term employment.”
- “There are jobs in our area, but not the higher-paying jobs required to attain self-sufficiency without reliance on some form of human service assistance.”

The results of the survey were then dissected to look at any differences in county feedback based on county size (small, medium, large, small metro, medium metro and large metro).

SMALL COUNTY RESULTS (20 counties)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

1. Lack of transportation (12.30)
2. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (12.30)
3. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (11.95)
4. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (11.30)
5. Lack of high school diploma or GED (10.20)
6. Lack of work experience (9.65)
7. Product of generational poverty (9.55)
8. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (9.50)
9. Mental health issues (8.90)
10. Lack of personal support system (8.75)
11. Legal issues (7.55)
12. Lack of child care (6.50)
13. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (6.30)
14. Domestic violence issues (5.20)
15. Lack of stable housing (4.65)
16. Limited English proficiency (1.40)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 34.75% - Not job ready
- 28.05% - Nearly job ready
- 26.70% - Unemployable
- 10.50% - Job ready

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 60.00% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 35.00% - Hybrid of both methods
- 5.00% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 0% - Human capital development
- 0% - Sanctioning

Sample comments from small counties

- “We must be allowed to have the supportive services flexibility in our PRC plans, so that clients are able to obtain specific services for their individual needs. These needs vary from county to county (for a rural county—transportation needs are a necessity).”
- “We once again are serving the ‘hard-to-serve’ population. With mostly mental/physical barriers. I would also add that we are dealing with people that have some type of criminal history.”

MEDIUM COUNTY RESULTS (35 counties)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

1. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (12.94)
2. Lack of transportation (11.86)
3. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (11.34)
4. Lack of high school diploma or GED (10.06)
5. Mental health issues (10.31)
6. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (9.49)
7. Lack of a personal support system (9.43)
8. Lack of work experience (9.40)
9. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (9.11)
10. Product of generational poverty (8.20)
11. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (8.17)
12. Lack of stable housing (6.77)
13. Legal issues (6.57)
14. Lack of child care (6.23)
15. Domestic violence issues (4.91)
16. Limited English proficiency (1.20)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 38.29% - Not job ready
- 27.86% - Nearly job ready
- 19.29% - Job ready
- 14.57% - Unemployable

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 48.57% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 25.71% - Hybrid of both methods
- 14.29% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 5.71% - Human capital development
- 5.71% - Sanctioning

Sample comments from medium sized counties

- “Those OWF applicants who appear to be ‘job ready’ are generally diverted into employment during the assessment process. Our county has an adequate number of entry-level (low-skilled) manufacturing jobs available at a rate of \$9-\$10/hr., which is low enough to qualify for other benefits (the working poor). This group tends to move from job to job while remaining in poverty. Those people currently on our OWF rolls are those who are not job ready and present multiple barriers, including undiagnosed mental health issues, which manifest in anti-social behavior, opposition to authority, unstable emotional relationships, etc. We often consider these people to lack motivation, commitment and self-efficacy.”
- “Mental health - would be a lower priority if MH providers worked more closely with us and did not just simply write individuals off as unable to do anything for 12 to 18 months.”

LARGE COUNTY RESULTS (13 counties)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

1. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (12.21)
2. Lack of high school diploma or GED (11.86)
3. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (11.64)
4. Lack of transportation (11.57)
5. Mental health issues (10.64)
6. Lack of work experience (9.14)
7. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (9.14)
8. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (7.93)
9. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (8.71)
10. Lack of a personal support system (8.64)
11. Product of generational poverty (8.36)
12. Legal issues (8.07)
13. Lack of stable housing (5.86)
14. Domestic violence issues (5.64)
15. Lack of child care (5.29)
16. Limited English proficiency (1.29)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 30.57% - Not job ready
- 25.71% - Nearly job ready
- 25.00% - Unemployable
- 18.71% - Job ready

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 50.00% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 35.71% - Hybrid of both methods
- 14.29% - Human capital development
- 0% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 0% - Sanctioning

Large county comments

- “Customers would benefit from more flexible work activity assignments that made considerations for individual barriers of families. Immediate attachment to the labor market may assist some, but too often the jobs have low wages and are high-turnover positions. Skill building may address this churning of jobs, but takes time and investment. Other barriers include physical, mental and substance abuse, which again take time to assess, diagnose and treat in order for the customer to be successful with employment and self-sufficiency.”
- “A system that combines economic development with barrier reduction and intensive case management that also will focus on motivating an individual to become and maintain work readiness.”
- “Each family has different combinations of barriers, and solutions are not ‘one size fits all.’ We need flexibility from both fiscal and program rules to be able to individualize their case management for better long-term outcomes. It takes years to assist families in moving out of poverty. This will not happen overnight.”
- “Most folks do not have the skills needed to compete in a global economy. There is a skills gap. Being working poor at minimum wage part-time jobs is still being in poverty.”

SMALL METRO COUNTY RESULTS (7 counties)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

1. Lack of transportation (13.14)
2. Lack of high school diploma or GED (12.57)
3. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (12.21)
4. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (12.00)
5. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (10.86)
6. Lack of work experience (10.29)
7. Lack of a personal support system (9.86)
8. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (9.57)
9. Mental health issues (8.14)
10. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (8.00)
11. Product of generational poverty (7.86)
12. Legal issues (7.71)
13. Lack of child care (6.00)
14. Lack of stable housing (4.14)
15. Domestic violence issues (3.71)
16. Limited English proficiency (2.29)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 37.14% - Not job ready
- 25.71% - Unemployable
- 24.29% - Nearly job ready
- 12.86% - Job ready

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 57.14% - Hybrid of both methods
- 28.57% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 14.29% - Human capital development
- 0% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 0% - Sanctioning

Comments from small metro counties

- "Federal regulations for allowing education as participation are too low."
- "Many work-required OWF participants fear that if they are to leave the program and get employment, it will negatively impact other benefits they receive such as housing, reduction of food assistance allotment, etc. Oftentimes they are reluctant to move forward as a result. Additionally, we spend so much time focused on making sure participants are working all required hours that we lack the ability to get to know the individual personally and understand what barriers exist and how we can help them overcome. Assigning them to a WEP location is valuable; however I fear that oftentimes because they are so focused on meeting hours so as not to get sanctioned they lack the time, ability or resources to do significant job searches and submission of applications. Applying for jobs in this day and time is an art, especially with everything moving toward online applications; I think many of our recipients are not

comfortable or aware of how to do this and need more time to focus on that skill. At this stage I think we have reached a point where we are focusing on the hardest-to-serve population with multiple barriers and challenges they face, in order to assist them it will take a great deal of time and intensive casework.”

MEDIUM METRO COUNTY RESULTS (3 counties)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

1. Mental health issues (14.00)
2. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (13.67)
3. Lack of high school diploma or GED (13.33)
4. Lack of work experience (13.00)
5. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (11.67)
6. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (10.33)
7. Lack of a personal support system (10.00)
8. Lack of transportation (9.00)
9. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (7.00)
10. Product of generational poverty (7.00)
11. Limited English proficiency (5.67)
12. Domestic violence issues (5.00)
13. Lack of stable housing (4.67)
14. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (4.33)
15. Legal issues (4.00)
16. Lack of child care (3.33)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 43.33% - Not job ready
- 26.67% - Nearly job ready
- 18.33% - Job ready
- 11.67% - Unemployable

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 100% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 0% - Hybrid of both methods
- 0% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 0% - Human capital development
- 0% - Sanctioning

Medium metro county comments

- “Intensive case management has helped our OWF population remove barriers such as those listed on previous page -Make an allowance for those required 86 core hours to attend GED as a countable activity, perhaps with time limits attached, similar to ETWA limits of 12 months - Integrating our TANF and WIA employment services as we do in Summit has increased access to employment opportunities and work readiness services.”

LARGE METRO COUNTY RESULTS (3 counties)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

1. Lack of high school diploma or GED (14.00)
2. Lack of work experience (11.33)
3. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (10.67)
4. Product of generational poverty (10.67)
5. Legal issues (10.67)
6. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (10.33)
7. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (10.33)
8. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (10.33)
9. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (8.33)
10. Lack of a personal support system (8.00)
11. Mental health issues (7.33)
12. Lack of transportation (6.33)
13. Lack of child care (6.00)
14. Domestic violence issues (5.00)
15. Lack of stable housing (4.33)
16. Limited English proficiency (2.33)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 34.33% - Not job ready
- 33.33% - Nearly job ready
- 18.33% - Job ready
- 14.00% - Unemployable

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 66.67% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 33.33% - Hybrid of both methods
- 0% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 0% - Human capital development
- 0% - Sanctioning

Large metro county comments

- “Based on the history of many of our OWF customers, person-centered case management will need to be a long-term commitment that will require funding in order to truly address the barriers of our customers.”
- “A structured plan, consistent guidance and a positive support system are needed to help our consumers to become self-sufficient. An in-depth assessment is needed when the individual walks in the door. This would provide the type of information needed to develop a structured and meaningful plan. Goals should be well-defined, broken down into small, manageable steps and build upon one another. Achieving and experiencing incremental successes creates hope and momentum. A case manager who has the time needed to guide, push or drive the consumer towards meeting these steps is equally important. Our consumers get lost in the process and overwhelmed when life events occur; they can get a job but struggle to keep it; and they can get into training programs or college but struggle to complete the goal. Consequences are discovered and continue to be a barrier long after the fact and make it that much harder to move forward. Intensive case management can help our consumers to address challenges that

arise, stay focused on their goals and stay on track. A positive role model, mentor or support system to cheer the individual along the way and act as a sounding board helps to make it personal. The individual owns the goals.”

Next, the survey results were dissected by county type (rural, semi-metropolitan and metropolitan).

RURAL COUNTY RESULTS (59 counties)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

1. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (12.32)
2. Lack of transportation (11.93)
3. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (11.32)
4. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (10.69)
5. Lack of high school diploma or GED (10.22)
6. Mental health issues (9.73)
7. Lack of work experience (9.58)
8. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (9.29)
9. Lack of personal support system (9.10)
10. Product of generational poverty (8.98)
11. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (7.58)
12. Legal issues (7.14)
13. Lack of child care (6.14)
14. Lack of stable housing (5.88)
15. Domestic violence issues (4.85)
16. Limited English proficiency (1.25)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 35.39% - Not job ready
- 26.95% - Nearly job ready
- 20.20% - Unemployable
- 17.45% - Job ready

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 52.54% - Hybrid of both methods
- 28.81% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 10.77% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 5.08% - Human capital development
- 3.39% - Sanctioning

Rural county comments

- “Not just OWF clients, but many of our clients lack motivation. We must find a way to incentivize leaving public assistance. People have become too reliant and use many types of assistance as part of their budget. Motivation to live independently is needed. However, I don't know how we can make people care.”
- “Our county is very small and has limited work placements and no public transportation. Also the few placements we have are not stepping stones to better employment.”

- “Preble County has limited availability of resources to assist people in removing barriers such as drug and alcohol or mental health concerns. There is only one provider option in the county and there are no transportation services available outside of NET. Preble County is most successful when we are able to work closely with the community partners who also serve the same client; we have WEP sites who are committed to client success and who work closely with us to help the client work through barriers, and when there is flexible funding available to assist with meeting simple needs like gas cards, GED books and supplies, getting state ID's, etc.”
- “There are jobs in our area but not the higher-paying jobs required to attain self-sufficiency without reliance on some form of human service assistance”

SEMI-METROPOLITAN COUNTY RESULTS (16 counties)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

1. Lack of transportation (12.31)
2. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (12.25)
3. Lack of high school diploma or GED (12.13)
4. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (11.38)
5. Mental health issues (10.00)
6. Lack of personal support system (9.69)
7. Lack of work experience (9.44)
8. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (8.88)
9. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (8.81)
10. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (8.63)
11. Legal issues (6.94)
12. Product of generational poverty (6.88)
13. Lack of stable housing (5.75)
14. Domestic violence issues (5.69)
15. Lack of child care (5.44)
16. Limited English proficiency (1.81)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 36.56% - Not job ready
- 27.88% - Nearly job ready
- 23.25% - Unemployable
- 12.31% - Job ready

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 43.75% - Hybrid of both methods
- 43.75% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 12.50% - Human capital development
- 0% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 0% - Sanctioning

Semi-metropolitan county comments

- “The job readiness component is unrealistic. Too short a time span. Real change can take months and years to affect.”

- “Customers would benefit from more flexible work activity assignments that made considerations for individual barriers of families. Immediate attachment to the labor market may assist some, but too often the jobs have low wages and are high-turnover positions. Skill building may address this churning of jobs, but takes time and investment. Other barriers include physical, mental and substance abuse, which again take time to assess, diagnose and treat in order for the customer to be successful with employment and self-sufficiency.”

METROPOLITAN COUNTY RESULTS (7 counties)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

1. Lack of high school diploma or GED (13.57)
2. Lack of work experience (11.29)
3. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (11.14)
4. Mental health issues (10.71)
5. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (10.71)
6. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (9.57)
7. Product of generational poverty (9.00)
8. Lack of transportation (8.57)
9. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (8.57)
10. Legal issues (8.57)
11. Lack of personal support system (8.14)
12. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (7.43)
13. Lack of child care (6.14)
14. Domestic violence issues (4.86)
15. Lack of stable housing (4.14)
16. Limited English proficiency (3.57)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 40.43% - Not job ready
- 30.00% - Nearly job ready
- 17.14% - Job ready
- 12.42% - Unemployable

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 71.43% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 28.57% - Hybrid of both methods
- 0% - Human capital development
- 0% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 0% - Sanctioning

Metropolitan county comments

- “Federal regulations for allowing education as participation are too low.”
- “Based on the history of many of our OWF customers, person-centered case management will need to be a long-term commitment that will require funding in order to truly address the barriers of our customers.”

COUNTY OBSERVATIONS ON BARRIERS – SUMMARIZED

- Substance abuse issues and inability to pass a drug test are significant barriers to reducing reliance on public assistance, particularly in rural counties and those with populations below 200,000.
- Lack of transportation is a significant barrier in counties of all sizes and types *except* large metro counties.
- Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level are noted to be significant barriers in counties of all sizes and types. This barrier ranks no lower than sixth in any county category.
- Lack of high school diploma or GED tends to rank higher as the size of the county surveyed increases, ranking as the number-one barrier in large metro counties.
- Lack of client motivation and commitment to success ranks high in all county sizes and types *except* large metro counties. (Note: The sample size of large metro counties was small, with only three counties.)
- Lack of child care, domestic violence issues, lack of stable housing and limited English proficiency were ranked as less-prevalent barriers in counties of all sizes and types. None of these barriers ranked higher than 12th in any county size or type.
- Product of generational poverty ranked highest in small, large metro and metropolitan counties. It tended to rank at the bottom of, or outside the top 10, barriers in counties of other sizes and types.
- Mental health issues ranked in the top 10 issues in counties of all sizes and types *except* large metro counties.
- Chronic physical health challenges that do not yet qualify for a disability was consistently in the top 10 barriers listed, regardless of the county size or type, but tended to be toward the bottom of the top 10 in each.
- Legal issues did not rank in the top 10 issues in counties of any size or type *except* large metro counties.
- Lack of vocational or other post-secondary education tends to present as a more significant barrier as county size increases, ranking third in large metro counties.
- Lack of work experience ranked in the top 10 barriers in counties of all types and sizes.
- Lack of a personal support system tended to rank at the lower end of the top 10 barriers in all county sizes and types other than metropolitan counties, where it ranked 11th.

COUNTY OBSERVATIONS ON JOB READINESS – SUMMARIZED

Respondents were to estimate the percentage of their OWF work-required clients who fell into the following basic categories:

Not job ready – Has multiple or significant barrier(s) to employment and is unlikely able to overcome within 12 months. However, long-term assistance in barrier removal may lead to eventual employment.

Nearly job ready – Has several or significant barrier(s) to employment but is likely able to overcome with assistance within 12 months.

Job ready – Has few, minor barriers to employment and is expected to become self-sufficient with little intervention.

Unemployable – Has significant barriers (may include medical issues) and is extremely unlikely, regardless of amount or length of assistance in barrier removal, to ever be capable of either full- or part-time employment.

- All counties, regardless of size or type, indicated that the highest percentage of their OWF work-required clients fell into the **Not job ready** status (percentages ranged from 30.57% in large counties to 43.33% in medium metro counties).
- All county sizes and types, with one exception, indicated that the second-highest percentage of their OWF work-required recipients fell into **Nearly job ready** status (percentages ranged from 25.71% in large counties and small metro counties to 33.33% in large metro counties). The exception was small metro counties, which ranked the **Unemployable** status second-highest.
- **Job ready** and **Unemployable** percentages varied positions in various county sizes. **Unemployable** percentages were higher in six of the 10 county sizes and types (percentages ranged from 11.67% in medium metro counties to 26.70% in small counties). **Job ready** percentages ranged from 10.50% in small counties to 18.33% in both medium metro and large metro counties.

COUNTY OBSERVATIONS ON THE BEST METHODS OF WORKING WITH OWF WORK-REQUIRED INDIVIDUALS – SUMMARIZED

Counties were given the choice of selecting what they feel is the best method to engage OWF work-required recipients. The four choices were as follows:

Immediate labor force attachment – Emphasizes that work-required clients become employed rapidly by focusing on job search assistance, volunteer work experience, and/or short term education or training.

Human capital development – Allows work-required clients to engage in more skill-building and/or education and training activities prior to actively seeking employment.

A hybrid of both models above –Directs work-required clients to one of the models based on their circumstances (education, skills etc.).

Sanctioning – Removes benefits for failure to comply with program requirements.

A hybrid of all – Uses immediate labor force attachment, human capital development and sanctioning based on the individual’s circumstances.

Counties also were able to choose “other” and submit alternative suggested methods.

- All counties, regardless of size or type, selected “hybrid of all models” as their highest choice.
- All counties, regardless of size or type, selected “hybrid of both methods” as their second-highest choice.
- Immediate labor force attachment received the third-highest percentage in three of the 10 county types, and human capital development received the third-highest percentage in two of the 10 county types.
- Sanctioning tied for the lowest score, regardless of county type or size. It received 0% in more than half of the county responses.

CONCLUSIONS

- County size and type play a significant role in how counties view client barriers.
- County size and type do not play a significant role in how counties view the job readiness status of their OWF work-required clients.

- County size and type do not play a significant role in what counties believe are the most effective methods of working with OWF work-required clients.
- While certainly not the only barriers that need significant attention, substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test, lack of transportation, lack of a high school diploma or GED, lack of client motivation and commitment to success, lack of available jobs, and/or lack of available jobs of the appropriate skill level (top five barriers – all county results) are barriers that Ohio must address in order to successfully reduce reliance on public assistance.

ALL DIRECTOR (OR DESIGNEE) COMMENTS

- “Based on the history of many of our OWF Customers, person-centered case management will need to be a long-term commitment that will require funding in order to truly address the barriers of our customers.”
- “low wages keeps OWFs on the system”
- “Almost half of the respondents to our assessment questionnaire listed pregnancy, maternity leave, or short-term illness as the key reason they were not able to work right now. This is data from one year of work participation assessments.”
- “We must be allowed to have the supportive services flexibility in our PRC plans, so that clients are able to obtain specific services for their individual needs. These needs vary from County to County (for a rural county---transportation needs are a necessity).”
- “a need for ‘job skills’ which are best learned through meaningful employment”
- “The more intensive the intervention required to ‘case manage’ individuals toward employment, the greater the cost is to the ‘system’ i.e. employment hours necessary to assist and monitor progress. People are motivated by money; continuing incentive programs such as OWIP make sense.”
- “Keep the PRC where each individual county can help some of the above barriers.”
- “Intensive case management has helped our OWF population remove barriers such as those listed on previous page – Make an allowance for those required 86 core hours to attend GED as a countable activity – perhaps with time limits attached, similar to ETWA limits of 12 months – Integrating our TANF and WIA employment services as we do in Summit, has increased access to employment opportunities and work readiness services.”
- “A structured plan, consistent guidance and a positive support system are needed to help our consumers to become self-sufficient. An in-depth assessment is needed when the individual walks in the door. This would provide the type of information needed to develop a structured and meaningful plan. Goals should be well-defined, broken down into small manageable steps and build upon one another. Achieving and experiencing incremental successes creates hope and momentum. A case manager who has the time needed to guide, push or drive the consumer towards meeting these steps is equally important. Our consumers get lost in the process and overwhelmed when life events occur; they can get a job but struggle to keep it; and they can get into training programs or college but struggle to complete the goal. Consequences are discovered and continue to be a barrier long after the fact and make it that much harder to move forward. Intensive case management can help our consumers to address challenges that arise, stay focused on their goals and stay on track. A positive role model, mentor or support system to cheer the individual along the way and act as a sounding board helps to make it personal. The individual owns the goals.”

- “An important point to consider is that 50% of our OWF cases are actually child-only cases living with a specified relative (kinship cash) or the parents are in receipt of SSI. No work activity is required and they will continue to be eligible for OWF.”
- “On question 5: Legal Issues – we interpret this to mean prior felonies especially those who are registered offenders who are not to be in contact with certain populations. Mental Health – would be a lower priority if MH providers worked more closely with us and did not just simply write individuals off as unable to do anything for 12 to 18 months.”
- “We would like to see changes in the federal regulations which would allow all GED classes as a countable work activity. This helps a person be employable when they achieve their GED. Also federally, get rid of the 2-parent rate and use only the all family rate for work activities. Have a state-wide Subsidized Employment Program (SEP) and OWF Diversion program to have a spectrum of services available to meet the individual's needs. More funding for substance abuse services and medication assisted treatment centers.”
- “Customers would benefit from more flexible work activity assignments that made considerations for individual barriers of families. Immediate attachment to the labor market may assist some, but too often the jobs have low wages and are high turnover positions. Skill building may address this churning of jobs, but takes time and investment. Other barriers include physical, mental, and substance abuse which again take time to assess, diagnose and treat in order for the customer to be successful with employment and self-sufficiency.”
- “Not just OWF clients, but many of our clients lack motivation. We must find a way to incentivize leaving public assistance. People have become too reliant and use many types of assistance as part of their budget. Motivation to live independently is needed. However, I don't know how we can make people care.”
- “Lacking self-confidence. General appearance (hygiene, teeth, etc...)”
- “Many work-required OWF participants fear that if they are to leave the program and get employment that it will negatively impact other benefits they receive such as housing, reduction of food assistance allotment, etc. Oftentimes they are reluctant to move forward as a result. Additionally, we spend so much time focused on making sure participants are working all required hours that we lack the ability to get to know the individual personally and understand what barriers exist and how we can help them overcome. Assigning them to a WEP location is valuable; however, I fear that oftentimes because they are so focused on meeting hours so as not to get sanctioned they lack the time, ability, or resources to do significant job searches and submission of applications. Apply for jobs in this day and time is an art, especially with everything moving toward online applications, I think many of our recipients are not comfortable or aware of how to do this and need more time to focus on that skill. At this stage I think we have reach a point where we are focusing on the hardest to serve population with multiple barriers and challenges they face, in order to assist them it will take a great deal of time and intensive casework.”
- “In our area, legal issues are basically that the client has a felony and finding an employer willing to hire a felon can be difficult depending on the type of felony it is.”
- “Need emergency transportation - there is public transportation, but they need to reserve that 2 days in advance, so if car breaks down, no public transportation option. Child care - need more flexible hours for childcare (i.e., 2nd, 3rd, and 12 hour shifts).”
- “Legislatures do not understand what works with clients on the county level - especially with dealing with general and situational poverty. State policies encourage clients' dependency on public assistance.”
- “Federal regulations for allowing education as participation are too low.”

- “Workers have found that often times it is difficult to quickly and easily identify barriers to moving folks out of poverty. Individuals may present ‘job ready’ but after no progress in securing gainful employment, workers have the challenge of identifying potential barriers. This process is time intensive and involved for the caseworker. One barrier slow to disclose itself is substance abuse/issues; perhaps drug testing for employment would reveal this sooner.”
- “A system that combines economic development with barrier reduction and intensive case management that also will focus on motivating an individual to become and maintain work readiness.”
- “We had the greatest success through our wind and flood National Emergency Grant (NEG) projects. In that, individuals worked hard, made a good wage for the area, took pride in cleaning up the community and built a desire to continue in that manner. Many went on to gain employment and contribute their success to Department of Labor's NEG program.”
- “Each family has different combinations of barriers, and solutions are not ‘one size fits all’. We need flexibility from both fiscal and program rules to be able to individualize their case management for better long-term outcomes. It takes years to assist families in moving out of poverty. This will not happen overnight.”
- “We once again are serving the ‘hard to serve’ population. With mostly mental/physical barriers. I would also add that we are dealing with people that have some type of criminal history.”
- “I see a great need for 'motivational techniques' to get the OWF population to recognize, and truly understand, their current situation and how it can be improved by becoming self-sufficient. A 'light at the end of the tunnel' if you will. But this effort is often clouded by the multiple barriers they possess. The life of an OWF client, and public assistance clients in general, is always in a state of 'chaos'.”
- “Item #5...Selection that states ‘Substance Abuse or inability to pass a drug test’... We believe the major item is Substance Abuse...many folks can ‘adjust’ to pass a test but cannot maintain being drug free and maintain long-term employment.”
- “The system makes it easy to stay on benefits, giving them no incentive to get off the benefits. It does not help those who have worked or are working to get out of poverty. The system also allows for many different ways to get around only one individual in the household to get benefits. If you are aged, then you have to spend all of your money to get help with your medical. But if you are younger and want help with medical, your resources do not count. There are so many exemptions to make it so a person does not have to work and can receive the benefits with no effort on their part. Make them culpable for their actions. When they get themselves fired from a job, and then applying for benefits, they should have some consequences, but they don't. They should also have limits on how long people can be on benefits (similar to unemployment benefits) without making some effort to get off benefits. Maybe some of the funds, after limits would be set, could go to helping with education and job training, instead of allowing them to stay on benefits so long.”
- “Our county is very small and has limited work placements and no public transportation. Also the few placements we have are not stepping stones to better employment.”
- “Most folks do not have the skills needed to compete in a global economy. There is a skills gap. Being working poor at minimum wage part-time jobs is still being in poverty.”
- “Those OWF applicants who appear to be ‘job ready’ are generally diverted into employment during the assessment process. Our county has an adequate number of entry level (low skilled) manufacturing jobs available at a rate of \$9-\$10/hr, which is low enough to qualify for other benefits (the working poor). This group tends to move from job to job while remaining in poverty. Those people currently on our OWF rolls are those who are not job ready and present

multiple barriers including undiagnosed mental health issues which manifest in anti-social behavior, opposition to authority, unstable emotional relationships, etc. We often consider these people to lack motivation, commitment, and self-efficacy.”

- “Continue to offer them as much training and outreach to partners in the workforces/employment agencies. Patience, as this is a difficult population to serve.”
- “Through our job center, we receive job openings from employers that we post on OhioMeansJobs. Many are low paying ... minimum wage or a little above. Some do not offer benefits. These jobs will not lead to self-sufficiency and will not lead to breaking the cycle of poverty in accordance with State's initiative. However, we do place a lot of clients in jobs (low paying to high paying) and help many employers fill their openings. Working is better than not working. The key to breaking the cycle of poverty is training beyond high school to acquire marketable job skills that lead to a higher wage. However, not everyone wants to or is capable of furthering their skills through formal training. Here lies the problem. Individuals have many barriers from lack of motivation to being an ex-offender to no transportation to no work experience to drug addiction to no driver's license to learning limitations and etc. Individuals must be looked at as individuals and dealt with one at a time. You can't clump them together. You are not going to resolve this problem overnight. It is going to take a lot of time and staff resources to address these issues. You need to assess and identify what individuals want or don't want and what they are capable of or not capable of doing. Even if someone wants to attend post-secondary education, they may not have the means to get to a training provider due to transportation...or they may not have the mental ability to complete the training... a single mom with 3 kids may not be able to juggle everything due to no support system ... or other reason. The high paying jobs that did not require a diploma/GED in steel and coal are gone or few and far between. We are a rural county with a lack of public transportation. So if you want people to be able to get to a training provider, then the State must provide funds to create a transportation department. But this does not completely resolve the problem. Even if people complete their training, they still may not have a car or license to get a job. And then you have to deal with some of the more difficult barriers such as drugs, work ethics, single parent, etc. In reality, we are not going to be able to help everyone for one reason or another or they just do not want to do anything. So what do you do with this population? Are we still going to be held accountable? We fund people to go to school through WIA and the best opportunities in our county are Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and nursing. Oil and gas exists as well but the skill set required varies. However, you must be able to pass a drug test. The majority of our jobs are in service ... retail and food ... which do not pay a high wage. I hear all of the time from employers that no one wants to work or can't pass a drug test. There is a lot of truth to that but also many employers only want to pay low wages. It is a two way street. Regarding your model above, some people may be able to succeed by going right into training without any soft skills training. Some may need soft skills training (work ethics, attitude, motivation, etc.) in addition to postsecondary training. Those who do not want to attend post-secondary training may be able to be placed right into jobs without soft skills while others will need a combination of both or placed into paid work experience to acquire good work ethics. For those placed into employment or employment activities, the job may not lead to self-sufficiency due to low wages paid by employers. So even if a person gets a minimum wage job, where will they be in 2, 3 5 year? Still in a low paying job? The bottom line is to approach each person on a case by case basis and go from there but the State must come up with the financial resources to implement programs. Our agency and staff can only do so much and then is it up to the client. Human behavior is difficult to change and control. So when the State develops it metrics to measure our success, they need to look at more than 'x' percentage got jobs or whatever. Our efforts and

programming needs to be measured as well. On another note, what about all of the people who are working but qualify for food stamps because they are working in low paying jobs. Training is the key for this population as well. Unfortunately, our area does not have a wealth of high paying jobs. The ones that do require a certain skill set. As stated earlier, high paying jobs that require a diploma or less are gone. In my opinion, you cannot go wrong with post-secondary training if people have the means to do so and can receive assistance to overcome their barriers.”

- “We have very few options for GED classes in our area. We also have limited agency staff to provide the customer service needed for some of our clients who are of lower educational level. I feel like they need computer classes so they know how to even apply online for benefits.”
- “The job readiness component is unrealistic. Too short a time span. Real change can take months and years to affect.”
- “In our county, we provide OWF clients with intensive case management to assist them in becoming self-sufficient. We work with them to reduce barriers but they have to be responsible for their personal motivation.”
- “When clients on subsidized housing become employed they begin paying rent, where rent has been zero, and their utility allowance is reduced or also completely lost. The incentive to become employed is sometimes discouraged. A transitional period for benefits, maybe something similar to Transitional Medicaid, would provide some incentive to become employed.”
- “Our county has limited availability of resources to assist people in removing barriers such as drug and alcohol or mental health concerns. There is only one provider option in the county and there are no transportation services available outside of NET Medicaid transportation. We are most successful when we are able to work closely with the community partners who also serve the same client, we have WEP sites who are committed to client success and who work closely with us to help the client work through barriers, and when there is flexible funding available to assist with meeting simple needs like gas cards, GED books and supplies, getting state IDs, etc.”
- “We have found that previous convictions (felonies) keep some of our participants from gaining employment.”
- “There are jobs in our area but not the higher paying jobs required to attain self-sufficiency without reliance on some form of human service assistance.”

APPENDIX E

Stakeholder Survey

SUMMARY

Between March 17 and April 1, 2015, the Workgroup to Reduce Reliance on Public Assistance surveyed stakeholder organizations on the challenges faced by Ohio Works First (OWF) work-required participants and the most effective methods to assist them. Along with providing basic demographic information about their county, the survey requested that the stakeholder do four things:

- Rank a list of barriers commonly associated with this population;
- Identify the job readiness status of their county OWF work-required population by percentage;
- Identify the most effective method of working with OWF work-required recipients;
- Provide any other instructive thoughts or comments for working with this population.

The workgroup received 250 responses to the survey request. Below is a summary of the results by category of counties:

ALL STAKEHOLDER RESULTS (250 responses)

Responding stakeholders listed their county size as:

- 12.40% - small (40,000 or less)
- 18.00% - medium (40,000 to 100,000)
- 11.20% - large (100,000 to 200,000)
- 13.60% - small metro (200,000 to 400,000)
- 12.00% - medium metro (400,000 to 600,000)
- 32.80% - large metro (600,000 and above)

Responding stakeholders listed their county type as:

- 28.40% - rural
- 24.80% - semi-metropolitan
- 46.80% - metropolitan

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

17. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (12.37)
18. Lack of transportation (12.30)
19. Lack of child care (10.17)
20. Lack of high school diploma or GED (10.44)
21. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (9.44)
22. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (9.32)
23. Mental health issues (9.01)
24. Lack of stable housing (8.82)
25. Lack of work experience (8.58)
26. Product of generational poverty (8.53)
27. Lack of personal support system (8.42)
28. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (7.06)
29. Legal issues (7.04)
30. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (6.92)
31. Domestic violence issues (5.38)
32. Limited English proficiency (2.19)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 33.90% - Not job ready

- 26.09% - Nearly job ready
- 20.04% - Unemployable
- 19.97% - Job ready

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 38.17% - Hybrid of both methods
- 36.10% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 6.22% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 16.18% - Human capital development
- 3.32% - Sanctioning

Sample comments from all stakeholders

- “No question, the biggest barrier facing our hungry neighbors is the lack of a sustainable wage. The majority of the folks receiving assistance cobble together two or three jobs and still can't make ends meet due to low per hour wages. Additionally when they are allowed part-time hours only, it prevents them from receiving life-critical benefits like healthcare.”
- “The most difficult barrier that people in poverty face is the lack of jobs that pay a living wage — it is nearly impossible to live on a minimum wage job. If government doesn't want to address the minimum wage issue, then families need help paying for child care and we need to provide good, quality public transportation so that people are able to get to their jobs. Most people want to work and want to be self-sufficient, but the odds are stacked against them when they can't find a job that pays enough for them to obtain safe housing, child care for their children, food for their families and transportation to get to and from their jobs. Often when families get jobs, they are cut off from all services because they make ‘too much;’ however, they don't make enough to support their families. This often leads to job loss due to the stress of trying to support their family on incomes that are too small.”
- “Nine out of 10 living-wage jobs in today's economy require some education or training beyond a high school diploma. In other words, regardless of any other job readiness work, if OWF participants do not have a high school diploma/GED and access to vocational training, they will not obtain a job that reduces reliance on public assistance and moves their family out of poverty. In whatever way possible, work activity requirements should recognize this reality of today's economy.”
- “If we're serious about moving people out of poverty, we need to invest in opportunities for people to work, through job training, social work and investments in our economy. Taking benefits away from people in an economy with too few opportunities for jobs will only hurt people.”
- “Where are the jobs that are sufficient to support an individual or a family? They are not there.”
- “The largest problem in Lorain County is the transportation issues.”
- “In our rural area, even a minimal public transportation system would solve a multitude of problems for clients. This is without question the largest barrier faced by the largest number of our clients.”
- “Individuals on TANF have multi-challenges. They have lacked work role models that have impacted their success and ability to move out of poverty. We need to set realistic goals. I see a lot of individuals who have AOD issues, learning disabilities, limited education, and lack of positive work role models, thus they do not understand what it always takes to move forward and the daily grind to get ahead. They also lack the motivational support to get ahead.
- “When a client becomes self-sufficient, stair-step the removal of benefits. Require personal accountability.”
- “Need graduated reduction of benefits when people gain income. By the time someone pays for child care, transportation, lost SNAP and higher rent they can actually have less money than they would get from OWF. The system now disincentivizes work.”

The results of the survey were then dissected to look at any differences in feedback based on county size (small, medium, large, small metro, medium metro and large metro).

SMALL COUNTY STAKEHOLDER RESULTS (29 responses)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

17. Lack of transportation (12.81)
18. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (12.00)
19. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (10.61)
20. Lack of child care (10.13)
21. Lack of high school diploma or GED (9.87)
22. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (9.29)
23. Product of generational poverty (9.29)
24. Mental health issues (8.94)
25. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (8.77)
26. Lack of stable housing (8.65)
27. Lack of work experience (8.03)
28. Lack of personal support system (7.23)
29. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (6.94)
30. Legal issues (6.03)
31. Domestic violence issues (5.87)
32. Limited English proficiency (1.55)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 33.00% - Not job ready
- 27.67% - Nearly job ready
- 24.50% - Job Ready
- 14.83% - Unemployable

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 44.83% - Hybrid of both methods
- 41.38% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 6.90% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 3.45% - Human capital development
- 3.45% - Sanctioning

Sample comments from small county stakeholders

- “In our rural area, even a minimal public transportation system would solve a multitude of problems for clients. This is without question the largest barrier faced by the largest number of our clients.”
- “Often our clients have so many work hours to complete they have trouble in their job search. Also childcare and transportation are both barriers in this rural county”
- “Providing ‘transition to employment assistance’ (\$), particularly at the onset of obtaining a job. Length of support and amount of the support based on the wage and individual/family circumstances.”

MEDIUM COUNTY STAKEHOLDER RESULTS (43 responses)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

17. Lack of transportation (12.69)
18. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (11.96)
19. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (11.49)
20. Lack of child care (10.27)
21. Lack of high school diploma or GED (9.64)
22. Mental health issues (9.20)
23. Product of generational poverty (8.84)

24. Lack of stable housing (8.80)
25. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (8.36)
26. Lack of work experience (8.36)
27. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (7.84)
28. Lack of a personal support system (7.47)
29. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (7.47)
30. Legal issues (7.13)
31. Domestic violence issues (4.69)
32. Limited English proficiency (1.80)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 33.91% - Not job ready
- 27.39% - Nearly job ready
- 21.50% - Unemployable
- 17.20% - Job ready

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 37.21% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 32.56% - Hybrid of both methods
- 16.28% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 6.98% - Human capital development
- 6.98% - Sanctioning

Sample comments from medium county stakeholders

- “The barriers facing my guests are many and must be addressed all at the same time. Funds to cover a case manager that crosses ALL areas, develops a relationship and advocates for the person is the most successful way to move our guests toward long-term employment and housing. There has to be a trust relationship, not just being a client of many fragmented services.”
- “We find there is not one solution — it must be designed to provide opportunities for success based on that person/family's situation. It also depends on why they find themselves needing assistance.”
- “Assessment done to determine skill level. Individual employment plan — these are the jobs that are available for the skill level/wages. Available jobs above that skill level and what technical training is needed to rise to that level, etc. Assistance/tutorial provided to rise above the present level. Built-in incentives; continuously, as clients progress.”
- “Criminal history. It takes a minute to get into trouble but a lifetime to get out. Everyone deserves a second, third chance, and employment isn't exactly overflowing for the mentally ill or felons.”
- “Unemployed people choose small towns where rent is lower, but that makes it harder to get to any possible jobs which are in the city.”
- “Given the significant drug/alcohol problems faced by our clients and the long history of legal issues, including past felonies, even if they become work-ready the felonies still impeded their ability to obtain gainful employment. Many clients we work with have long-term sobriety and are quite employable, however this continuously hampers their success.”

LARGE COUNTY STAKEHOLDER RESULTS (27 responses)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

17. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (12.93)
18. Lack of transportation (12.68)
19. Lack of child care (10.68)
20. Lack of high school diploma or GED (10.46)
21. Lack of stable housing (9.04)
22. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (8.96)

23. Lack of a personal support system (8.75)
24. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (8.68)
25. Product of generational poverty (8.64)
26. Lack of work experience (8.25)
27. Mental health issues (8.21)
28. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (8.00)
29. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (6.61)
30. Legal issues (5.96)
31. Domestic violence issues (5.93)
32. Limited English proficiency (2.21)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 27.82% - Not job ready
- 26.61% - Job ready
- 26.07% - Nearly job ready
- 19.50% - Unemployable

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 50.00% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 28.57% - Hybrid of both methods
- 14.29% - Human capital development
- 3.57% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 3.57% - Sanctioning

Large county stakeholder comments

- “1-Lack of quality training programs for all clients. 2-Develop a specialized transition unit that will follow up with clients at 30/60/90 intervals to assist with any concerns/issues the client/employer may have. 3- Provide up-front and on-site support system such as psychological counseling, clothing banks (Dress for Success), budget counseling, transportation allowances. 4-The Personal Responsibility Act - Come back to square one - What does really mean for clients, do they really understand it and how to own it? 5-Reduce the caseload of workers and retrain them to be more focused, compassionate and take time with clients rather than rushing them through an interview. The client's first impression begins at the front desk on how the ‘system’ experience will move forward. 6-Have a general orientation session when clients are applying for assistance, process, what to expect and what resources will be available to them. 7-The One-Stop Shop method providing required services in one location if at all possible.”
- “Many OWF work-required clients want to work, however the structure of the program makes it impossible for them to learn critical thinking skills because they are often faced with an all-or-nothing situation. There is no room for error without sacrificing the benefits that are needed in order to survive. This has led to OWF clients facing more unnecessary penalties when other options should have been made available to give the skills needed to become truly self-sufficient.”
- “Many of the consumers I see have been so indoctrinated in a victim mentality and enabled by systems of care that perpetuate that mentality that they need more intensive coaching and support through the pre-employment and early employment steps to maintain jobs than is currently available to them. And it can't be optional support. I've often wondered if a graduated system of fiscal support would be beneficial, instead of the current system of ‘either you qualify or you don't.’”

SMALL METRO COUNTY STAKEHOLDER RESULTS (34 responses)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

17. Lack of transportation (12.79)
18. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (12.76)
19. Lack of child care (9.82)

20. Lack of high school diploma or GED (9.71)
21. Mental health issues (9.50)
22. Product of generational poverty (9.47)
23. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (9.29)
24. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (9.21)
25. Lack of a personal support system (9.15)
26. Lack of stable housing (8.32)
27. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (7.71)
28. Lack of work experience (7.50)
29. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (7.41)
30. Legal issues (6.44)
31. Domestic violence issues (5.44)
32. Limited English proficiency (1.47)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 33.97% - Not job ready
- 27.29% - Nearly job ready
- 20.09% - Job ready
- 18.66% - Unemployable

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 50.00% - Hybrid of both methods
- 20.59% - Human capital development
- 26.47% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 2.94% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 0% - Sanctioning

Comments from small metro county stakeholders

- “Lack of public transportation.”
- “I am glad to see this is getting attention. High schools used to have OWF and OWA programs that worked with students. My father spent 20 years as an Occupational Work Experience Teacher at Chardon High School. So many of his students have thanked him over the years for literally saving their lives. He taught them social skills, work skills and worked with their employers (plus helped get them the jobs to begin with). We need to focus on prevention in addition to what we do now.”
- “There should be a gradual decrease in benefits to those who finally find stable employment. Many get discouraged when food stamp benefits or other benefits stop within a month of working and some say they were better off not working.”
- “A huge problem is the lack of jobs that pay enough to support oneself. A number of our pantry clients are working but rely on pantries to make it through the month.”
- “Yes, there are no jobs in the city of Lorain. Both mills are in layoff, Ford has closed and there is a very minor retail market. Until employers come to Lorain, nothing will change.”

MEDIUM METRO COUNTY STAKEHOLDER RESULTS (30 responses)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

17. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (12.66)
18. Lack of transportation (12.17)
19. Lack of child care (10.59)
20. Lack of high school diploma or GED (10.55)
21. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (10.38)
22. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (9.21)
23. Lack of work experience (8.52)

24. Lack of a personal support system (8.38)
25. Lack of stable housing (8.38)
26. Legal issues (8.03)
27. Mental health issues (8.00)
28. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (7.31)
29. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (6.83)
30. Product of generational poverty (6.55)
31. Domestic violence issues (5.31)
32. Limited English proficiency (3.14)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 34.07% - Not job ready
- 22.96% - Nearly job ready
- 21.85% - Job ready
- 21.11% - Unemployable

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 40.74% - Hybrid of both methods
- 33.33% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 22.22 - Human capital development
- 3.70% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 0% - Sanctioning

Medium metro county stakeholder comments

- "Individuals on TANF have multi-challenges. They have lacked work role models that have impacted their success and ability to move out of poverty. We need to set realistic goals. I see a lot of individuals who have AOD issues, learning disabilities, limited education and lack of positive work role models, thus they do not understand what it always takes to move forward and the daily grind to get ahead. They also lack the motivational support to get ahead."
- "In my opinion, most OWF clients appear not be motivated because of their past or the current culture they experience."
- "Child care is the primary issue facing individuals looking for work in addition to a lack of soft skill development."
- "By allowing those individuals who want to go to school, for either their GED or college, to use some of their schooling towards their volunteer hours for benefits."

LARGE METRO COUNTY STAKEHOLDER RESULTS (27 responses)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

17. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (12.93)
18. Lack of transportation (12.68)
19. Lack of child care (10.68)
20. Lack of high school diploma or GED (10.46)
21. Lack of stable housing (9.04)
22. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (8.96)
23. Lack of a personal support system (8.75)
24. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (8.68)
25. Product of generational poverty (8.64)
26. Lack of work experience (8.25)
27. Mental health issues (8.21)
28. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (8.00)
29. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (6.61)

- 30. Legal issues (5.96)
- 31. Domestic violence issues (5.93)
- 32. Limited English proficiency (2.21)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 27.82% - Not job ready
- 26.61% - Job ready
- 26.07% - Nearly job ready
- 19.50% - Unemployable

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 50.00% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 28.57% - Hybrid of both methods
- 14.29% - Human capital development
- 3.57% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 3.57% - Sanctioning

Large metro county comments

- “You need more high-level programs. Many of today's ‘new poor’ were yesterday's college-educated professionals. Teaching them how to write a resume and offering a job at Wendy's does not help.”
- “Many OWF work-required clients want to work, however the structure of the program makes it impossible for them to learn critical thinking skills because they are often faced with an all-or-nothing situation. There is no room for error without sacrificing the benefits that are needed in order to survive. This has led to OWF clients facing more unnecessary penalties when other options should have been made available to give the skills needed to become truly self-sufficient.”

Next, the survey results were dissected by county type (rural, semi-metropolitan and metropolitan).

RURAL COUNTY STAKEHOLDER RESULTS (67 responses)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

- 17. Lack of transportation (13.45)
- 18. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (12.01)
- 19. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (11.15)
- 20. Lack of child care (10.08)
- 21. Lack of high school diploma or GED (9.79)
- 22. Mental health issues (9.11)
- 23. Product of generational poverty (9.10)
- 24. Lack of stable housing (8.99)
- 25. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (8.69)
- 26. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (8.59)
- 27. Lack of work experience (7.83)
- 28. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (7.15)
- 29. Lack of personal support system (7.07)
- 30. Legal issues (6.24)
- 31. Domestic violence issues (5.15)
- 32. Limited English proficiency (1.58)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 32.51% - Not job ready
- 27.12% - Nearly job ready
- 21.08% - Job ready

- 19.29% - Unemployable

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 40.30% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 37.31% - Hybrid of both methods
- 8.96% - Human capital development
- 7.46% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 5.97% - Sanctioning

Rural county stakeholder comments

- “Need poverty prevention programs within schools...catch them before they make the wrong decisions, single motherhood/deadbeat fathers, devalue education, drug/alcohol abuse, criminal history, etc.”
- “In our rural area, even a minimal public transportation system would solve a multitude of problems for clients. This is without question the largest barrier faced by the largest number of our clients.”
- “We have hired OWF clients and have found some of them to be unreliable due to: health issues, lack of transportation, lack of child care and lack of prioritizing their job duties over other issues, usually of family problems. For lack of better words, they seem to have a poverty mentality: I need a job, but my sister's baby is in the hospital, so I need to be there. I need a job, but the kids missed the bus again, so I'll be late. They do not plan for contingencies. They rely on the sympathy of their supervisors so they can get by. In some cases, an employee has good skills, but just can't seem to get themselves to work on a consistent basis. We have also hired OWF clients who have become very good employees, some have been promoted and one is now in management.”
- “When the definite end of benefits looms, the human spirit will cause a person to spring towards action. In Ohio, we have to develop a way to allow someone to ‘graduate’ upwards in income levels without punishment. For example, a person earning more on the hour may lose support such as child care because they are no longer income qualified. Thus causing a setback.”
- “Sanctioning rarely works. OJT by placing clients in supportive work-training sites provides an effective way of building the human capital and providing real-life, skill-building experiences for workers beyond the classroom and also helps them learn to network and build community relationships, which can lead to employment.”

SEMI-METROPOLITAN COUNTY STAKEHOLDER RESULTS (62 responses)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

17. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (12.48)
18. Lack of transportation (12.31)
19. Lack of child care (10.20)
20. Lack of personal support system (10.08)
21. Lack of high school diploma or GED (9.54)
22. Mental health issues (9.26)
23. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (9.05)
24. Product of generational poverty (9.00)
25. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (8.59)
26. Lack of stable housing (8.77)
27. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (7.72)
28. Lack of work experience (7.69)
29. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (7.64)
30. Legal issues (6.15)
31. Domestic violence issues (5.49)
32. Limited English proficiency (2.03)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 33.97% - Not job ready
- 27.29% - Nearly job ready
- 20.08% - Job ready
- 18.66% - Unemployable

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 46.67% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)
- 33.33% - Hybrid of both methods
- 11.67% - Human capital development
- 6.67% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 1.67% - Sanctioning

Semi-Metropolitan county comments

- “The available and principle that would require a moderately diminishing availability of assistance would be a benefit. I.e. rent assistance that progressively gets smaller, perhaps at a yearly pace. This would encourage progress in the re-education process of potential employees.”
- “Where are the jobs that are sufficient to support an individual or a family? They are not there.”
- “Assessment done to determine skill level. Individual employment plan — these are the jobs that are available for the skill level/wages. Available jobs above that skill level and what technical training is needed to rise to that level, etc. Assistance/tutorial provided to rise above the present level. Built-in incentives; continuously, as clients progress.”
- “I have identified a group of our population who are hardcore unemployed because of mental health disorders. Most of this group has criminal records, all motivated by self-medicating drug use.”

METROPOLITAN COUNTY STAKEHOLDER RESULTS (117 responses)

Ranking of barriers by weighted average

17. Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level (12.53)
18. Lack of transportation (11.59)
19. Lack of high school diploma or GED (11.32)
20. Lack of child care (10.22)
21. Lack of vocational or post-secondary training (10.15)
22. Lack of work experience (9.52)
23. Mental health issues (8.82)
24. Lack of stable housing (8.75)
25. Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test (8.58)
26. Lack of personal support system (8.37)
27. Legal issues (8.00)
28. Product of generational poverty (7.94)
29. Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability (6.39)
30. Lack of client motivation and commitment to success (5.71)
31. Domestic violence issues (5.46)
32. Limited English proficiency (2.65)

Job readiness of OWF work-required clients

- 34.78% - Not job ready
- 24.75% - Nearly job ready
- 21.31% - Unemployable
- 19.16% - Job ready

Most effective method to assist OWF work-required clients

- 28.07% - Hybrid of all methods (labor force attachment, human capital development, sanctioning)

- 41.23% - Hybrid of both methods
- 22.81% - Human capital development
- 5.26% - Immediate labor force attachment
- 2.63% - Sanctioning

Metropolitan county stakeholder comments

- “The most difficult barrier that people in poverty face is the lack of jobs that pay a living wage — it is nearly impossible to live on a minimum wage job. If government doesn't want to address the minimum wage issue, then families need help paying for child care and we need to provide good, quality public transportation so that people are able to get to their jobs. Most people want to work and want to be self-sufficient, but the odds are stacked against them when they can't find a job that pays enough for them to obtain safe housing, child care for their children, food for their families and transportation to get to and from their jobs. Often when families get jobs, they are cut off from all services because they make ‘too much;’ however, they don't make enough to support their families. This often leads to job loss due to the stress of trying to support their family on incomes that are too small.”
- “I think that the key is a variety of the first few items that we rank. To end overall reliance on public benefits, we need jobs that pay a living wage with the flexibility to allow individuals to care for their and their family's health care needs (illness or sick babysitter), a benefits system that transitions people off instead of facing a cliff, and supportive services such as child care, transportation and job training to get people ready. Having small children of my own, I have often wondered how people do it if they don't get time off when the kid is sick and can't go to the sitter, when the only appointment for the ear infection is in the middle of the day, or if they are expected to manage kids while working multiple jobs to pay the rent.”
- “I believe what is needed is intensive case management, generally speaking. Those with other options exercise them, because they do not get what they think they need from JFS. This is not JFS's fault — the significant defunding since 2007 has made it difficult-impossible for counties to provide the needed support. Any program implemented under the Governor's ‘person-centered work program’ must provide in-depth assessment and meaningful services that address the barriers determined in the assessment. Anything else will simply increase the cynicism that already exists in the community about OWF.”
- “Child care is the primary issue facing individuals looking for work in addition to a lack of soft skill development.”

STAKEHOLDER OBSERVATIONS ON BARRIERS – SUMMARIZED

- Lack of transportation and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level are the top two barriers among the “all-county” responses. These also appear as either number one or two in broken-down responses for counties of all sizes and types. Clearly, these are issues stakeholders believe must be addressed.
- Lack of child care presents as a much more significant barrier among stakeholder responses than those from directors of county departments of job and family services. It ranks fourth overall for stakeholders and 13th overall in county director responses. This difference in perception needs to be evaluated.
- Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test ranks in the top 10 of stakeholder responses, regardless of county type or size.
- Lack of a high school diploma or GED ranks in the top five of stakeholder responses, regardless of county type or size.
- Lack of stable housing presents significantly higher as a barrier in the view of stakeholders than for county directors, ranking eighth among all stakeholders and 14th among directors. The difference in perception needs to be evaluated.
- Domestic violence issues and limited English proficiency ranked as the least significant barriers for stakeholders, regardless of county type or size. This essentially mirrored responses of county directors, who also consistently ranked these two barriers at the bottom of the list.
- Product of generational poverty ranked as the 10th most significant barrier among all stakeholders and all county directors alike.

- Lack of a high school diploma ranked as the third most significant barrier among all stakeholders and all county directors alike.
- Lack of client motivation and commitment to success ranked significantly higher as a barrier on county director responses (fourth overall) than in stakeholder responses (12th overall). This is another area that may need some analysis to determine reasons for differences in perception.
- Lack of work experience was similar in overall ranking between the two groups, ranking seventh overall in county director responses, and ninth overall for stakeholders.
- Chronic physical health challenges that do not yet qualify for disability presented as a much more significant barrier to county directors (ranking eighth overall) than to stakeholders (ranking 14th overall).
- Lack of vocational or post-secondary training presented as a greater barrier in the view of stakeholders (ranking six overall) than for county directors (ranked 11th overall).
- Mental health issues ranked similarly among both groups, ranking sixth overall in county directors and seventh overall for stakeholders.
- Legal issues also ranked similarly, ranking 13th among all stakeholder respondents and 12th overall for county director respondents.
- Lack of a personal support system also ranked similarly overall between the two groups, ranking 11th overall for stakeholders and ninth overall for county directors.

STAKEHOLDER OBSERVATIONS ON JOB READINESS – SUMMARIZED

Respondents were to estimate the percentage of their OWF work-required clients who fell into the following basic categories:

Not job ready – Has multiple or significant barrier(s) to employment and is unlikely able to overcome within 12 months. However, long-term assistance in barrier removal may lead to eventual employment.

Nearly job ready – Has several or significant barrier(s) to employment but is likely able to overcome with assistance within 12 months.

Job ready – Has few, minor barriers to employment and is expected to become self-sufficient with little intervention.

Unemployable – Has significant barriers (may include medical issues) and is extremely unlikely, regardless of amount or length of assistance in barrier removal, to ever be capable of either full- or part-time employment.

- Overall, there was little difference in perception of job readiness of OWF work-required clients between stakeholder and county director respondents.
- Both groups ranked the largest percentage of clients as **Not job ready**, with all stakeholders identifying 33.90% in this category and all county directors identifying 36.05%. **Nearly job ready** percentages varied even less, with stakeholders identifying 26.09% in this category and county directors identifying 27.39%. The **Unemployable** percentages also were quite close, at 20.13% among county directors and 20.04% among stakeholders. **Job ready** percentages were slightly farther apart, with stakeholders identifying 19.97% in this category and county directors identifying 16.43%. The workgroup sees nothing here that requires additional review.

STAKEHOLDER OBSERVATIONS ON THE BEST METHODS OF WORKING WITH OWF WORK-REQUIRED INDIVIDUALS – SUMMARIZED

Stakeholders were given the choice of selecting what they feel is the best method to engage OWF work-required recipients. The four choices were as follows:

Immediate labor force attachment – Emphasizes that work-required clients become employed rapidly by focusing on job search assistance, volunteer work experience, and/or short term education or training.

Human capital development – Allows work-required clients to engage in more skill building and/or education and training activities prior to actively seeking employment.

A hybrid of both models above – Directs work-required clients to one of the models based on their circumstances (education, skills etc.).

Sanctioning – Removes benefits for failure to comply with program requirements.

A hybrid of all – Uses immediate labor force attachment, human capital development and sanctioning based on the individual's circumstances.

- Overall, stakeholders and county directors alike identified the preferred method as “a hybrid of all,” but at a significantly lower overall percentage (36.10% for stakeholders, 52.44% for county directors).
- Overall, both groups ranked “a hybrid of both models” similarly, with stakeholders choosing this 38.17% of the time and county directors 31.71%.
- Human capital development alone ranked higher among stakeholder respondents (16.18%) than county directors (6.10%).
- Immediate labor force attachment alone or sanctioning alone each scored similarly among both groups.

CONCLUSIONS

- County size and type play a role in how stakeholders view client barriers.
- County size and type play a small role in how stakeholders view the job readiness of OWF work-required clients.
- County size and type play a role in what stakeholders believe are the most effective methods of working with OWF work-required clients.
- As noted, stakeholders indicated a significant concern about the availability of transportation and lack of available jobs and/or jobs of an appropriate skill level for OWF work-required clients.
- It is also clear that stakeholders view the availability of child care as a significant barrier, much more so than county directors. This difference should be reviewed to understand why the perception is so different.
- As mentioned, the difference in view between stakeholders and county directors related to ranking of lack of client motivation and commitment to success also needs review. One possible explanation would be that the county job and family services departments work with all OWF-required clients, while stakeholders likely work with a subset of clients who either sought out their services or were referred there.

ALL STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

- “Need poverty prevention programs within schools...catch them before they make the wrong decisions: single motherhood/deadbeat fathers, devalue education, drug/alcohol abuse, criminal history, etc.”
- “Continuing with public assistance after employment and then tapering off.”
- “The barriers facing my guests are many and must be addressed all at the same time. Funds to cover a case manager that crosses ALL areas, develops a relationship and advocates for the person is the most successful way to move our guests toward long-term employment and housing. There has to be a trust relationship, not just being a client of many fragmented services”
- “The largest problem in Lorain County is the transportation issues.”
- “Hold all SSI Assistance Assessments to the highest standard - and have a process to expedite process for assistance for those most disabled - or have a safety net within the county that is long enough to cover the process taken by the authorities to grant SSI”
- “I am glad to see this is getting attention. High schools used to have OWF and OWA programs that worked with students. My father spent 20 years as an Occupational Work Experience Teacher at Chardon High School. So many of his students have thanked him over the years for literally saving their lives. He taught them social skills, work skills and worked with their employers (plus helped get them the jobs to begin with). We need to focus on prevention in addition to what we do now.”
- “1-Lack of quality training programs for all clients. 2-Develop a specialized transition unit that will follow up with clients at 30/60/90 intervals to assist with any concerns/issues the client/employer may have. 3- Provide up-front and on-site support system such as psychological counseling, clothing banks (Dress for Success), budget counseling, transportation allowances, 4-The Personal Responsibility Act - Come back to square one - What does really mean for clients, do they really understand it and how to own it? 5-Reduce the caseload of workers and retrain them to be more focused, compassionate and take time with clients

rather than rushing them through an interview. The client's first impression begins at the front desk on how the 'system' experience will move forward. 6-Have a general orientation session when clients are applying for assistance, process, what to expect and what resources will be available to them. 7-The One-Stop Shop method providing required services in one location if at all possible."

- "Individuals on TANF have multi-challenges. They have lacked work role models that have impacted their success and ability to move out of poverty. We need to set realistic goals. I see a lot of individuals who have AOD issues, learning disabilities, limited education, and lack of positive work role models, thus they do not understand what it always takes to move forward and the daily grind to get ahead. They also lack the motivational support to get ahead."
- "In our rural area, even a minimal public transportation system would solve a multitude of problems for clients. This is without question the largest barrier faced by the largest number of our clients."
- "They need to know that the experience is in place to help them develop skills to become employed over the long term. Use this time to explore different things that they may be interested in and don't be afraid to seek a job during this time."
- "A lot of our clients enter with no Social Security card, no driver's license or birth certificate. It is very difficult to get one of these items without having at least one of the other. Making an affordable way to obtain one of these items would go a long way in helping to move them out of poverty and get them closer to the work force."
- "Drug test before giving benefits. Repeat tests throughout."
- "I previously administered a workforce ready program in Monroe County for individuals timing out of benefits. I combined a 6-week job readiness course with regular positive mentoring and access to transportation. Another feature was helping with clothing and haircuts. The DJFS director at the time stated the program accomplished in 6 months what he thought would take 2 years. We also were awarded a Best Practice from the John Glenn Institute. I credit my motivational staff with this success."
- "In my opinion most OWF clients appear not be motivated because of their past or the current culture they experience."
- "We are not a Job and Family Services agency, so this information is based on our experience assisting customers outside of the Job and Family Services process. We find there is not one solution — it must be designed to provide opportunities for success based on that person/family's situation. It also depends on why they find themselves needing assistance."
- "Based on the history of many of our OWF customers, person-centered case management will need to be a long-term commitment that will require funding in order to truly address the barriers of our customers."
- "No question, the biggest barrier facing our hungry neighbors is the lack of a sustainable wage. The majority of the folks receiving assistance cobble together 2 or 3 jobs and still can't make ends meet due to low per hour wages. Additionally when they are allowed part-time hours only, it prevents them from receiving life-critical benefits like healthcare."
- "Positive thanking, find their talents, abilities for a successful future for them and their family."
- "We have hired OWF clients and have found some of them to be unreliable due to: health issues, lack of transportation, lack of child care and lack of prioritizing their job duties over other issues, usually of family problems. For lack of better words, they seem to have a poverty mentality: I need a job, but my sister's baby is in the hospital, so I need to be there. I need a job, but the kids missed the bus again, so I'll be late. They do not plan for contingencies. They rely on the sympathy of their supervisors so they can get by. In some cases, an employee has good skills, but just can't seem to get themselves to work on a consistent basis. We have also hired OWF clients who have become very good employees, some have been promoted and one is now in management."
- "While they are receiving benefits, the urgency to seek employment is not visible. Removing the dependency on public assistance is more of a motivator for the job seeker to actually find employment. Those with drug issues/legal issues need to be in some form of counseling/treatment and not receiving government subsidies."
- "Help OWF beneficiaries develop the self-employment skills that would allow them to earn money and report this properly to meet obligations for benefits and tax reporting. Establish programs that develop accounting programs."

- “When a client becomes self-sufficient, stair-step the removal of benefits. Require personal accountability.”
- “When the definite end of benefits looms, the human spirit will cause a person to spring towards action. In Ohio, we have to develop a way to allow someone to ‘graduate’ upwards in income levels without punishment. For example, a person earning more on the hour may lose support such as child care because they are no longer income qualified. Thus causing a setback.”
- “Assisting OWF workers to not only look at employment but career goals that give them an opportunity for life, rather than jumping from one job to another”
- “Question 6: Nearly all of these factors are significant, except client motivation.”
- “I see a lack of motivation and hope. I feel a lot of families could benefit from mentoring or job coaching.”
- “Drug testing for OWF work-required clients might be a start. If they test positive then get them into treatment. If they continue to test positive then sanctions may be necessary.”
- “We're looking at the importance of community health workers in conjunction with Medicaid recipients. I could see a direct correlation between a similar type of support system with clients needing TANF and workforce development support. Ultimately, I would be interested in being engaged and working with models that approach peoples' issues holistically.”
- “Mentoring, social capital, positive relationships that encourage and help with barrier removal.”
- “The system must be more responsive to clients facing barriers — when they don't get efficient responses, they lose motivation.”
- “Often our clients have so many work hours to complete they have trouble in their job search. Also childcare and transportation are both barriers in this rural county.”
- “Cultural issues.”
- “Morrow MHA administers the Housing Choice Voucher program for our county. When one of our clients has an income change-up, we are required to give them a full month’s notice of their rent change. This allows the family to have a month to prepare to be responsible for more of their rent. It seems to me that it would make sense to do the same thing in regards to food stamps. Instead of immediately cutting the food stamp amount the following month, they could be granted a month’s notice to prepare for the change. Our clients seem more willing to become employed and stick with the employment when changes aren't abruptly made.”
- “Need to start at the middle school level on intervention and mentoring so that they will leave school fully expecting to work and be self-sufficient.”
- “We have to re-instill the notion that employment is a desirable goal. A goal worth pursuing and attaining, even if it's difficult. A life on disability is no life at all really. 3rd shift child care would help our county. Work must be seen as a protective factor — it improves physical and mental health while unemployment/disability increases a person’s risk for physical/mental impairments.”
- “I think there is a certain amount of game-playing going on here. Most of those not now working are either disabled or just unable to find work with their existing skill sets. Punitive efforts to reduce welfare rolls serve mostly to increase burdens on food banks and the agencies they serve.”
- “I have witnessed that those having someone who supports them and believes in them is a tremendous help!”
- “So many clients have felony convictions (drug-related, theft to support drug habit, etc.), which is why I rated legal issues so high.”
- “I feel OWF should teach clients more about how businesses work, to understand employment and the opportunity to work in different fields. Most poor people do not understand the credit rating system, banking practices/procedures, basic principles of having checking and savings accounts or even investing money, owning a home or buying property. In America these are core foundations to building and being productive, working-class people. Once a client has an understanding of those things, they can make a conscience effort to find their footing in society and know there are many streams of income available to them besides what they see in their community. They need help to determine the skilled trade or vocation they are interested in. (College is not always the option.) Testing is essential but not always accurate. If a client believes they are taking an assessment test to determine their strengths and weakness at a job or career path; and not to see how smart they are in math, reading and technology,

they will be more at ease and I'm sure the assessment will show what areas the funding for education and training should cover for that individual. Many poor people are not aware of the many growing professions, or the title of jobs within a hospital, local government, utility companies, skilled labor construction, metro parks, security, transportation, colleges/universities, social work, courts, law firms, marketing firms, sport arenas, sport and fitness gyms, spas/restores, and hotel hospitality. There are more opportunities available for them than is advertised to them currently. The need to know there is a wealth of opportunity beyond these county borders."

- "In our experience, basic financial literacy is also a barrier to maintaining employment and housing."
- "There should be a gradual decrease in benefits to those who finally find stable employment. Many get discouraged when food stamp benefits or other benefits stop within a month of working and some say they were better off not working."
- "I do not think the current OWF methods are working. In our county, WEP workers are assigned to work sites to do rather mundane work. Our center is a WEP site. This work does not prepare them to get a job. A small percentage of the people who work at the WEP sites are motivated. The majority who work lack motivation, self-direction and a sense of responsibility. More resources are needed to actually assist people with job search and placement. The approach needs to be more individualized in order to adequately address each client's barriers."
- "Need graduated reduction of benefits when people gain income. By the time someone pays for child care, transportation, lost SNAP and higher rent they can actually have less money than they would get from OWF. The system now disincentivizes work."
- "The available and principle that would require a moderately diminishing availability of assistance would be a benefit, i.e. rent assistance that progressively gets smaller perhaps at a yearly pace. This would encourage progress in the re-education process of potential employees."
- "I would include as a barrier, the lack of appropriate, affordable housing. "Stable housing" is subjective."
- "You want someone with no transportation to seek a job? And what jobs? All their jobs went to China."
- "Where are the jobs that are sufficient to support an individual or a family? They are not there."
- "This is a biased question and survey; it assumes individuals want to be dependent, whereas it should be assumed that all individuals want the best quality of life for themselves and their loved ones. The greatest barrier in Cuyahoga County is the continued inequality of the educational system and similar public services like transportation and services for individuals with disabilities."
- "If we're serious about moving people out of poverty, we need to invest in opportunities for people to work, through job training, social work and investments in our economy. Taking benefits away from people in an economy with too few opportunities for jobs will only hurt people."
- "I think that there is a large need for companies to be more flexible with hiring those who are formerly incarcerated. They are going through an already hard transition made harder by the lack of jobs available to them due to their past."
- "Time limits on assistance have created a population of desperately poor, hungry and unhealthy people."
- "Assessment done to determine skill level. Individual employment plan — these are the jobs that are available for the skill level/wages. Available jobs above that skill level and what technical training is needed to rise to that level, etc. Assistance/tutorial provided to rise above the present level. Built-in incentives; continuously, as clients progress."
- "I hope this helps others to become functional society employment."
- "People's need for public assistance does not end immediately upon obtaining a low-paying job. Support should be phased out, not end abruptly."
- "I have no basis for what would be an opinion to answer question 7 so it has been left unanswered."
- "A large issue not touched on here is that many people can't move out of poverty with the jobs available and achievable in the time frame allotted by the program. Wages are very low and cannot sustain an individual or let alone a family. A person can't work two or three part-time jobs and raise a family."
- "More programs like Getting Ahead to address generational poverty issues."
- "Lack of education/awareness of rules of work requirement and lack of enforcement from JFS."

- “Sanctioning clients causes them to drop out of the system, which means that they are no longer utilizing any of the help that is available to get their family back on its feet. This causes the cycle to continue and perpetuates poverty in our communities.”
- “I have identified a group of our population who are hardcore unemployed because of mental health disorders. Most of this group has criminal records, all motivated by self-medicating drug use.”
- “Lack of public transportation.”
- “Public assistance has made itself too available for the clients. From working in a HR standpoint, the clients work the system, reduce work to engage in more benefits while being under review, and as soon as the review is completed, the client increases their workload. There is too much assistance available to those that do not want to work, have little or no education, as well as lacking motivation to better themselves for their children's benefit.”
- “Need for training in money management skills.”
- “Training to upgrade work skills that open doors to available jobs needs to be provided to be successful over the long term. Programs that focus on getting a job do not produce long-term change.”
- “I believe the state/county agencies could work together to help workers fight for higher pay.”
- “A huge problem is the lack of jobs that pay enough to support oneself. A number of our pantry clients are working but rely on pantries to make it through the month.”
- “Criminal history. It takes a minute to get into trouble but a lifetime to get out. Everyone deserves a second, third chance, and employment isn't exactly overflowing for the mentally ill or felons.”
- “It takes a major shift in mindset.”
- “Unemployed people choose small towns where rent is lower, but that makes it harder to get to any possible jobs which are in the city”
- “You need more high-level programs. Many of today's ‘new poor’ were yesterday's college-educated professionals. Teaching them how to write a resume, and offering a job at Wendy's does not help.”
- “Some of the people who rely on assistance do it because getting into the educational programs that best suit them will not accept them because of financial issues.”
- “We know that 2,600 jobs are available about 25 miles from the Pantry itself...but how are we going to provide for individuals to get to these jobs when there is no public transportation or provision made for paying for transport? It has always been an issue including the clients who are required to spend time in the Jobs Store office. Those who do drive either don't have a vehicle or the gas for the daily required attendance. No one will ever leave our doorway hungry, but making demands about sanctioning will only increase our burden to provide food and the finances to continue to meet this challenge.”
- “We have people attempting to use claims of disability to stay out of market. Once under sanctions, they find work. Still need portions of assistance programs to take care of dependents. We need incentive system to allow gradual independence and reward for working harder.”
- “Many of the individuals tell me they don't want to work. Those who do want to work are typically overqualified for the job. I pursue some of them but I typically will lose them. I have people tell me they will call me when their funds run out.”
- “Yes, there are no jobs in the city of Lorain. Both mills are in layoff, Ford has closed and there is a very minor retail market. Until employers come to Lorain, nothing will change”
- “Some OWF candidates don't have to opportunity to work because they have bad records in the system.”
- “The barriers are not singular issues but multi-faceted, and require a dynamic, multi-faceted approach.”
- “The most difficult barrier that people in poverty face is the lack of jobs that pay a living wage — it is nearly impossible to live on a minimum wage job. If government doesn't want to address the minimum wage issue, then families need help paying for child care and we need to provide good, quality public transportation so that people are able to get to their jobs. Most people want to work and want to be self-sufficient, but the odds are stacked against them when they can't find a job that pays enough for them to obtain safe housing, child care for their children, food for their families and transportation to get to and from their jobs. Often when families get jobs, they are cut off from all services because they make ‘too much;’ however, they don't make enough to support their families. This often leads to job loss due to the stress of trying to support their family on incomes that are too small.”
- “Not being financially literate.”

- “Many OWF work-required clients want to work, however the structure of the program makes it impossible for them to learn critical thinking skills because they are often faced with an all-or-nothing situation. There is no room for error without sacrificing the benefits that are needed in order to survive. This has led to OWF clients facing more unnecessary penalties when other options should have been made available to give the skills needed to become truly self-sufficient.”
- “Retention incentives, increase transportation options, educate employers on benefits of hiring restored citizens, opportunity to complete high school diploma both in person and career online high school, activities that will count toward participation, job coaching after someone becomes employed for at least six months, ability to follow up and track participant activity with other invested providers, discount monthly bus passes, interview OWF work-required clients or conduct focus groups, on-the-job mentors.”
- “We have to meet clients where they are. Ex: If they don't have a GED, I would encourage obtaining that first and then building on continuing their education to compete in the technologically advanced future.”
- “I feel some services are pulled out from the family too soon after they start working. This system seems to keep people wanting the benefits and not trying to work. They are afraid of losing the safeguard of what they have. Part-time jobs or short-term jobs don't allow the family to ever catch up”
- “I feel that providing work sites is critical. Many have little skills in how to go about locating a work site and as a result become frustrated and confused. Providing a pre-designated site would help everyone in this process. To be clear, something like the old WPA or CCC work programs, which were very successful. I draw that conclusion from my own family members that participated in these programs and appreciated the experience.”
- “The experience they get from our work site helps them more to employment. We have had a lot of OWF become employed.”
- “Many of the employable want to work, but because of age and race discrimination they can't find the work they want and/or need. People need to know they are good and reliable people that are respected. Just because they have been searching for a job for a long time does not mean they are not a valuable person. Jobs need to be able to sustain a person; many people now are hired for less than the minimum wage with no health care. They find out that they can stay on assistance and get better paid and better health care so they have no incentive to get off assistance.”
- “Felony convictions that may have originally occurred during young adulthood are a huge issue for employability. For me, that is #1 barrier followed by undiagnosed mental illness and then undiagnosed/untreated physical barriers”
- “Sanctioning rarely works. OJT by placing clients in supportive work-training sites provides an effective way of building the human capital and providing real-life, skill-building experiences for workers beyond the classroom and also helps them learn to network and build community relationships, which can lead to employment.”
- “Reducing the poverty cycle is imperative, including the propensity for teenage pregnancy, which is highly contingent on reducing domestic violence and other trauma in impoverished communities.”
- “When a person goes to work, many of the supports that they had are eliminated and they are not able to obtain the same level of supports they once had using the salaries that they are paid. For instance, they are not able to afford child care therefore cannot work. I would recommend that many of their social services supports remain intact for a period of time until they are better able to obtain these supports themselves.”
- “Investing in human capital so that individuals are able to make more money than just enough to get by. Who wants to make the same amount of money you receive if receiving public assistance.”
- “Barrier: A loss of benefits once you have an increase in income. This incentivizes families to not get better-paying jobs or promotions. If you get an increase in salary you are likely to lose child care benefits or reduction in food stamps. Maintain benefits for a period of time beyond salary increase would be an incentive to becoming self-sufficient.”
- “We need a much clearer picture and profile of the OWF population, including education, encounters with the criminal justice system, housing, physical and mental health issues, and use of both public and private basic support systems.”

- “Child care is the primary issue facing individuals looking for work in addition to a lack of soft skill development.”
- “It is critical that a way is found to involve the larger community, especially those who have been and/or are part of the program to be an ongoing part of any movement towards change. In the past, many counties have had advisory groups made up of such members of the population. Ensuring their presence in the future is a need that is seldom addressed and understood.”
- “We serve the limited English proficient population; a strong job club model that incorporates soft job skills training, ESOL and mental health support would be an incredibly positive initiative.”
- “While I mentioned that personal support and work experiences are top priority in this survey, I believe that the county can help most quickly and effectively by reducing the barriers to transportation. That means reducing costs and increasing availability of bus stops. People need to arrive on time and ready to work. Many folks are isolated because of the costs and distances of RTA. The county is in the best position to help with that cost. THANK YOU.”
- “Criminal records prevent most OWF work-required clients from moving from public assistance, which creates long-term poverty to self-reliance on income maintenance. Clients should be involuntarily removed if they have not participated in increasing their access to jobs, opportunities and education.”
- “The welfare system is itself a barrier, as many clients feel their caseworkers intentionally make their lives difficult. Useless make-work assignments do not lead to self-sufficiency. Real jobs with real opportunities motivate people. These people are the ultimate recipients of there being fewer jobs in the economy, and vulnerable groups are being excluded for longer periods. Many of the poor are products of inadequate schooling, where they were behind from the beginning. That requires a larger investment in schools for them, and early childhood for their children to keep them up with everyone else. There is less unskilled work, but the OWF work requirements exclude most skill training, leading to a dead end. Time limits are too short, particularly given the recession and slow job growth. A substantial percentage of clients are ‘hard cases’ with multiple barriers, often involving physical and mental health conditions of the clients or family members. We see family stress and near-destitution with some of these families. The system is poorly set up and poorly funded to evaluate and help them, as it requires skilled personal contact, a lot of patience and more money than the government has been willing to spend.”
- “People need proper individualized assessments completed by specially trained staff in order to identify all the barriers and evaluations completed by medical and mental health professionals so we can determine their limitations and help figure out what will help reduce their reliance on benefits. We need intensive case management by social workers who want to help people succeed instead of by workers who just look for reasons to sanction and close. We truly need a good and meaningful leaver study or follow-up, because people's problems don't stop once they walk out your doors. Many don't want to come back in because of the way they were treated; let's put the ‘human’ back in Human Services. We have to let people know we care about them and what happens and want better things for them, to convince them to want it too. Getting allowances for vocational training, which will lead to good-paying jobs and not just lots of school loans, or grants that help out the educational institutions but do nothing for the client in the way of getting employment; having viable PRC plans, which provide assistance directly to our clients when the needs arise (South Central Ohio DJFS and Fayette County DJFS); have no PRC benefits available for emergent needs. Setting aside sufficient monies for the emergent needs and reducing the lengthy periods of eligibility — like only one service in a year, 18-month or 2-year period. Cars break down, tires go flat, people don't have money to start jobs. They need help. Let's help them up instead of pushing them down!”
- “OWF work-required clients who are currently engaged in education programs to earn either a GED or a college degree would greatly benefit from having their participation in the education program count toward their required monthly work hours (beyond the 12 allowable months). Individuals would also benefit greatly from being able to access child care services at a higher percentage of poverty (increasing the income limit by which to qualify).”
- “Cultural expectation and incentive to rely on government assistance: ‘It's just what we do,’ without question.”
- “Treat them like human beings and quit putting barriers in their way and setting them up to fail.”

- “Services for persons with major barriers, such as those with mental illnesses, should contract with professionals with expertise in working with those populations. If this is not an option, the program needs to hire persons with this specialized training and background.”
- “Clothes; how to seek a job; for most getting onto the labor force will be a long-term project and immediacy is not only not a good method, it can be a negative method.”
- “Stigma regarding addiction and mental health issues are major obstacles for jobs. People need to be matched to jobs that are meaningful to them and hopefully will pay more than the minimum. I feel too many jobs are low-paid and menial for people who are trying to get to or back to work.”
- “I worked as a job coach at Cincinnati Works for 9 years. What you need to know to put this population to work is in a book written by that program's founder, Liane Phillips. Title: No One Is Unemployable.”
- “By allowing those individuals who want to go to school, for either their GED or college, to use some of their schooling towards their volunteer hours for benefits.”
- “In my opinion I think the clients we have seen lack motivation to do this for a long period of time, yet want the benefits. They start off well but in a manner of the first few weeks, they disappear. I don't know what the answer is, but it can be frustrating to an organization to assist with getting new clients every month and orientating to start all over.”
- “Short-term, subsidized, transitional employment is a helpful service that assists clients to gain some work experience. Wage subsidy provides opportunities for employment involvement that would not otherwise be available”
- “Our agency assists refugees and they face very difficult challenges than the typical American. Many of them have limited English proficiency and if they are older, it is often difficult for them to learn English within a short period of time since their learning capacity is lower than that of a young person. Those who are willing and able to take a manual labor job at a low pay rate do, but since these jobs are often at or near the minimum wage they often still rely on food stamps. Some clients calculate that it is more worthwhile to rely on cash assistance for an extended period of time with the hope of learning English and finding a better paying job, but I have seen that after two or three years of reliance on OWF many are still not much more likely to find a high-paying job. However, I have heard time and time again that if they were able to find a job that paid enough to not rely on food stamps and not struggle to get by that they would be willing to work right away. This could be as little as \$12/hour rather than \$8.50 or \$9.00, which would be enough of an incentive. For example, I have a client who has been on OWF for almost two years attending English classes and he recently came to me and said he wanted to work for a certain company where his friend works. Our agency had helped that client get that job and so I know it pays \$11.50 an hour. I asked him why he suddenly wants to start working rather than focus on English and he said that it pays enough to support the family, whereas the other jobs are too low-paying. Sanctioning clients, increasing OWF attendance requirements, imposing requirements for food stamps and all other disincentives for relying on assistance just cause the agency and client to focus energy on welfare-related tasks rather than finding jobs. The positive incentive of earning more money is the single best thing that could reduce our clients' reliance on welfare. This could mean an increase in the minimum wage, government incentives for increased wages for manual labor jobs or other creative solutions.”
- “More time needs to be given to the clients working on their GED. It would help to provide childcare assistance and food while they are attending classes.”
- “If you are looking for commitments from interested citizens to work on this issue, I would be someone who would like to be involved.”
- “Legal family formation; barriers to unmarried parents are an enormous invisible barrier. We can reduce reliance on public assistance if we help unmarried parents form families for their children rather than serving members of the family in public silos. Please contact me for clarification! neofathering@gmail.com”
- “Training and volunteer requirements need adding. In addition to the school hours, students not completing more than 30 hours per week should have to volunteer an additional 5 hours per week on or off campus; performing some type of community-based services to be reported and monitored by the school services department.”

- “We should allow longer educational programs to count toward meeting work requirements, as long as there is a reasonable expectation that it will lead to employment; more focus on getting to living-wage employment, not just minimum wage and that's it.”
- “Most people on OWF want to work, but are always on the brink of catastrophe because they lack supportive services for when children get sick, or their car goes out, or they have an unforeseen emergency that throws their finances into chaos. Successfully getting recipients into the workforce will require help with these supports for more than just a few months.”
- “Impossible for me to rank the 16 options in Q 6. We see a lot of clients at Legal Aid, but really only the tip of the iceberg regarding OWF. Would not be responsible to generalize too much from our experience, and it varies too much — people we see have all of these issues, in the aggregate. I believe what is needed is intensive case management, generally speaking. Those with other options exercise them, because they do not get what they think they need from JFS. This is not JFS's fault — the significant defunding since 2007 has made it difficult/impossible for counties to provide the needed support. Any program implemented under the Governor's ‘person-centered work program’ must provide in-depth assessment and meaningful services that address the barriers determined in the assessment. Anything else will simply increase the cynicism that already exists in the community about OWF.”
- “I believe all OWF clients should be drug screened before attempting to build job skills or find jobs.”
- “Attention to ‘bridge’ assistance is important. Reducing benefits in concert with the person achieving economic self-sufficiency is important. It would be very helpful if this could be individualized, with caseworkers having some latitude re: ‘bridge’ assistance. An increase in the minimum wage would also be quite helpful.”
- “Given the significant drug/alcohol problems faced by our clients and the long history of legal issues, including past felonies, even if they become work-ready the felonies still impeded their ability to obtain gainful employment. Many clients we work with have long-term sobriety and are quite employable, however this continuously hampers their success.”
- “In my experience after living in two large metropolitan areas such as Houston and Dallas, Texas, a large number of employers are attracted to those areas because of the established infrastructure and the demand for their product/service. When I see my jurisdiction, Carroll County, it is obvious that the current demand for products and services rely heavily within the oil/gas industry, however we either lack the education and/or infrastructure within the community to retain jobs. We as a county need to take full advantage of this opportunity for our residents. These businesses offer employment, which requires certain skill sets. If there isn't already training there needs to be training made available to residents in order to work in the industry. Improving our K-12 education is another step that is crucial. Industries employ workers who will live in the area. The better our school systems are the more likely employees will live in the area and enroll their children in the school districts. By providing better education this not only brings jobs here but it will retain the industry and improve the community. I could go on and on, I'm sure this is already been discussed, but in order to reduce poverty we must educate, train and strategically plan for the future.”
- “Providing ‘transition to employment assistance’ (\$), particularly at the onset of obtaining a job. Length of support and amount of the support based on the wage and individual/family circumstances.”
- “Drug testing before providing ANY public assistance.”
- “Fair salaries and affordable benefits are crucial.”
- “PLEASE NOTE: When attempting to complete ranking of barriers, defaulted to a sequential listed from start to finish—I wasn't able to override. Critical need is to provide a program that allows for proper educational/skill development while receiving OWF benefits that leads to a sustainable income, versus short-term focus on meeting weekly work requirements for OWF (doesn't allow for education/training).”
- “I think that the key is a variety of the first few items that we rank. To end overall reliance on public benefits, we need jobs that pay a living wage with the flexibility to allow individuals to care for their and their family's health care needs (illness or sick babysitter), a benefits system that transitions people off instead of facing a cliff, and supportive services such as child care, transportation and job training to get people ready. Having small children of my own, I have often wondered how people do it if they don't get time off when the kid is sick and can't go to the sitter, when the only appointment for the ear infection is

in the middle of the day, or if they are expected to manage kids while working multiple jobs to pay the rent.”

- “Participants face many, many personal barriers in the effort for self-sufficiency; delivery of services shouldn't be one of them. Limiting the time allowed for educational activities equally limits the investment in the participants' employability. Education should be encouraged, not limited.”
- “9 out of 10 living-wage jobs in today's economy require some education or training beyond a high school diploma. In other words, regardless of any other job readiness work, if OWF participants do not have a high school diploma/GED and access to vocational training, they will not obtain a job that reduces reliance on public assistance and moves their family out of poverty. In whatever way possible, work activity requirements should recognize this reality of today's economy.”
- “Many of the consumers I see have been so indoctrinated in a victim mentality and enabled by systems of care that perpetuate that mentality that they need more intensive coaching and support through the pre-employment and early employment steps to maintain jobs than is currently available to them. And it can't be optional support. I've often wondered if a graduated system of fiscal support would be beneficial, instead of the current system of 'either you qualify or you don't.' ”
- “Allow clients to keep subsidized housing, food stamps and health insurance for 1 year after getting a job at the same rates.”
- “We have developed our 10-week COOKS! Culinary Training Program around support of the individual, mentoring by more advanced students and developing a habit of having to punch-in and punch-out during the 10-week program so that each individual knows that they have to be accountable.”

STAKEHOLDERS RESPONDING TO SURVEY

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| Friends of the Homeless of Tuscarawas County | Frontline Service |
| ICAN Housing | Society of St. Vincent de Paul |
| Interfaith | Pickaway County Community Action |
| Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health PATH Program | Lockwood United Methodist Church |
| Urban Mission Ministries Hutton House Homeless Shelter | Mental Health and Recovery Board of Union County |
| Ashland Church Community Emergency Shelter Services | Catholic Charities — PATH |
| YWCA | Portage Metropolitan Housing Authority |
| Harbor House (300 Beds Inc.) | Extended Housing |
| Humana Inc. | Toledo Lucas County Homelessness Board |
| Integrated Services of Appalachian Ohio/BOSCO | Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority |
| Franklin Plaza | Haven House of Pickaway County |
| Region 7 Continuum-of-Care Coalition | Ohio Association of Foodbanks |
| The Salvation Army Emergency Shelter | Joy's Place |
| Howells & Howells | Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency |
| Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association and Region 7 Continuum of Care | New Avenues for Independence Buckeye Industries |
| Lorain County Habitat for Humanity | Ashtabula County Community Action Agency |
| Franklin County Job and Family Services | Mid-Ohio Foodbank |
| St. Michael Archangel Parish Cleveland, Ohio 44109 | Northwest Ohio Development Agency |
| Huckleberry House | Community Action Organization of Delaware Madison and Union Counties, also serving Champaign, Shelby and Logan |
| Catholic Charities | Community AIDS Network/Akron Pride Initiative |

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| Hopewell Health Centers, Inc. | Zanesville Metropolitan Housing Authority |
| WSOS Community Action Commission | CDP |
| Housing Services Alliance, Inc. | New Directions for Living |
| Policy Matters Ohio | Department of Veterans Affairs |
| Scioto Paint Valley Mental Health Center | Community Support Services, Inc. Akron, OH |
| Liberty Center of Sandusky County | Cuyahoga Health Access Partnership |
| Logan Co Metropolitan Housing Authorization | Project Woman |
| YWCA of Greater Cleveland | Council for Economic Opportunities in Greater Cleveland |
| Ottawa County Transitional Housing, Inc. | Beatitude House |
| Serenity House | Morrow Metropolitan Housing Authority |
| West Side Catholic Center | Ironton Lawrence County Community Action Organization |
| Mental Health and Recovery Board of Ashland County | Catalyst Life Services |
| Hope Whispers Community Organization Inc. | WSOS Community Action Commission |
| Liberty Center Connections | Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless |
| Community Action Agency of Columbiana County, Inc. | Portage Metropolitan Housing Authority |
| Winter Sanctuary Emergency Homeless Shelters | Harmony House Homeless Services, Inc. |
| Lake County Continuum of Care | Appleseed Community Mental Health Center, Housing Department |
| Housing Solutions of Greene County, Inc. | Cuyahoga County IT |
| Community Housing of Darke, Miami and Shelby Counties, Inc. | Pickaway County Community Action Organization, Inc. |
| Home Is The (HIT) Foundation | Washington-Morgan Community Action |
| Catholic Charities | Oberlin Community Services |
| Emmanuel Community Care Center | Communications Apprenticeship and Training |
| ICAN Housing | Residential Administrators |
| FOCUS | Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greene County |
| New Housing Ohio | Toledo Community Service Center dba Family House |
| St. Andrew Food Pantry | Daybreak |
| Ross County Community Action Commission, Inc. | Community Action Committee of Pike County |
| Hocking Metropolitan Housing Authority | Vineyard Community Center |
| The Salvation Army, Canton Corps | Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission |
| Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc. | Milestones Autism Resources |
| Cuyahoga County Division of Senior and Adult Services | Bucyrus Church of God Food Pantry |
| Lafayette United Methodist Church | EDWINS Leadership and Restaurant Institute |
| Greater Cleveland Food Bank | Community Activist Infant Mortality Initiative Equity and Inclusion CCS |
| Cuyahoga County Department of Job and Family Services | Scan Hunger Center Pantry |
| May Dugan Center | ABLE/LAWO |
| United Way of Greater Cleveland | Supports to Encourage Low-Income Families |

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| FrontLine Service | Services for Independent Living Inc. |
| HARCATUS CAO, Inc. RSVP | LSS Food Pantries |
| Food Program and Clothesline of Jackson | Family Promise of Greater Cleveland |
| Bread of Life | Feeding America |
| Inter Parish Ministry | Child Care Resource Center |
| Childhood Food Solutions | Neighborhood Ministries |
| WorkGroup | Lutheran Home at Concord Reserve |
| Marietta Community Food Pantry | 35 years at Catholic Charities, 20 of the years working in employment services. Recently retired. |
| Ohio Department of Job and Family Services | Home Care Workers |
| Deardoff Senior Center | LifeHope Community Church (food pantry through the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank) |
| Ohio Food bank Association | Broad Street Food Pantry |
| The City Mission — Laura's Home Women's Crisis Center | Plymouth-Shiloh Food Pantry |
| Urban Ark | Community Re-Entry, Inc. |
| CCF main campus | Plymouth Shiloh Food Pantry |
| New Day Family Resource Center | Northeast Ohio Neighborhood Services. |
| McCarthy, Burgess & Wolff | Lorain Christian Temple Disciples of Christ |
| United Way of Greater Cleveland | The May Howard Community Project |
| Mid-Ohio Foodbank | St. Paul United Methodist Church |
| McCall Consulting & Associates Inc. | University Settlement, Inc. |
| Enterprise Community Partners | Community Action Council of Portage County, Inc. |
| Cleveland Housing Network | Cleveland Clinic, Stephanie Tubbs Jones Health Center |
| The Foodbank, Inc. | West Side Catholic Center |
| Catholic Charities | Miami Valley Family Care Center |
| The Well at Sunnyside | Greater Dover New Philadelphia Food Pantry |
| People To People Ministries | Lakeville Food Pantry |
| Mercer Residential Services, Inc. | Summit County Child Support Enforcement Agency |
| Shared Harvest Foodbank | Second Harvest Food Bank of The Mahoning Valley |
| Potter's House Ministries | Feed Your Neighbor, Toledo Area Ministries, Toledo, Ohio |
| Ohio Association of Foodbanks | Lorain County AIDS Task Force |
| COAD/RSVP of the Ohio Valley | Shared Harvest Foodbank |
| Lifeline, Inc. (Lake County's Community Action Agency) | Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority |
| Cleveland Tenants Organization | Shawnee Family Health |
| The Salvation Army Harbor Light | Beech Brook |
| Ohio Association of Foodbanks | Cuyahoga EITC Coalition |
| Enterprise Community Partners | YWCA Greater Cleveland |
| United Clevelanders Against Poverty Metanoia Project | Asian Services In Action |
| Hitchcock Center for Women | St. Paul's Community Outreach |
| Cleveland Eastside Ex-Offender Coalition | Advocates for Basic Legal Equality |
| Southeastern Ohio Legal Services Chillicothe Area | Legal Aid Society of Columbus |

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| Office | |
| MedWish International | Legal Aid Society |
| UCP of Greater Cleveland | Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services |
| Jewish Family Service Association | Community Legal Aid Services |
| ORCA House | Legal Aid Society of Columbus |
| Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati | Workmen's Circle Educational Center |
| Cleveland City Council | Women's Recovery Center |
| Emmanuel Baptist Church | Butler Behavioral Health Services |
| HFLA of Northeast Ohio | Vocational Guidance Services |
| Us Together | West Side Community House |
| Trinity Lakewood Community Outreach | Cleveland Public Library |
| VAMC | North Coast Strategy Partners, LLC |
| Healthy Fathering Collaborative | Greater Cleveland Food Bank |
| Greene County Housing Program, American Red Cross, Dayton Area Chapter | Helping All Students to Independence/Remington College |
| County Councilperson, District 2 | Gesher of Cleveland |
| Mayerson Center for Safe and Healthy Children | Carroll County Department of Job and Family Services/OhioMeansJobs Carroll County Area 16 Workforce Investment Board Member |
| Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati | Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio Advocates for Ohio's Future |
| Carroll County Board of Developmental Disabilities | Columbiana County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board |
| Personal and Family Counseling Services, an OhioGuidestone Org. | Carroll County General Health District |
| Carroll County Family and Children First Council | Family and Children First Council |
| Carroll County Department of Job and Family Services | United Way of Greater Stark County 2-1-1 Information and Referral |
| Greene County Combined Health District | Cincinnati Chamber — Leadership Action |
| Leadership Action | Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber |
| The Legal Aid Society of Columbus | Leadership: Action, on behalf of Cincinnati State Technical & Community College, Workforce Development Center |
| Council on Rural Services | Leadership Action; St. Vincent de Paul-Cincinnati |
| Greene County Family and Children First | United Way of the Greater Dayton Area, Greene County |
| Freestore Foodbank | |

APPENDIX F

Focus Group Summary

On March 23 and March 25, 2015, the Workgroup to Reduce Reliance on Public Assistance conducted two focus groups with Ohio Works First (OWF) recipients. The March 23 focus group contained nine participants who all were seeking GED completion at that time and ranged in age from 17 to 50. The March 25 focus group contained six participants who ranged in age from 21 to 52. All 15 participants were participating in a work-required activity as a condition of their receipt of OWF when they participated in the focus groups.

Focus Group with GED Students: Cincinnati, Ohio, March 23, 2015

PARTICIPANTS (all were asked to use pseudonyms)

“Nae” – 21-year-old female
“Kowah” – 20-year-old female
“D” – 38-year-old male
“T.T.” – 25-year-old female
“Sari” – 27-year-old female
“Nita” – 29-year-old female
“Kenyata” – 21-year-old female
“Mook” – 17-year-old female
“Momma” – 50-year-old female

PURPOSE/GROUND RULES

The purpose of the focus group was to get a perspective of current public assistance recipients’ lives to:

- Understand the challenges that lead people to apply for assistance;
- Understand individual plans to become self-sufficient;
- Identify challenges or road blocks to attaining goals;
- Seek input on how we can modify our current system to help them meet their goals.

THEMES IDENTIFIED

Participants answered questions designed to increase understanding of the challenges that lead people to apply for assistance.

- Most respondents indicated they felt they would only need assistance for a short period of time and they were desperate to be away from it.
- Pregnancy and birth of children was a common reason why people applied.
- Lack of receipt of child support from an absent parent was another predominant theme of why participants sought out public assistance.

Participants answered questions to help the workgroup understand the individual plans participants had to become self-sufficient.

- While all participants had aspirations, most were not able to articulate clear plans or paths out of the public assistance system. All indicated that their pursuit of the GED was the current step they were taking to move away from assistance.

Participants answered questions about their aspirations were and where they'd like to be in five years.

- College (17-year-old female)
- Entrepreneur/my own daycare (21-year-old female)
- Working in a daycare or hair salon (20-year-old female)
- Have my HVAC certification and be a self-employed technician (39-year-old male)
- Own my own restaurant (25-year-old female)
- Nurse (27-year-old female)
- Paramedic (29-year-old female)
- Pediatrician or veterinarian (21-year-old female)
- Taking care of my grandson (50-year-old female)

Participants were asked to identify challenges or road blocks to attaining these goals.

- Most identified system rules as a challenge, such as the constant need to report reason for non-compliance, and the lack of “real” programs to assist them in getting a marketable skill. Lack of receipt of child support also was identified.
- Participants understand that they are responsible for improving their lives and want to get off of public assistance as soon as possible. System rules (time limits, sanctions) often make it difficult to succeed and cause more stress.
- A common response/theme among participants was caring for their children, who are “the most important thing.”
- Other responses:
 - Participation requirements start too soon. Applicants need time to take care of their basic life needs before being required to participate.
 - Students leave school unprepared for life. Basic life skill lessons need to be provided throughout the school years (such as how to manage money, pay bills, earn money and take care of one’s self).
 - More jobs and training programs need to be created.
 - Helping people to meet basic needs is not enough. Current available public housing can keep people down. Benefits can create dependency. The system needs to do more to help people reach their goals.

Participants provided their input on how we should modify our current system to help them meet their goals. Suggestions included:

- Institute real programs to help people, not programs that trap people in poverty.
- Stop clustering people in poverty (subsidized housing); spread people out.
- Give people more freedom to do what they need to do to be successful.
- Push people to meet goals.
- Drug testing and sanctions for those who don’t care for their children.
- Participants need to take responsibility for themselves. The system should have stipulations, not time limits.
- Create “real” programs; food and housing assistance only create generational poverty.
- Teach financial literacy throughout the school years.
- Provide free therapy sessions to help people deal with their issues.
- Have more hiring events, make job information more available in poor neighborhoods.
- Spread out public housing instead of clustering recipients in smaller areas.

FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

- It is clear from this focus group that participants don't believe that a "one-size-fits-all" program can work. Participants indicated they need more personal attention and that the system needs to work with people differently depending on where they are in their lives. While some need constant guidance and support, others need freedom to manage their lives.
- Most of the participants indicated that they have been on assistance for less than a year, though many had been on assistance of some sort as a child. Most could not articulate a clear path off assistance, and most stated that they simply needed a job to move away.
- Participants were mixed in their view of the system in its current state. Some believe that the system is broken and is designed to keep people in poverty. Others felt that recipients need to follow the rules the system has in place and be responsible for their lives.
- Collectively, the group felt strongly that the current mix of benefits and public housing traps people into generational poverty and that we are not teaching people to be independent. Most agreed that there should be time limits for people to get assistance. Additionally, most agreed that while they receive assistance, they need to be engaged in real efforts (education, training, life skills) to move off of it.
- Many expressed significant frustration with an apparent lack of consequences for other recipients who do not follow established rules.
- Some expressed frustration with current staff delivering the service, in that individuals do not get the personal attention they need.
- Most agreed that people must be "pushed" to strive harder to get the things they want.
- Most believe that employment opportunities need to be created and that those opportunities must pay a living wage.
- Virtually all expressed great frustration with the current conditions of a life in poverty. They felt that large areas of public housing are keeping people in poverty and promoting generational poverty.
- Lastly, a common theme was that we need to make available more effective programs, such as:
 - Therapy sessions for public assistance recipients;
 - Information about programs and services in neighborhoods;
 - Life skills classes in middle school and high school;
 - Help with criminal records.

Focus Group with Community Link Participants: March 25, 2015

PARTICIPANTS (all were asked to use pseudonyms)

"Mimi" – 28-year-old African-American female (1 child)

"Nini" – 21-year-old African-American female (1 child)

"Tae" – 33-year-old African-American male (5 children)

"Keem" – 31-year-old African-American male (1 child, one on the way)

"P" – 36-year-old African-American male (6 children)

"Ann" – 52-year-old African-American female (no children)

PURPOSE/GROUND RULES

The purpose of the focus group was to get a perspective of current public assistance recipients' lives to:

- Understand the challenges that lead people to apply for assistance;
- Understand their individual plans to become self-sufficient;

- Identify challenges or road blocks to attaining goals;
- Seek input on how we can modify our current system to help them meet their goals.

THEMES IDENTIFIED

Participants answered questions designed to increase understanding of the challenges that lead people to apply for assistance, giving the following responses:

- Two participants described difficulties finding work after moving to Ohio from another state.
- Several participants described difficulties finding or keeping work due to legal issues.
- One participant cited depression and pregnancy as a barrier to work.
- Child care and family responsibilities were another common theme.

Participants answered questions to help the workgroup understand the individual plans participants had to become self-sufficient.

- Like the previous focus group, all had aspirations, but most were not able to articulate clear plans or paths out of the public assistance system. All were participating in an OWF work-required program when they participated in the focus group, and most were actively seeking employment. Others were pursuing education.

Common characteristics of the participants based on their statements:

- All have had on-and-off connections to the workforce. All but one had lost or quit employment recently for various reasons (boss didn't like me, asking me to do too much for what they were paying, did something stupid that resulted in a misdemeanor on my record, stopped showing up due to depression, got pregnant, had to move out of state, paying too much child support).
- Most originally believed they would only be on assistance a short period of time (a couple of months), but encountered difficulties finding a job. Most described receiving less support for finding a job (case management) than they had anticipated.
- 50 percent of the participants of this focus group had been on some type of public assistance as a child.
- The majority (four of the six) did not grow up in a traditional household. Some were raised by grandparents, a single parent or a variety of extended family members. One had a traditional two-parent household for first seven years until the father left. Only one was consistently raised in a traditional two-parent household.

Based on the differences in their household makeup as children, participants were asked who they got guidance from as they grew up.

- Parent(s)
- Grandparent(s)
- Sibling(s)
- The "streets"

A follow-up question was asked to identify who they seek guidance/support from as adults.

- Case manager or caseworker/church
- Parent(s)
- Self
- Grandparent(s)
- Friends

Most said they did not have any reliable individuals in their lives with whom they could consistently leave children or who could consistently help them in an emergency.

Participants identified challenges or road blocks to attaining their goals:

-
- A common theme was employment challenges, including jobs that don't pay living wages and difficulties getting loans to achieve entrepreneurial success such as owning a small business.
- Systemic issues, such as a lack of focus on moving people out of poverty, benefit amounts being too low and housing assistance failing to provide enough space, were another common theme.
- One participant expressed a desire for life skills lessons to be taught in schools.

Participants described how they would change the system, if they could:

- Some participants thought that sanctions and participation requirements were too strict.
- Others thought that when they applied for assistance, they would be put in a job. Most felt they need more guidance and direction. Most indicated they didn't see their case manager frequently enough.
- The group collectively stated they need more case management, more connection to jobs, more job placement and more personal contact.
- Only one participant had ever been to the county OhioMeansJobsCenter, though most had registered with OhioMeansJobs.com.
- The group felt that caseworkers need to be more understanding and that recipients should get a lot more detail about what they can do to move away from public assistance. Some indicated caseworkers should be offered incentives for helping recipients move away from assistance.
- One participant thought the program should be stricter, and it could benefit from a better understanding of the recipient through more detailed questions on the application. The participant added that the detailed questions may deter applicants who "shouldn't be there," expressing the belief that many recipients should not be in the system and are preventing those who need help from getting it.
- Another participant suggested life skills classes for adults and even high school students. Suggested skills included driving lessons, buying and repairing a car, credit management, budgeting and basic survival skills.

FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

- Intensive case management is needed. The system needs to spend more time getting to know those served. Also, provide help with goal-setting, structured steps in obtaining goals and support. A general consensus was that people want to work and to be successful.
- The system needs to do a better job of informing individuals about what services (programs, trainings, hiring events and supports) are available to them and how to access them.
- The system needs to provide people with more immediate and robust help in finding a job.
- The system needs to allow people more time to search for a job. The current participation hour requirements get in the way.
- Life-skills training is needed. Classes need to be offered to adults on assistance and to students.
- People are not opposed to participating in activities to get assistance, but feel that the system needs to do a better job in helping them to move toward self-sufficiency.

APPENDIX G

Workgroup Guiding Topics

The workgroup's report initially began with several key topics to guide the development of priority areas for the report's recommendations. Below is a compilation of these topics and the workgroup's responses.

How counties can work to reduce public assistance reliance

Defining case management and coordinating services

- Define what the Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP) will look like, along with comprehensive assessments.
- Determine whether we utilize current staff, new staff, contracted staff or a combination to deliver new case management services.
- Coordinate with Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA), whether separate or combined.
- Identify the investments needed to build capacity based on county size and demographics – transportation, mental health, education, etc. – for barrier removal and enhancement of skills (time-consuming and requires resources).
- Reduce bureaucracies to the extent possible and focus on quality customer service.
- Continue to ensure that all OhioMeansJobs (OMJ) workforce tools and programs are available to public assistance recipients.
- Collaborate with the county child support enforcement agencies (CSEAs), county public children services agencies (PCSAs), WIOA and community partners to create a “culture of resolution” as an improvement upon our “culture of referral.” Develop a more structured and comprehensive level of cooperation among the various state and county job and family services (JFS) and Medicaid programs to ensure coordinated service delivery and barrier removal within our own systems. Coordinate services with both governmental and non-governmental systems to address barriers and improve access to needed services (i.e. criminal justice, mental and physical health, substance abuse, Social Security, etc.).
- Develop a team approach – consisting of representatives from all systems involved with an individual – to focus and coordinate services, figure out funding issues for specific issues and individuals, and obtain consensus on lead agencies. (Lead agencies will vary by presenting need, i.e. wraparound, involve new systems, etc.)
- Provide targeted case management to a limited number of individuals based on capacity and resources, utilizing available data and best practices (TBD).
- Coordinate with early child care and K-12, vocational and post-secondary education to improve academic access and success.
- Maximize and develop partnerships with local community colleges and other vocational education programs to create short-term education and career pathways that lead to employment in high-wage, high-growth industries.
- Narrow the focus and population to provide person-centered case management with Ohio Works First (OWF) and WIOA populations using limited resources.
- Ensure that current staff have the training and skills needed to provide a high level of case management.

- Ensure that case management services already provided by other systems are not duplicated (customers often have multiple barriers and are involved in more than one system). In these situations, coordinate JFS services with the system already managing the customer's case.
- Allow "volunteers" to participate in assessment activities if resources are available, but case management is not available to them.
- Provide real work experience opportunities with real employers and a supportive work environment.
- Provide supports to work through the barriers to employment while teaching problem-solving skills and strategies.
- Create a basic skill set that recipients can continue to build on.
- Build a network of service providers who work together to effectively share information, prioritizing the needs of our program participants (more than a referral system).

Economic development, living wages and local infrastructure

- Conduct an economic development/workforce analysis of local employers to determine gaps between workforce needs of the employers and the skill sets of the work-required individuals in our systems.
- Work with local economic development agencies to attract employers that pay wages sufficient to remove the need for public assistance.
- Provide pipeline to targeted employment, based on the workforce analysis, by developing industry-specific training with local community colleges; hands-on experience such as co-ops, internships, etc. with local employers, subsidized with WIOA funds; and working with local employers to guarantee they hire individuals at the completion of the core training and On-the-Job Training (OJT) experiences. Work with employers to increase entry-level wages as a result of being provided a fully-trained individual tailored to their specific needs.
- Develop transportation systems that meet the employment needs of the community.
- Coordinate with city and county economic development and planning departments to improve employment opportunities, which can include subsidized employment to gain hands-on experience while earning income and providing employers incentives to work with and hire our customers. Offer pre-screening, interviewing, training, tax abatement and incentives, and infrastructure grants.
- Create a statewide campaign to make trade work appealing to 16- to 24-year-olds to help replace existing, aging workers in these fields.

Compliance and advocacy

- Effectively manage OWF work requirements and ensure that all-family participation rates are met.
- Ensure eligibility timeliness, rule compliance and program integrity.
- Advocate for rule changes, waivers and funding opportunities that would more fully support the work needed to effect long-term change.
- Advocate for a waiver of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) work participation requirements, as these often are at odds with the individual's needs.
- Allow for local flexibility to address issues presented in our communities; a cookie-cutter approach will not work.
- Develop strategies to engage low-income working individuals in a way that doesn't interfere with current employment.

- Advocate for policy revisions that provide more options and greater flexibility to accomplish the work (service provision and allowable work activities) that will be required to make the new case management structure successful.
- Request increased state support in removing program barriers.
- Create a state directive to Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) regarding priority of service for TANF recipients.

Public messaging

- Provide the voice of expertise, experience and reason to help inform state partners and legislators on the multi-faceted barriers faced by customers who have touched or been touched by numerous public systems (beyond JFS).
- Educate the public and our partners on available services/benefits and their limits as defined by federal and state policies.
- Create and portray a positive, statewide message about personal responsibility and opportunities for success.
- Promote a “work first” messaging campaign across the state.
- Develop “personal journey” documents from a wide spectrum of people who have made their way off public assistance and share with different audiences.

What age group we should focus on (16- to 24-year-olds)

- Identify a subset of 16- to 24-year-olds, such as those who are OWF work-required or those aging out of foster care. The number we can serve depends on resources, which differ from county to county. Develop a strategy to identify the smaller, focused pool of cases. Address the issue of non-work-required individuals and how to engage them. Identify tools that the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) can provide to help select the initial population. Determine how much flexibility counties will have in identifying customers.
- Note that including Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) recipients will flood the system and detract from the strength of the mission.
- See what works with the subset of 16- to 24-year-olds before opening the program up to all adults.
- Re-think “volunteers.”
- Consider that Franklin County has 78,000 youth in the age range who are at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL), according to the Ohio Development Services Agency’s Office of Research. Franklin County estimates a caseload size of 100, with the development of an initial comprehensive case plan that takes about two hours per customer. Full-time equivalent (FTE), salary and benefits only, for Franklin County is \$58,750, with associate’s degree and two years of experience (or combination). Assume additional qualifications, resulting in higher cost. Assume 780 case managers for initial population at an estimated annual cost of \$45.8 million. This is only the targeted age, not the full population currently scheduled to be included in 2016. ***Eligible target population should be refined in partnership with ODJFS in order to meet future performance standards.***
- Consider Franklin other metro counties’ large refugee and limited English proficiency (LEP) community with additional and unique services – 187 different languages currently.
- Consider that “development” is a factor for this age group. Immaturity and lack of drive are the nature of being a teenager.

- Consider that in-school youth will be hard to serve; an 18- to 24-year-old age range may be more practical.
- Limit to work-required OWF recipients.
- Consider/include WIOA-eligible participants as well.
- Keep in mind that there may be fewer physical health barriers with this population.
- Let positive experiences reinforce the value of a work ethic and work experience.
- Address concerns about “volunteers” (non-work-required OWF population, PRC, etc.).
- Potentially create a career pathway for a youth in case management before barriers (i.e. criminal activity, pregnancy, substance abuse) become more challenging.
- Implement the entire program in small portions on a timeline with a schedule, identified accountabilities and metrics measured along the implementation.

That solutions should be data-driven and evidence-based

- Determine what data/reports we should request from ODJFS.
- Determine what best practices already exist.
- Use proven models and build upon them.
- Do not create a program based on assumptions and anecdotal information.
- Recognize that current systems are very limited in the amount of data available and that methods for analyzing statistics are virtually non-existent. ODJFS, the Ohio Department of Medicaid and the Ohio Department of Administrative Services should work within existing systems when responding to county data requests. Data needs to be mined from existing population. Reports need to be done consistently over a reasonable sample population.
- Consider that smaller counties do not get the same data that larger counties receive, nor do they have the staff to extract and synthesize data in usable formats.
- Look nationally at systems where this work has been accomplished and learn from others’ lessons. Identify existing “evidence-based” models.
- Ensure that solutions recognize what is in the control of county JFS agencies and customers, as well as where community and government partners are required.
- Obtain longitudinal research that demonstrates the effectiveness of a new system approach.
- Find ways to measure baby steps in the long process of getting out of poverty.
- Consider contract between ODJFS and a higher education institution to determine evidence-based practices for this age group, specifically for the populations that have multiple barriers to employment.

That person-centered case management will be at the heart of all solutions

- Define person-centered case management. It is likely labor-intensive.
- Recognize that comprehensive case management is a collaborative process of assessment, planning, facilitation, care coordination, evaluation and advocacy for options and services to an individual’s and family’s comprehensive health and social service needs. Communication and available resources will promote quality, cost-effective outcomes. Components include a proven comprehensive assessment tool and a comprehensive case plan.
- Define self-sufficiency.
- Ensure that case managers are knowledgeable in all areas (child care, subsidized housing, food assistance, medical assistance, cash assistance and access to supportive services). Many of our customers must travel to several different agencies meet their needs, adding complexity to their already complex situation. While a case manager cannot be all things to all people, his or her comprehensive knowledge would help the client maximize services and create a more holistic

approach. The case manager will be responsible for assisting the client in creating an Individualized Employment Plan (IEP), eliminating barriers, planning finances, tracking and monitoring progress, and making community linkage where appropriate (i.e. individuals with disabilities, substance abuse issues, etc.).

- Ensure that strategy is family-centered. This involves addressing family issues and needs that hinder success.
- Recognize that person-centered case management is focused, individualized and time-consuming. We must create realistic expectations regarding caseload size based on available resources. “We can’t boil the ocean.”
- Remember that the key is local flexibility. While there are common themes to the barriers people in poverty face, the ways those barriers are expressed or resolved differ greatly in different parts of the state. Transportation is one example – a bus token is irrelevant in some counties. Some services may not be available in certain communities. If comprehensive case management is individualized, local flexibility is necessary to serve customers “where they are.”
- Start with 16- to 24-year-olds who are not receiving more specialized case management from another system, such as transitional youth, behavioral health clients, those with developmental disabilities, etc. Transitioning foster youth already get specialized case management, especially if pending “foster care to age 21” legislation is passed. Don’t duplicate case management occurring in behavioral health system, as much of this is already Medicaid-billable. We can assess and help with the employment/training plan, but behavioral health would continue with case management. If an individual has multiple case managers, they need to be coordinated across systems. This could be achieved similarly to Family and Children First Council (FCFC) procedures.
- Recognize that existing staff may not have skill set to provide deep-end case management.
- Acknowledge that this is a shift for the counties, who have been directed to a “processing” environment for several years now.
- Consider that the work with youth who are already receiving or at risk of receiving public assistance will require an intensive needs assessment, followed by a comprehensive look at services needed to prevent long-term dependence. Assessment requires tools and specific skill sets. We also need a plan to identify the steps for youth to take, and youth must commit to actively participate and engage in the process. The agreed-upon plan involves coordinating services with the case manager and an active participant. The case manager must attend appointments, arrange transportation, and provide support, reassurance and encouragement. Outcomes must be realistic. We should offer rewards for achievement.
- Emphasize the barriers:
 - Confidentiality issues;
 - Funding restrictions across systems;
 - Creating a coordinated case management system that allows us to coordinate and share information;
 - Finding resources to pay for the costs associated with this program, including case management, data management and analysis, administrative costs, supportive costs, etc.;
 - Allowing sufficient time to fully develop a successful model, whether in-house or sub-granted/contracted;
 - Developing policies that align across systems to allow for this approach (and aren’t always within state control – i.e. U.S. departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, etc.);

- Developing protocols to break down silos at both state and local levels – will take time to break down after decades of building them up.
- Ensure that person-centered case management is driven by the client’s goals, objectives, strengths and needs, as opposed to those of the system or administrative agency.

That helping move people out of poverty is a long and often costly proposition

- Recognize that “no one leaps out of poverty.” Prevention and real change require up-front investments, which are expensive – worthwhile, but significant. It is naïve to think that dynamic change can be achieved with current (recycled) funding.
- Acknowledge that there is no magic bullet and that poverty still will exist, but the initiative still is worth tackling.
- Know that we are the right system to direct this, and the initiative must be locally driven.
- Emphasize that “this is a marathon, not a sprint.”
- Take any additional performance standards into consideration.
- Recognize that it is very difficult to evaluate success on a long-term process.
- Acknowledge that aforementioned baby steps may not look good in the public eye.
- Access existing research to identify best practices. If it were easy, it would have been done already.
- Craft recommendations and solutions that account for differences between rural and urban environments.
- Allocate local resources for a comprehensive case management system, staff (internal or contracted), administration and capacity-building to have sufficient programs in place to address individual barriers, transportation and other topics.
- Recognize that many people who live in poverty do not rely on public assistance. In addition, many people relying on public assistance as support already are employed full-time, but continue to live in poverty. The goal to reduce public assistance reliance may be different than reducing poverty.
- Understand that working full-time does not necessarily equate to being lifted out of poverty. A living wage is outside the scope of this project.
- Recognize that we did not arrive at the current level of dependency overnight. Many recipients find it more convenient to jump over bureaucratic hurdles than to deal with the challenges of the workplace. Motivating youth to choose employment will require a number of strategies – both “carrots” and “sticks.” It also will involve back-sliding and re-starting before success is achieved. We must commit to the long haul.
- Consider that clients often do not disclose true barriers for some time. This makes the development of an evidence-based assessment tool all the more important.

That we need to define what “success” is for those we work with, as it may be different depending on the level of barrier(s) a family may face, and that success often flows along a continuum

- Know that success means continued satisfactory work on each individualized comprehensive case management plan and reaching goals in the times provided in the plan.
- Involve customers in defining their successes and setting their goals – this is critical. What we want may not be what they want.
- Understand that success for some of the hardest-to-serve individuals may mean another sustainable source of income, such as Supplemental Security Income. Some counties’ use of OWF caseload reduction savings demonstrates that those counties have successfully moved public assistance recipients into employment or other forms of income. This also means that the

remaining OWF population includes some of our hardest-to-serve folks – the poorest of poor, with multiple barriers.

- Understand that success also may be obtaining child support, recovering from mental health and/or addiction or dependency on alcohol and other drugs, reducing levels of assistance while retaining work supports, avoiding sanctions, and working one's self-sufficiency contract.
- Keep the goals of federal programs in mind. For the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), it's supplemental nutrition; for Medicaid, it's healthy people.
- Remember that our own children have varying levels of success by age 25, on a continuum of developing into self-sufficient adults. We should not hold people in poverty to a higher standard than the general population.
- Tie success to a starting point. If employment is success, is it 20 hours per week at minimum wage? Achievement of certain agreed-upon goals (based on where the participant is when we begin the engagement process) within a reasonable and mutually agreed-upon time frame. Participant engagement is its own hurdle and should be measured as success in its own right. Success number one may be "participant willingly signed mutually agreed-upon action plan."
- Identify evidence-based practices for different populations (substance abuse, mental health, education deficiencies, first-time work, offenders, etc.). We should be able to link different success outcomes or benchmarks for different barriers. A majority of our populations have multiple barriers, each needing different interventions.
- Recognize that success is unique to the individual. It is based on local resources available to address barriers and on the individual him- or herself.
- Create a reasonable definition for success that accounts for the number of barriers, the severity of barriers, the capacity for individual change, family supports, etc.
- Temper success by the specific barrier present, not solely by the number of barriers present. For example, dropping out in the ninth grade and reading at a fourth-grade level is very different from dropping out in the 11th grade and reading at an 11th-grade level – the amount of time to earn a General Education Development (GED) is drastically different.
- Remember that while self-sufficiency is the ultimate goal, a long-term career pathway would be ideal.
- Ensure that everyone involved understands what it takes to move people off of various types of assistance:
 - For a family of four, a person must earn \$15.24 per hour (40 hrs/week) to move off SNAP
 - For a family of four, a person must earn \$15.63 per hour (40 hrs/week) to move off Medicaid (if there is not an option for employer health care, they would need to purchase health care through the exchange)
 - For a family of four, a person must earn \$35.25 per hour (40 hrs/week) to move off subsidized child care

What are those metrics? How are they measured? What will it take to be successful?

- Metrics must be simple, tangible and hard to "game." We know the historic volume of OWF recipients leaving for wages in excess of program ceilings. Increase that volume by 50 percent in the coming 12 months. Do that well for a year or two, then try to address recidivism.
- Need a system to manage the metrics. A new benefits system would be ideal, if it can be accomplished.
- Metrics must be on a continuum, not an "all or nothing" system.

- Success can be defined as achieving individualized steps or goals established in self-sufficiency plan/contract. These will be different goals with different timelines, based on the individual's person-centered case management plan. Steps can include:
 - Completion of OMJ activities that can be tracked and customized, as with the OMJ Backpack
 - Gaining employment, education and/or training
 - Attending mental health and/or substance abuse appointments
 - Following doctor's orders
 - Improving test scores
 - Securing housing
 - Joining the military
 - Wage increases
 - Employment that removes the individual from OWF
 - Educational attainment (high school diploma, GED, certificate/credential, college degree)
- Do not hold "volunteer" populations to performance measures.
- Accept and work through failure. We must acknowledge that many customers will have setbacks (two steps forward, one step back).
- Identify metrics through best practices for different barriers.
- Measure progress on the continuum as the individual progresses through barriers.
- Customers may see success in removing one barrier but not another.
- Will be extremely expensive (think about funding in early 2000s with excess TANF dollars).
- Plans for self-reliance must contain measurable and achievable steps, each of which should be credited as a success upon attainment.
- Each plan should be custom-built to meet the needs of the individual; therefore, achievement must be custom-measured. This will allow for some consistency in defining the steps to allow for a measurable activity. Examples include obtaining a reliable means of transportation to GED classes, completing classes already the participant is enrolled in, arranging child care, or preparing a new resume. Plans are not a one-size-fits-all design.
- Cost is largely in the form of staff required to work case management. Ratio is critical. Skill sets will require reasonable compensation.
- Impact of churning on cases – are we responsible when a case closes?
- Consider mobility of customer, impact of frequent inter-county moves and effect on performance.
- Measure agency outcomes that contribute to positive outcomes for customers.
- Metrics must be within the control of the county JFS (i.e. NOT securing a job at a living wage), incremental (to show the progress and work that is being accomplished over multiple years of service), and flexible (allowing for differences between rural and metro counties).
- Must recognize that not all customers will achieve long-term outcomes, like full-time employment at a livable wage job, but that they may meet intermediate or short-term outcomes that stabilize their family. These short-term outcomes could include participating in Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation programs, receiving Supplemental Security Income and/or Retirement Survivors and Disability Insurance, maintaining housing, participating in required activities, children enrolling in and attending school, etc.
- Clarify which metrics are used for performance and what information/data is collected for research (i.e. wage rates over five years).

- Suggestions include increased family stability and self-sufficiency that tracks the family in defined primary categories such as housing, income, benefits, education (parent and child), support network, barriers, etc.
- Based on assessments, develop and implement plans that move families along the continuum of self-sufficiency as follows:
 - In-crisis – in need of multiple services/benefits from multiple systems, with several immediate barriers (homelessness, domestic violence, child abuse, etc.)
 - Vulnerable – in need of multiple services/benefits from multiple systems, with multiple barriers
 - At-risk – in need of multiple services/benefits, with some level of stability but in need of intensive or multiple services to maintain stability
 - Stable – making use of one or more benefits (food assistance, child care, Medicaid), in need of access to support services to advance (but not intensive services)
 - Thriving – no formal use of governmental assistance
- Need to understand that success for the individual and the agencies implementing the efforts will be incremental, long-term and modest

That workload/caseload size is critical to defining the scope of the work and resources needed to address it

- Know that statewide, child welfare caseload average for ongoing cases is 12 per caseworker; standard is 12 to 15
- Decide what kinds of cases we can provide case management to, and how we fit into existing case management by a different system.
- Remember that staff skill sets may be lacking.
- Adopt the Public Children Services Association of Ohio’s recommended caseload size for ongoing cases as starting point.
- Consider that current staff weren’t hired for their social work skills – they are eligibility determiners. Must either hire new workers or train existing ones, keeping in mind existing challenges, systems and caseloads. Child welfare workers attending Core training is a lengthy process.
- Explore other models for family-centered case management. Current child welfare provides model for 12 to 18 cases per worker.
- Consider that each case will be different and have its own barriers, so a heavier, more complicated case will require more time.
- Obtain clear OWF data from ODJFS. Business Intelligence Channel (BIC) data show 61,071 statewide OWF cases as of January 2015. Only 16,032 represent adult recipient, work-required cases (not child-only). The number of OWF recipients ages 16 to 24 is 17,011, but it is unclear how many are work-required. If we serve all 17,011 and estimate a caseload of 20 per worker, we need 850 workers. Estimating a cost of \$50,000 per FTE worker, case management alone comes to \$42.5 million. This doesn’t include other supports.
- Suggest no more than 25 cases per worker.
- Consider the “volunteer” population. It is pointless if volunteers drain the system and we achieve little. Consider establishing a threshold of volunteers by percentage above the mandated population.

Who are the other partners that need to be involved in the solution?

- Primary partners should be those that ODJFS might have some leverage over

- WIBs
- Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
- Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE) and GED providers
- Job Corps
- Perkins Grant schools
- ODJFS veterans representatives
- Community Development Block Grant recipients
- In each case, asked the above parties to:
 - Give priority status to OWF recipients
 - Conduct active outreach to populations that overlap, e.g. veterans on OWF
 - Report monthly on co-enrollment and employment rates
- County JFS agencies – public assistance, CSEA, PCSA and OMJ/WIOA staff
- K-12 school districts
- Colleges and universities
- Criminal justice system
- Mental health providers
- Substance abuse/behavioral health providers
- Housing/shelter providers
- Courts
- Domestic violence groups
- Victim assistance groups
- Child care
- Legal Aid
- Non-profits (Community Action, food pantries, shelters)
- Developmental disability groups
- Faith-based community
- Soft skill training providers
- Customers
- Employers
- FCFC
- Bureau of Motor Vehicles
- Economic development groups
- Re-entry coalitions
- Transportation providers
- Ohio Department of Medicaid
- Local politicians
- State legislators
- Businesses and business associations

That economic development and the availability of living wage jobs IN ALL COMMUNITIES is critical to overall statewide success of this effort

- Obtain high-level engagement from policy and business sector to address this.
- Know that not all customers are capable of obtaining and keeping living-wage jobs.
- Educate customers on where jobs are available and what skills are needed. There may not be options in their local areas that match their interests and skill sets.
- Consider that some industries, like oil and gas, bring their skilled workforce with them.

- Consider that employers have several part-time service jobs that aren't being filled.
- Recognize that the state needs to create jobs.
- Give counties maximum flexibility in utilizing TANF for this area.
- Create accountability for job development and creation.
- Adjust performance based on state average for job creation or retention.
- Know that economies and employment are not uniform across the state, so success will look different in different areas.
- Cannot support performance measures that do not account for the varied demographics and opportunities across Ohio.
- Cannot hold county JFS system responsible for economic development and job creation.
- Create state commitment to/messaging that Ohio is looking for employers who offer jobs that help lift our residents out of poverty with a level of financial independence and a reasonable, reliable schedule.
- Offer incentives to employers – but this isn't the responsibility of the county JFS.
- Figure out how to get participants to communities that have living-wage employment if there aren't local jobs that pay enough to remove them from assistance.
- Understand that data shows recipients are working, but the work is not sufficient to make recipients ineligible for public assistance.
- Remember that public assistance recipients need support to develop or increase their education, skills and experiences to be viable candidates for the living-wage jobs that already exist or are in the economic development plans in their communities. Public assistance recipient status should not be an employability factor if recipients are adequately prepared.

How do we help those in this generation who rely on public assistance, and how do we prevent the next from doing so?

- Use a comprehensive case management structure with a multi-generational, family-centered approach.
- Start with work ethic and soft skills.
- Start at an earlier age.
- Look at what research supports for intervention to individuals who are able to transition out of poverty.
- Implement early intervention.
- Involve schools.
- Make sure that societal expectations resound at every level.
- Create a community-wide effort, starting when folks are young.
- Create work ethic.
- Match interest with a long-term career plan/pathway – create a basic foundation.
- Consider that at a recent youth priorities summit with more than 80 participants, youth shared that financial literacy skills, post-high school transition skills and professional skills are their greatest needs in order to become successful adults.

Need to utilize technology to enhance data-sharing among partners working with those in poverty

- Releases of info helpful – see FCFC model?
- Current policies and systems do not allow for the transfer of information among existing systems. Alterations and enhancements are necessary to allow for data-sharing across systems and to make each system's core data elements comparable.

- Could develop a case management system that is separate from the eligibility side of the work.
- If sanctions are part of the discussion, case management system needs to be able to feed data to eligibility system.
- Build on new eligibility system – utilizing multiple systems is time-consuming and inefficient.
- Counties should receive client- and family-level data from Integrated Data Systems (IDS) between JFS, child welfare, criminal justice and homeless systems.
- Counties should use their IDS to research, implement and evaluate programs. Coordinated services should be supported with inter- and intra-agency reporting and accountability.
- We should use external providers and partners to objectively evaluate program performance and client outcomes based on the IDS or existing administrative data.

Competing legislation: Some of our efforts with 16- to 24-year-olds may conflict with meeting current performance measures

- Create a comprehensive assessment of TANF and WIOA rules and work with the state to resolve inconsistencies.
- Lobby to change current performance measures.
- Determine how this can dovetail with proposed “foster care to age 21” legislation to maximize resources for a shared population and shared goals.
- Meet federal performance standards to avoid large financial sanctions that would cripple programs and systems.
- Acknowledge that when the focus shifts to a new priority, other priorities lose emphasis due to limited time and money.
- Tie OWF work participation rate to financial sanctions.
- Recognize that SNAP timeliness and accuracy is critical.
- Measure WIOA outcomes.
- Consider CSEA performance measures.
- Consider Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) measures.
- Anticipate that state leadership will need to explore the possibility of obtaining waivers for some of the funding streams, like WIOA youth dollars.
- Recognize that OWF work participation doesn’t include the kinds of activities needed to engage youth in becoming self-reliant. We must either get a waiver or accept that we’ll be out of compliance.
- Facilitate advocacy at federal level to alter current requirements and align state/federal efforts.

Need to delineate differences between rural and metro counties:

- Flexibility is needed to adapt to the needs, conditions and resources of the local community.
- Differences go beyond just size (rural or metro).
- See example of Franklin County’s large refugee and LEP population (187 languages).
- Need to be able to develop our own programs that meet the unique needs of local communities.
- Rural challenges include transportation, scarce resources, reduced service availability, reduced number of available and appropriate jobs, etc.
- Rural strengths are more manageable, personal relationship-building in smaller numbers.
- Address serious concerns: available resources and issues vary greatly from county to county and region to region. Look at unemployment differences.
- Similar issues require different solutions in different areas; one size doesn’t fit all.
- Concentration of poverty, demographics and available resources differ.

- Barriers have common themes but are expressed in differing ways and to differing degrees – solutions vary. Different strategies are appropriate for different counties. Resources and challenges also are very, very different.
- Some counties can leverage local support, while others will rely solely on state allocations.
- Success reflects diversity – should custom-built in each community.
- Political will varies.

Need to ensure cross-county information-sharing ability, as people may move from county to county, particularly if there is no statewide system to document case management efforts and services:

- Mobility of customers requires a statewide system to document case management activities.
- Technology must support inter-county movement.
- Can we use the Ohio Welfare Case Management System (OWCMS)?
- Ohio Benefits plans to add SNAP and TANF in 2016.
- How can we be successful without a statewide system?
- Internally, a person-centered case manager who truly is resolving issues and not referring them must have access to the Client Registry Information System – Enhanced (CRIS-E), Ohio Benefits, the Medicaid Information Technology System (MITS), the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS), the Support Enforcement Tracking System (SETS) and OMJ. Silos need to be dismantled in order for counties to be able to effectively provide this service. We are excellent at work-arounds, but they are time-consuming.
- If Ohio Benefits will be the case records system, it must include tracking of self-sufficiency assignments and related case management activities.
- We need some level of assurance that a system is up and running in order to effectively manage data, reports and outcomes.
- What other needs/conditions should be in place before we can start?
- We likely will require a manual tracking system starting in 2015, which is problematic.
- Without the ability to share information across counties, customers will basically start over each time they re-locate. Many customers are transient and move across county borders to avoid sanctions. This is costly and creates duplicate services.
- Development of a true case management component to Ohio Benefits could be time-consuming and costly. This may lead to counties developing other systems that operate outside of state systems.

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
|----|----------------|---|---|---|----------------|---|--|
| 1 | | County Job and Family Services Director Barrier Rankings | | | | | |
| 2 | Ranking | Barrier | All Counties Weighted Average | | Ranking | Barrier | Small Counties Weighted Average |
| 3 | 1 | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 11.89 | | 1 | Lack of transportation | 12.30 |
| 4 | 2 | Lack of transportation | 11.72 | | 2 | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level | 12.30 |
| 5 | 3 | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 10.78 | | 3 | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 11.95 |
| 6 | 4 | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 10.78 | | 4 | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 11.30 |
| 7 | 5 | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level | 10.73 | | 5 | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 10.20 |
| 8 | 6 | Mental health issues | 9.78 | | 6 | Lack of work experience | 9.65 |
| 9 | 7 | Lack of work experience | 9.70 | | 7 | Product of generational poverty | 9.55 |
| 10 | 8 | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 9.32 | | 8 | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 9.50 |
| 11 | 9 | Lack of a personal support system | 9.13 | | 9 | Mental health issues | 8.90 |
| 12 | 10 | Product of generational poverty | 8.57 | | 10 | Lack of a personal support system | 8.75 |
| 13 | 11 | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 7.91 | | 11 | Legal issues | 7.55 |
| 14 | 12 | Legal issues | 7.22 | | 12 | Lack of child care | 6.50 |
| 15 | 13 | Lack of child care | 6.00 | | 13 | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 6.30 |
| 16 | 14 | Lack of stable housing | 5.71 | | 14 | Domestic violence issues | 5.20 |
| 17 | 15 | Domestic violence issues | 5.01 | | 15 | Lack of stable housing | 4.65 |
| 18 | 16 | Limited English proficiency | 1.56 | | 16 | Limited English proficiency | 1.40 |
| 19 | | | | | | | |
| 20 | Ranking | Barrier | Medium Counties Weighted Average | | Ranking | Barrier | Large Counties Weighted Average |
| 21 | 1 | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 12.94 | | 1 | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level | 12.21 |
| 22 | 2 | Lack of transportation | 11.86 | | 2 | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 11.86 |
| 23 | 3 | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 10.06 | | 3 | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 11.64 |
| 24 | 4 | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 11.34 | | 4 | Lack of transportation | 11.57 |
| 25 | 5 | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level | 9.49 | | 5 | Mental health issues | 10.64 |
| 26 | 6 | Mental health issues | 10.31 | | 6 | Lack of work experience | 9.14 |
| 27 | 7 | Lack of work experience | 9.40 | | 7 | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 9.14 |
| 28 | 8 | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 9.11 | | 8 | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 8.71 |
| 29 | 9 | Lack of a personal support system | 9.43 | | 9 | Lack of a personal support system | 8.64 |
| 30 | 10 | Product of generational poverty | 8.20 | | 10 | Product of generational poverty | 8.36 |
| 31 | 11 | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 8.17 | | 11 | Legal issues | 8.07 |
| 32 | 12 | Legal issues | 6.57 | | 12 | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 7.93 |
| 33 | 13 | Lack of child care | 6.23 | | 13 | Lack of stable housing | 5.86 |
| 34 | 14 | Lack of stable housing | 6.77 | | 14 | Domestic violence issues | 5.64 |
| 35 | 15 | Domestic violence issues | 4.91 | | 15 | Lack of child care | 5.29 |
| 36 | 16 | Limited English proficiency | 1.20 | | 16 | Limited English proficiency | 1.29 |
| 37 | | | | | | | |
| 38 | | | | | | | |
| 39 | | | | | | | |
| 40 | | | | | | | |
| 41 | | | | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
|----|----------------|---|--|---|----------------|---|---|
| 42 | | | | | | | |
| 43 | | | | | | | |
| 44 | | | | | | | |
| 45 | | | | | | | |
| | | | Small Metro Counties Weighted Average | | | | Medium Metro Counties Weighted Average |
| 46 | Ranking | Barrier | | | Ranking | Barrier | |
| 47 | 1 | Lack of transportation | 13.14 | | 1 | Mental health issues | 14.00 |
| 48 | 2 | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 12.57 | | 2 | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 13.67 |
| 49 | 3 | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level | 12.21 | | 3 | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 13.33 |
| 50 | 4 | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 12.00 | | 4 | Lack of work experience | 13.00 |
| 51 | 5 | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 10.86 | | 5 | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 11.67 |
| 52 | 6 | Lack of work experience | 10.29 | | 6 | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level | 10.33 |
| 53 | 7 | Lack of a personal support system | 9.86 | | 7 | Lack of a personal support system | 10.00 |
| 54 | 8 | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 9.57 | | 8 | Lack of transportation | 9.00 |
| 55 | 9 | Mental health issues | 8.14 | | 9 | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 7.00 |
| 56 | 10 | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 8.00 | | 10 | Product of generational poverty | 7.00 |
| 57 | 11 | Product of generational poverty | 7.86 | | 11 | Limited English proficiency | 5.67 |
| 58 | 12 | Legal issues | 7.71 | | 12 | Domestic violence issues | 5.00 |
| 59 | 13 | Lack of child care | 6.00 | | 13 | Lack of stable housing | 4.67 |
| 60 | 14 | Lack of stable housing | 4.14 | | 14 | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 4.33 |
| 61 | 15 | Domestic violence issues | 3.71 | | 15 | Legal issues | 4.00 |
| 62 | 16 | Limited English proficiency | 2.29 | | 16 | Lack of child care | 3.33 |
| 63 | | | | | | | |
| 64 | | | | | | | |
| | | | Large Metro Counties Weighted Average | | | | |
| 65 | Ranking | Barrier | | | | | |
| 66 | 1 | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 14.00 | | | | |
| 67 | 2 | Lack of work experience | 11.33 | | | | |
| 68 | 3 | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 10.67 | | | | |
| 69 | 4 | Product of generational poverty | 10.67 | | | | |
| 70 | 5 | Legal issues | 10.67 | | | | |
| 71 | 6 | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level | 10.33 | | | | |
| 72 | 7 | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 10.33 | | | | |
| 73 | 8 | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 10.33 | | | | |
| 74 | 9 | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 8.33 | | | | |
| 75 | 10 | Lack of a personal support system | 8.00 | | | | |
| 76 | 11 | Mental health issues | 7.33 | | | | |
| 77 | 12 | Lack of transportation | 6.33 | | | | |
| 78 | 13 | Lack of child care | 6.00 | | | | |
| 79 | 14 | Domestic violence issues | 5.00 | | | | |
| 80 | 15 | Lack of stable housing | 4.33 | | | | |
| 81 | 16 | Limited English proficiency | 2.33 | | | | |
| 82 | | | | | | | |
| 83 | | | | | | | |
| 84 | | | | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
|-----|----------------|---|---|---|----------------|---|--|
| 85 | | | | | | | |
| 86 | | | | | | | |
| 87 | | | | | | | |
| 88 | | | | | | | |
| 89 | | | | | | | |
| 90 | Ranking | Barrier | Rural Counties Weighted Average | | Ranking | Barrier | Semi-Metropolitan Counties Weighted Average |
| 91 | 1 | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 12.32 | | 1 | Lack of transportation | 12.31 |
| 92 | 2 | Lack of transportation | 11.93 | | 2 | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 12.25 |
| 93 | 3 | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 11.32 | | 3 | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 12.13 |
| 94 | 4 | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level | 10.69 | | 4 | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level | 11.38 |
| 95 | 5 | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 10.22 | | 5 | Mental health issues | 10.00 |
| 96 | 6 | Mental health issues | 9.73 | | 6 | Lack of a personal support system | 9.69 |
| 97 | 7 | Lack of work experience | 9.58 | | 7 | Lack of work experience | 9.44 |
| 98 | 8 | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 9.29 | | 8 | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 8.88 |
| 99 | 9 | Lack of a personal support system | 9.10 | | 9 | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 8.81 |
| 100 | 10 | Product of generational poverty | 8.98 | | 10 | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 8.63 |
| 101 | 11 | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 7.58 | | 11 | Legal issues | 6.94 |
| 102 | 12 | Legal issues | 7.14 | | 12 | Product of generational poverty | 6.88 |
| 103 | 13 | Lack of child care | 6.14 | | 13 | Lack of stable housing | 5.75 |
| 104 | 14 | Lack of stable housing | 5.88 | | 14 | Domestic violence issues | 5.69 |
| 105 | 15 | Domestic violence issues | 4.85 | | 15 | Lack of child care | 5.44 |
| 106 | 16 | Limited English proficiency | 1.25 | | 16 | Limited English proficiency | 1.81 |
| 107 | | | | | | | |
| 108 | | | | | | | |
| 109 | | | | | | | |
| 110 | Ranking | Barrier | Metropolitan Counties Weighted Average | | | | |
| 111 | 1 | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 13.57 | | | | |
| 112 | 2 | Lack of work experience | 11.29 | | | | |
| 113 | 3 | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 11.14 | | | | |
| 114 | 4 | Mental health issues | 10.71 | | | | |
| 115 | 5 | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 10.71 | | | | |
| 116 | 6 | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level | 9.57 | | | | |
| 117 | 7 | Product of generational poverty | 9.00 | | | | |
| 118 | 8 | Lack of transportation | 8.57 | | | | |
| 119 | 9 | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 8.57 | | | | |
| 120 | 10 | Legal issues | 8.57 | | | | |
| 121 | 11 | Lack of a personal support system | 8.14 | | | | |
| 122 | 12 | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 7.43 | | | | |
| 123 | 13 | Lack of child care | 6.14 | | | | |
| 124 | 14 | Domestic violence issues | 4.86 | | | | |
| 125 | 15 | Lack of stable housing | 4.14 | | | | |
| 126 | 16 | Limited English proficiency | 3.57 | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|-----|----------------|---|---|----------------|---|---|---|---|
| 96 | | | | | | | | |
| | | | Rural Counties Weighted Average | | | | Semi- Metropolitan Counties Weighted Average | |
| 97 | Ranking | Barrier | | Ranking | | Barrier | | |
| 98 | 1 | Lack of transportation | 13.45 | 1 | | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate | 12.48 | |
| 99 | 2 | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate | 12.01 | 2 | | Lack of transportation | 12.31 | |
| 100 | 3 | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 11.15 | 3 | | Lack of child care | 10.20 | |
| 101 | 4 | Lack of child care | 10.08 | 4 | | Lack of a personal support system | 10.08 | |
| 102 | 5 | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 9.79 | 5 | | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 9.54 | |
| 103 | 6 | Mental health issues | 9.11 | 6 | | Mental health issues | 9.26 | |
| 104 | 7 | Product of generational poverty | 9.10 | 7 | | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 9.05 | |
| 105 | 8 | Lack of stable housing | 8.99 | 8 | | Product of generational poverty | 9.00 | |
| 106 | 9 | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 8.69 | 9 | | Lack of stable housing | 8.77 | |
| 107 | 10 | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 8.59 | 10 | | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 8.59 | |
| 108 | 11 | Lack of work experience | 7.83 | 11 | | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 7.72 | |
| 109 | 12 | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 7.15 | 12 | | Lack of work experience | 7.69 | |
| 110 | 13 | Lack of a personal support system | 7.07 | 13 | | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 7.64 | |
| 111 | 14 | Legal issues | 6.24 | 14 | | Legal issues | 6.15 | |
| 112 | 15 | Domestic violence issues | 5.15 | 15 | | Domestic violence issues | 5.49 | |
| 113 | 16 | Limited English proficiency | 1.58 | 16 | | Limited English proficiency | 2.03 | |
| 114 | | | | | | | | |
| 115 | | | | | | | | |
| 116 | | | | | | | | |
| | | | Metropolitan Counties Weighted Average | | | | | |
| 117 | Ranking | Barrier | | | | | | |
| 118 | 1 | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate | 12.53 | | | | | |
| 119 | 2 | Lack of transportation | 11.59 | | | | | |
| 120 | 3 | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 11.32 | | | | | |
| 121 | 4 | Lack of child care | 10.22 | | | | | |
| 122 | 5 | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 10.15 | | | | | |
| 123 | 6 | Lack of work experience | 9.52 | | | | | |
| 124 | 7 | Mental health issues | 8.82 | | | | | |
| 125 | 8 | Lack of stable housing | 8.75 | | | | | |
| 126 | 9 | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 8.58 | | | | | |
| 127 | 10 | Lack of a personal support system | 8.37 | | | | | |
| 128 | 11 | Legal issues | 8.00 | | | | | |
| 129 | 12 | Product of generational poverty | 7.94 | | | | | |
| 130 | 13 | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 6.39 | | | | | |
| 131 | 14 | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 5.71 | | | | | |
| 132 | 15 | Domestic violence issues | 5.46 | | | | | |
| 133 | 16 | Limited English proficiency | 2.65 | | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|-----|---|--|---|------------|---|---|--|------------|
| 99 | Barrier | Rural County Directors' Ranking | Rural County Stakeholders' Ranking | Difference | Barrier | Semi-Metropolitan County Directors' Ranking | Semi-Metropolitan County Stakeholders' Ranking | Difference |
| 100 | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 1 | 3 | -2.00 | Lack of transportation | 1 | 2 | -1.00 |
| 101 | Lack of transportation | 2 | 1 | 1.00 | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 2 | 7 | -5.00 |
| 102 | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 3 | 9 | -6.00 | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 3 | 5 | -2.00 |
| 103 | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level | 4 | 2 | 2.00 | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level | 4 | 1 | 3.00 |
| 104 | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 5 | 5 | 0.00 | Mental health issues | 5 | 6 | -1.00 |
| 105 | Mental health issues | 6 | 6 | 0.00 | Lack of a personal support system | 6 | 4 | 2.00 |
| 106 | Lack of work experience | 7 | 11 | -4.00 | Lack of work experience | 7 | 12 | -5.00 |
| 107 | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 8 | 12 | -4.00 | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 8 | 10 | -2.00 |
| 108 | Lack of a personal support system | 9 | 13 | -4.00 | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 9 | 11 | -2.00 |
| 109 | Product of generational poverty | 10 | 7 | 3.00 | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 10 | 13 | -3.00 |
| 110 | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 11 | 10 | 1.00 | Legal issues | 11 | 14 | -3.00 |
| 111 | Legal issues | 12 | 14 | -2.00 | Product of generational poverty | 12 | 8 | 4.00 |
| 112 | Lack of child care | 13 | 4 | 9.00 | Lack of stable housing | 13 | 9 | 4.00 |
| 113 | Lack of stable housing | 14 | 8 | 6.00 | Domestic violence issues | 14 | 15 | -1.00 |
| 114 | Domestic violence issues | 15 | 15 | 0.00 | Lack of child care | 15 | 3 | 12.00 |
| 115 | Limited English proficiency | 16 | 16 | 0.00 | Limited English proficiency | 16 | 16 | 0.00 |
| 116 | | | | | | | | |
| 117 | | | | | | | | |
| 118 | | | | | | | | |
| 119 | Barrier | Metropolitan County Directors' Ranking | Metropolitan County Stakeholders' Ranking | Difference | | | | |
| 120 | Lack of a high school diploma or GED | 1 | 3 | -2.00 | | | | |
| 121 | Lack of work experience | 2 | 6 | -4.00 | | | | |
| 122 | Chronic physical health challenge yet does not qualify for disability | 3 | 13 | -10.00 | | | | |
| 123 | Mental health issues | 4 | 7 | -3.00 | | | | |
| 124 | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success | 5 | 14 | -9.00 | | | | |
| 125 | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level | 6 | 1 | 5.00 | | | | |
| 126 | Product of generational poverty | 7 | 12 | -5.00 | | | | |
| 127 | Lack of transportation | 8 | 2 | 6.00 | | | | |
| 128 | Lack of vocational or other post-secondary training | 9 | 5 | 4.00 | | | | |
| 129 | Legal issues | 10 | 11 | -1.00 | | | | |
| 130 | Lack of a personal support system | 11 | 10 | 1.00 | | | | |
| 131 | Substance abuse issues or inability to pass a drug test | 12 | 9 | 3.00 | | | | |
| 132 | Lack of child care | 13 | 4 | 9.00 | | | | |
| 133 | Domestic violence issues | 14 | 15 | -1.00 | | | | |
| 134 | Lack of stable housing | 15 | 8 | 7.00 | | | | |
| 135 | Limited English proficiency | 16 | 16 | 0.00 | | | | |
| 136 | | | | | | | | |
| 137 | | | | | | | | |
| 138 | Red indicates a difference of 8 places or more in ranking or half the total ranking options | | | | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
|----|----------------|--|----------|---|----------------|------------------------------|----------|
| 1 | | County Job and Family Services Director Job Readiness Ranking | | | | | |
| 2 | | All Counties | | | | Small Counties | |
| 3 | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % | | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % |
| 4 | 1 | Not job ready | 36.05% | | 1 | Not job ready | 34.75% |
| 5 | 2 | Nearly job ready | 27.39% | | 2 | Nearly job ready | 28.05% |
| 6 | 3 | Unemployable | 20.13% | | 3 | Unemployable | 26.70% |
| 7 | 4 | Job ready | 16.43% | | 4 | Job ready | 10.50% |
| 8 | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | Medium Counties | | | | Large Counties | |
| 10 | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % | | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % |
| 11 | 1 | Not job ready | 38.29% | | 1 | Not job ready | 30.57% |
| 12 | 2 | Nearly job ready | 27.86% | | 2 | Nearly job ready | 25.71% |
| 13 | 3 | Job ready | 19.29% | | 3 | Unemployable | 25.00% |
| 14 | 4 | Unemployable | 14.57% | | 4 | Job ready | 18.71% |
| 15 | | | | | | | |
| 16 | | Small Metro Counties | | | | Medium Metro Counties | |
| 17 | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % | | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % |
| 18 | 1 | Not job ready | 37.14% | | 1 | Not job ready | 43.33% |
| 19 | 2 | Unemployable | 25.71% | | 2 | Nearly job ready | 26.67% |
| 20 | 3 | Nearly job ready | 24.29% | | 3 | Job ready | 18.33% |
| 21 | 4 | Job ready | 12.86% | | 4 | Unemployable | 11.67% |
| 22 | | | 100.00% | | | | |
| 23 | | Large Metro Counties | | | | | |
| 24 | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % | | | | |
| 25 | 1 | Not job ready | 34.33% | | | | |
| 26 | 2 | Nearly job ready | 33.33% | | | | |
| 27 | 3 | Job ready | 18.33% | | | | |
| 28 | 4 | Unemployable | 14.00% | | | | |
| 29 | | | | | | | |
| 30 | | | | | | | |
| 31 | | | | | | | |
| 32 | | | | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
|----|----------------|------------------------------|----------|---|----------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| 33 | | | | | | | |
| 34 | | Rural Counties | | | | Semi-Metropolitan Counties | |
| 35 | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % | | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % |
| 36 | 1 | Not job ready | 35.39% | | 1 | Not job ready | 36.56% |
| 37 | 2 | Nearly job ready | 26.95% | | 2 | Nearly job ready | 27.88% |
| 38 | 3 | Unemployable | 20.20% | | 3 | Unemployable | 23.25% |
| 39 | 4 | Job ready | 17.45% | | 4 | Job ready | 12.31% |
| 40 | | | | | | | |
| 41 | | Metropolitan Counties | | | | | |
| 42 | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % | | | | |
| 43 | | Not job ready | 40.43% | | | | |
| 44 | | Nearly job ready | 30.00% | | | | |
| 45 | | Job ready | 17.14% | | | | |
| 46 | | Unemployable | 12.42% | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
|----|----------------|-----------------------------|----------|---|----------------|------------------------------|----------|
| 1 | | Stakeholder Ranking | | | | | |
| 2 | | All Counties | | | | Small Counties | |
| 3 | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % | | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % |
| 4 | 1 | Not job ready | 33.90% | | 1 | Not job ready | 33.00% |
| 5 | 2 | Nearly job ready | 26.09% | | 2 | Nearly job ready | 27.67% |
| 6 | 3 | Unemployable | 20.04% | | 3 | Job ready | 24.50% |
| 7 | 4 | Job ready | 19.97% | | 4 | Unemployable | 14.83% |
| 8 | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | Medium Counties | | | | Large Counties | |
| 10 | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % | | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % |
| 11 | 1 | Not job ready | 33.91% | | 1 | Not job ready | 27.82% |
| 12 | 2 | Nearly job ready | 27.39% | | 2 | Job ready | 26.61% |
| 13 | 3 | Unemployable | 21.50% | | 3 | Nearly job ready | 26.07% |
| 14 | 4 | Job ready | 17.20% | | 4 | Unemployable | 19.50% |
| 15 | | | | | | | |
| 16 | | Small Metro Counties | | | | Medium Metro Counties | |
| 17 | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % | | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % |
| 18 | 1 | Not job ready | 36.77% | | 1 | Not job ready | 34.07% |
| 19 | 2 | Nearly job ready | 25.16% | | 2 | Nearly job ready | 22.96% |
| 20 | 3 | Unemployable | 22.03% | | 3 | Job ready | 21.85% |
| 21 | 4 | Job ready | 16.03% | | 4 | Unemployable | 21.11% |
| 22 | | | | | | | |
| 23 | | Large Metro Counties | | | | | |
| 24 | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % | | | | |
| 25 | 1 | Not job ready | 27.82% | | | | |
| 26 | 2 | Job ready | 26.61% | | | | |
| 27 | 3 | Nearly job ready | 26.07% | | | | |
| 28 | 4 | Unemployable | 19.50% | | | | |
| 29 | | | | | | | |
| 30 | | | | | | | |
| 31 | | | | | | | |
| 32 | | | | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
|----|----------------|------------------------------|----------|---|----------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| 33 | | | | | | | |
| 34 | | Rural Counties | | | | Semi-Metropolitan Counties | |
| 35 | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % | | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % |
| 36 | 1 | Not job ready | 32.51% | | 1 | Not job ready | 33.97% |
| 37 | 2 | Nearly job ready | 27.12% | | 2 | Nearly job ready | 27.29% |
| 38 | 3 | Job ready | 21.08% | | 3 | Job ready | 20.08% |
| 39 | 4 | Unemployable | 19.29% | | 4 | Unemployable | 18.66% |
| 40 | | | | | | | |
| 41 | | Metropolitan Counties | | | | | |
| 42 | Ranking | Job Readiness Status | % | | | | |
| 43 | 1 | Not job ready | 34.78% | | | | |
| 44 | 2 | Nearly job ready | 24.75% | | | | |
| 45 | 3 | Unemployable | 21.31% | | | | |
| 46 | 4 | Job ready | 19.16% | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|----|---------------------------------|---|--|-------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|-------------------|
| 1 | Job Readiness Comparison | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Job Readiness Status | All Counties - Directors | All Counties - Stakeholders | Difference | Job Readiness Status | Small Counties - Directors | Small Counties - Stakeholders | Difference |
| 3 | Not job ready | 36.05% | 33.90% | 2.15% | Not job ready | 34.7500% | 33.00% | 1.75% |
| 4 | Nearly job ready | 27.39% | 26.09% | 1.30% | Nearly job ready | 28.0500% | 27.67% | 0.38% |
| 5 | Unemployable | 20.13% | 20.04% | 0.09% | Unemployable | 26.7000% | 14.93% | 11.77% |
| 6 | Job ready | 16.43% | 19.97% | -3.54% | Job ready | 10.5000% | 24.50% | -14.00% |
| 7 | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | Job Readiness Status | Medium Counties - Directors | Medium Counties - Stakeholders | Difference | Job Readiness Status | Large Counties - Directors | Large Counties - Stakeholders | Difference |
| 10 | Not job ready | 38.28% | 33.91% | 4.37% | Not job ready | 30.57% | 27.82% | 2.75% |
| 11 | Nearly job ready | 27.86% | 27.39% | 0.47% | Nearly job ready | 25.71% | 26.07% | -0.36% |
| 12 | Job ready | 19.29% | 17.20% | 2.09% | Unemployable | 25.00% | 19.50% | 5.50% |
| 13 | Unemployable | 14.57% | 21.50% | -6.93% | Job ready | 18.71% | 26.61% | -7.90% |
| 14 | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | | | | | | | | |
| 16 | Job Readiness Status | Small Metro Counties - Directors | Small Metro Counties - Stakeholders | Difference | Job Readiness Status | Medium Metro Counties - Directors | Medium Metro Counties - Stakeholders | Difference |
| 17 | Not Job Ready | 37.14% | 36.77% | 0.37% | Not job ready | 43.3300% | 34.07% | 9.26% |
| 18 | Unemployable | 25.71% | 22.03% | 3.68% | Nearly Job Ready | 26.6700% | 22.96% | 3.71% |
| 19 | Nearly Job Ready | 24.29% | 25.16% | -0.87% | Job ready | 18.3300% | 21.85% | -3.52% |
| 20 | Job ready | 12.86% | 16.03% | -3.17% | Unemployable | 11.6700% | 21.11% | -9.44% |
| 21 | | | | | | | | |
| 22 | | | | | | | | |
| 23 | Job Readiness Status | Large Metro Counties - Directors | Large Metro Counties - Stakeholders | Difference | | | | |
| 24 | Not job ready | 34.33% | 27.82% | 6.51% | | | | |
| 25 | Nearly job ready | 33.33% | 26.07% | 7.26% | | | | |
| 26 | Job ready | 18.33% | 26.61% | -8.28% | | | | |
| 27 | Unemployable | 14.00% | 19.50% | -5.50% | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|----|--|--|---|-------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|-------------------|
| 28 | | | | | | | | |
| 29 | | | | | | | | |
| 30 | Job Readiness Status | Rural Counties - Directors | Rural Counties - Stakeholders | Difference | Job Readiness Status | Semi- Metropolitan Counties - Directors | Semi- Metropolitan Counties - Stakeholders | Difference |
| 31 | Not job ready | 35.39% | 32.51% | 2.88% | Not job ready | 36.56% | 33.97% | 2.59% |
| 32 | Nearly job ready | 26.95% | 27.12% | -0.17% | Nearly job ready | 27.88% | 27.29% | 0.59% |
| 33 | Unemployable | 20.20% | 19.29% | 0.91% | Unemployable | 23.25% | 18.66% | 4.59% |
| 34 | Job ready | 17.46% | 21.08% | -3.62% | Job ready | 12.31% | 20.08% | -7.77% |
| 35 | | | | | | | | |
| 36 | | | | | | | | |
| 37 | Job Readiness Status | Metropolitan Counties - Directors | Metropolitan Counties - Stakeholders | Difference | | | | |
| 38 | Not job ready | 40.43% | 34.78% | 5.65% | | | | |
| 39 | Nearly job ready | 30.00% | 24.75% | 5.25% | | | | |
| 40 | Job ready | 17.14% | 19.16% | -2.02% | | | | |
| 41 | Unemployable | 12.43% | 21.31% | -8.88% | | | | |
| 42 | | | | | | | | |
| 43 | Highlighted in red if difference is 8% or more | | | | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
|----|---|----------------------------------|----------|---|----------------|----------------------------------|----------|
| 1 | County Job and Family Services Director Case Management Method Ranking | | | | | | |
| 2 | | All Counties | | | | Small Counties | |
| 3 | Ranking | Method | % | | Ranking | Method | % |
| 4 | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 52.44% | | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 60.00% |
| 5 | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 31.71% | | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 35.00% |
| 6 | 3 | Immediate labor force attachment | 7.32% | | 3 | Immediate labor force attachment | 5.00% |
| 7 | 4 | Human capital development | 6.10% | | 4 | Human capital development | 0.00% |
| 8 | | Sanctioning | 2.44% | | | Sanctioning | 0.00% |
| 9 | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | Medium Counties | | | | Large Counties | |
| 11 | Ranking | Method | % | | Ranking | Method | % |
| 12 | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 48.57% | | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 50.00% |
| 13 | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 25.71% | | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 35.71% |
| 14 | 3 | Immediate labor force attachment | 14.29% | | 3 | Human capital development | 14.29% |
| 15 | 4 | Human capital development | 5.71% | | 4 | Immediate labor force attachment | 0.00% |
| 16 | | Sanctioning | 5.71% | | | Sanctioning | 0.00% |
| 17 | | | | | | | |
| 18 | | Small Metro Counties | | | | Medium Metro Counties | |
| 19 | Ranking | Method | % | | Ranking | Method | % |
| 20 | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 57.14% | | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 100.00% |
| 21 | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 28.57% | | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 0.00% |
| 22 | 3 | Human capital development | 14.29% | | 3 | Immediate labor force attachment | 0.00% |
| 23 | 4 | Immediate labor force attachment | 0.00% | | 4 | Human capital development | 0.00% |
| 24 | | Sanctioning | 0.00% | | | Sanctioning | 0.00% |
| 25 | | | | | | | |
| 26 | | Large Metro Counties | | | | | |
| 27 | Ranking | Method | % | | | | |
| 28 | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 66.67% | | | | |
| 29 | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 33.33% | | | | |
| 30 | 3 | Immediate labor force attachment | 0.00% | | | | |
| 31 | 4 | Human capital development | 0.00% | | | | |
| 32 | | Sanctioning | 0.00% | | | | |
| 33 | | | | | | | |
| 34 | | | | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
|----|----------------|----------------------------------|----------|---|----------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| 35 | | | | | | | |
| 36 | | | | | | | |
| 37 | | | | | | | |
| 38 | | | | | | | |
| 39 | | | | | | | |
| 40 | | | | | | | |
| 41 | | | | | | | |
| 42 | | | | | | | |
| 43 | | Rural Counties | | | | Semi-Metropolitan Counties | |
| 44 | Ranking | Method | % | | Ranking | Method | % |
| 45 | | Hybrid of all models | 52.54% | | | Hybrid of all models | 43.75% |
| 46 | | Hybrid of both methods | 28.81% | | | Hybrid of both methods | 43.75% |
| 47 | | Immediate labor force attachment | 10.17% | | | Human capital development | 12.50% |
| 48 | | Human capital development | 5.08% | | | Immediate labor force attachment | 0.00% |
| 49 | | Sanctioning | 3.39% | | | Sanctioning | 0.00% |
| 50 | | | | | | | |
| 51 | | Metropolitan Counties | | | | | |
| 52 | Ranking | Method | % | | | | |
| 53 | | Hybrid of all models | 71.43% | | | | |
| 54 | | Hybrid of both methods | 28.57% | | | | |
| 55 | | Immediate labor force attachment | 0.00% | | | | |
| 56 | | Human capital development | 0.00% | | | | |
| 57 | | Sanctioning | 0.00% | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
|----|--|----------------------------------|----------|---|----------------|----------------------------------|----------|
| 1 | Stakeholder Case Management Ranking | | | | | | |
| 2 | | All Counties | | | | Small Counties | |
| 3 | Ranking | Method | % | | Ranking | Method | % |
| 4 | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 36.10% | | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 41.38% |
| 5 | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 38.17% | | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 44.83% |
| 6 | 3 | Immediate labor force attachment | 6.22% | | 3 | Immediate labor force attachment | 6.90% |
| 7 | 4 | Human capital development | 16.18% | | 4 | Human capital development | 3.45% |
| 8 | 5 | Sanctioning | 3.32% | | 5 | Sanctioning | 3.45% |
| 9 | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | Medium Counties | | | | Large Counties | |
| 11 | Ranking | Method | % | | Ranking | Method | % |
| 12 | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 37.21% | | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 50.00% |
| 13 | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 32.56% | | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 28.57% |
| 14 | 3 | Immediate labor force attachment | 16.28% | | 3 | Human capital development | 14.29% |
| 15 | 4 | Human capital development | 6.98% | | 4 | Immediate labor force attachment | 3.57% |
| 16 | 5 | Sanctioning | 6.98% | | 5 | Sanctioning | 3.57% |
| 17 | | | | | | | |
| 18 | | Small Metro Counties | | | | Medium Metro Counties | |
| 19 | Ranking | Method | % | | Ranking | Method | % |
| 20 | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 26.47% | | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 33.33% |
| 21 | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 50.00% | | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 40.74% |
| 22 | 3 | Human capital development | 20.59% | | 3 | Immediate labor force attachment | 3.70% |
| 23 | 4 | Immediate labor force attachment | 2.94% | | 4 | Human capital development | 22.22% |
| 24 | 5 | Sanctioning | 0.00% | | 5 | Sanctioning | 0.00% |
| 25 | | | | | | | |
| 26 | | Large Metro Counties | | | | | |
| 27 | Ranking | Method | % | | | | |
| 28 | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 50.00% | | | | |
| 29 | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 28.57% | | | | |
| 30 | 3 | Immediate labor force attachment | 3.57% | | | | |
| 31 | 4 | Human capital development | 14.29% | | | | |
| 32 | | Sanctioning | 3.57% | | | | |
| 33 | | | | | | | |
| 34 | | | | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
|----|----------------|----------------------------------|----------|---|----------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| 35 | | | | | | | |
| 36 | | | | | | | |
| 37 | | | | | | | |
| 38 | | Rural Counties | | | | Semi-Metropolitan Counties | |
| 39 | Ranking | Method | % | | Ranking | Method | % |
| 40 | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 32.51% | | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 46.67 |
| 41 | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 27.12% | | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 33.33% |
| 42 | 3 | Immediate labor force attachment | 19.29% | | 3 | Human capital development | 11.67% |
| 43 | 4 | Human capital development | 21.08% | | 4 | Immediate labor force attachment | 6.67% |
| 44 | 5 | Sanctioning | 0.00% | | 5 | Sanctioning | 1.67% |
| 45 | | | | | | | |
| 46 | | Metropolitan Counties | | | | | |
| 47 | Ranking | Method | % | | | | |
| 48 | 1 | Hybrid of all models | 28.07% | | | | |
| 49 | 2 | Hybrid of both methods | 41.23% | | | | |
| 50 | 3 | Immediate labor force attachment | 5.26% | | | | |
| 51 | 4 | Human capital development | 22.81% | | | | |
| 52 | 5 | Sanctioning | 2.63% | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|----|---|--|---|-------------------|----------------------------------|--|---|-------------------|
| 35 | | | | | | | | |
| 36 | | | | | | | | |
| 37 | | | | | | | | |
| 38 | | | | | | | | |
| 39 | | | | | | | | |
| 40 | | | | | | | | |
| 41 | | | | | | | | |
| 42 | | | | | | | | |
| 43 | | | | | | | | |
| 44 | Method | Rural Counties - Directors | Rural Counties - Stakeholders | Difference | Method | Semi- Metropolitan Counties - Directors | Semi- Metropolitan Counties - Stakeholders | Difference |
| 45 | Hybrid of all models | 52.54% | 32.51% | 20.03% | Hybrid of all models | 43.75% | 46.67% | -2.92% |
| 46 | Hybrid of both methods | 28.81% | 27.12% | 1.69% | Hybrid of both methods | 43.75% | 33.33% | 10.42% |
| 47 | Immediate labor force attachment | 10.17% | 19.29% | -9.12% | Human capital development | 12.50% | 11.67% | 0.83% |
| 48 | Human capital development | 5.08% | 21.08% | -16.00% | Immediate labor force attachment | 0.00% | 6.67% | -6.67% |
| 49 | Sanctioning | 3.39% | 0.00% | 3.39% | Sanctioning | 0.00% | 1.67% | -1.67% |
| 50 | | | | | | | | |
| 51 | | | | | | | | |
| 52 | Method | Metropolitan Counties - Directors | Metropolitan Counties - Stakeholders | Difference | | | | |
| 53 | Hybrid of all models | 71.43% | 28.07% | 43.36% | | | | |
| 54 | Hybrid of both methods | 28.57% | 41.23% | -12.66% | | | | |
| 55 | Immediate labor force attachment | 0.00% | 5.26% | -5.26% | | | | |
| 56 | Human capital development | 0.00% | 22.81% | -22.81% | | | | |
| 57 | Sanctioning | 0.00% | 2.63% | -2.63% | | | | |
| 58 | | | | | | | | |
| 59 | | | | | | | | |
| 60 | Red indicates difference of 10% or more | | | | | | | |

Workgroup to Reduce Reliance On Public Assistance Stakeholder Survey

How to assist OWF work required clients to reduce their reliance on public ...

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Section 751.37 of House Bill 483 of the 130th Ohio General Assembly established the Workgroup to Reduce Reliance on Public Assistance. The language instructs the Governor-appointed workgroup to develop proposals to help individuals to cease relying on public assistance programs administered by ODJFS and county departments of job and family services. The workgroup consists of representatives serving the three most populous counties, three rural counties, and three additional counties. Section 751.37 also instructs the workgroup to issue a report of its proposals to the Governor and General Assembly.

In this survey the Workgroup would like to get your input on the barriers faced by Ohio Works First (OWF) work required clients to reducing their reliance on public assistance and moving out of poverty.

Note: Ohio Works First (OWF) is commonly referred to as "cash assistance" or TANF

1. Please tell us your name

*2. Please tell us the name of the organization for whom you are responding.

*3. Please tell us the name of the county your organization serves. (Note: if your organization serves multiple counties, please list the name of the county where you, personally, do the majority of your work)

*4. What is your county population size?

- Small - 40,000 or less
- Medium - 40,000 to 100,000
- Large - 100,000 to 200,000
- Small Metro - 200,000 to 400,000
- Medium Metro - 400,000 to 600,000
- Large Metro - 600,000 or above

*5. What is your county type?

- Rural
- Semi - Metropolitan
- Metropolitan

Workgroup to Reduce Reliance On Public Assistance Stakeholder Survey

6. Ranking from 1 to 16 (1 being most significant) what are the most significant barriers OWF work required clients in your county face in reducing their reliance on public assistance and moving out of poverty?

(Note: When you select your ranking the order of the list will adjust as you go in order to coincide with your ranking)

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of transportation |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of child care |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of a High School Diploma Or GED |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of Vocational or other Post Secondary Education |
| <input type="text"/> | Substance Abuse Issues or inability to pass a drug test |
| <input type="text"/> | Mental Health Issues |
| <input type="text"/> | Chronic Physical Health Challenge yet does not qualify for disability |
| <input type="text"/> | Domestic Violence Issues |
| <input type="text"/> | Legal Issues |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of stable housing |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of a personal support system |
| <input type="text"/> | Product of generational poverty |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of work experience |
| <input type="text"/> | Limited English Proficiency |

Workgroup to Reduce Reliance On Public Assistance Stakeholder Survey

7. In your experience what percentage of OWF work required clients in your county fall into the following basicgroups?

(Please enter as a positive number DO NOT INCLUDE % sign)

Job Ready - has minor barriers few in number to employment. It's expected the client will be able to become self sufficient with little intervention

Nearly Job Ready - has several or significant barrier (s) to employment but is likely able to overcome with assistance within 12mths

Not Job Ready - has multiple barriers or significant barrier(s) to employment that make it unlikely that they will be be overcome within 12 mths. However long term assistance in barrier removal may lead to eventual employment.

Unemployable - has such significant barriers (may include medical issues), that make it extremely unlikely, regardless of amount or length of assistance in barrier removal, that the client will ever be capable of either full or part time employment

Workgroup to Reduce Reliance On Public Assistance Stakeholder Survey

8. In your experience what is the most effective method to assisting OWF work required clients in reducing their reliance on public assistance and moving out of poverty?

- Immediate labor force attachment - emphasizes that work required clients become employed rapidly by focusing on job search assistance, volunteer work experience, and/or short term education or training
- Human capital development - allows work required clients to engage in more skill building, and/or education and training activities prior to actively seeking employment
- A hybrid of both models above - work required clients are directed to one of the models based upon the circumstances (education, skills etc.) of the individual
- Sanctioning (removing benefits) for failure to comply with program requirements
- A hybrid of all: Immediate labor force attachment, Human capital development, Sanctioning based upon the circumstances of the individual

Other (please specify & briefly describe)

9. Any additional comments or thoughts about the barriers faced by OWF work required clients or the methods to assist them in reducing their reliance on public assistance and moving out of poverty?

The Workgroup to Reduce Individuals Reliance On Public Assistance

How to assist OWF work required clients to reduce their reliance on public ...

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Section 751.37 of House Bill 483 of the 130th Ohio General Assembly established the Workgroup to Reduce Reliance on Public Assistance. The language instructs the Governor-appointed workgroup to develop proposals to help individuals to cease relying on public assistance programs administered by ODJFS and county departments of job and family services. The workgroup consists of representatives serving the three most populous counties, three rural counties, and three additional counties. Section 751.37 also instructs the workgroup to issue a report of its proposals to the Governor and General Assembly.

In this portion of the survey the Workgroup would like to get your input on the barriers faced by your OWF work required clients to reducing their reliance on public assistance and moving out of poverty.

1. Please tell us your name

*2. County Name

*3. What is your county population size?

- Small - 40,000 or less
- Medium - 40,000 to 100,000
- Large - 100,000 to 200,000
- Small Metro - 200,000 to 400,000
- Medium Metro - 400,000 to 600,000
- Large Metro - 600,000 or above

*4. What is your county type?

- Rural
- Semi - Metropolitan
- Metropolitan

The Workgroup to Reduce Individuals Reliance On Public Assistance

***5. Ranking from 1 to 16 (1 being most significant) what are the most significant barriers OWF work required clients in your county face in reducing their reliance on public assistance and moving out of poverty?**

(Note: When you select your ranking of an item the list will automatically adjust order as you go to coincide with your ranking)

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of transportation |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of child care |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of available jobs and/or lack of jobs of the appropriate skill level |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of a High School Diploma Or GED |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of Vocational or other Post Secondary Education |
| <input type="text"/> | Substance Abuse Issues or inability to pass a drug test |
| <input type="text"/> | Mental Health Issues |
| <input type="text"/> | Chronic Physical Health Challenge yet does not qualify for disability |
| <input type="text"/> | Domestic Violence Issues |
| <input type="text"/> | Legal Issues |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of stable housing |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of a personal support system |
| <input type="text"/> | Product of generational poverty |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of client motivation and commitment to success |
| <input type="text"/> | Lack of work experience |
| <input type="text"/> | Limited English Proficiency |

The Workgroup to Reduce Individuals Reliance On Public Assistance

***6. In your experience what percentage of OWF work required clients in your county that fall into the following basic groups?**

(Please enter as a positive number DO NOT INCLUDE % sign)

Job Ready - has minor barriers few in number to employment. It's expected the client will be able to become self sufficient with little intervention

Nearly Job Ready - has several or significant barrier (s) to employment but is likely able to overcome with assistance within 12mths

Not Job Ready - has multiple barriers or significant barrier(s) to employment that make it unlikely that they will be be overcome within 12 mths. However long term assistance in barrier removal may lead to eventual employment.

Unemployable - has such significant barriers (may include medical issues), that make it extremely unlikely, regardless of amount or length of assistance in barrier removal, that the client will ever be capable of either full or part time employment

The Workgroup to Reduce Individuals Reliance On Public Assistance

***7. In your experience what is the most effective method to assisting OWF work required clients in reducing their reliance on public assistance and moving out of poverty?**

- Immediate labor force attachment - emphasizes that work required clients become employed rapidly by focusing on job search assistance, volunteer work experience, and/or short term education or training
- Human capital development - allows work required clients to engage in more skill building, and/or education and training activities prior to actively seeking employment
- A hybrid of both models above - work required clients are directed to one of the models based upon the circumstances (education, skills etc.) of the individual
- Sanctioning (removing benefits) for failure to comply with program requirements
- A hybrid of all: Immediate labor force attachment, Human capital development, Sanctioning based upon the circumstances of the individual

Other (please specify & briefly describe)

8. Any additional comments or thoughts about the barriers faced by OWF work required clients or the methods to assist them in reducing their reliance on public assistance and moving out of poverty?

