



Housing and Employment Navigator

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

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

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

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

Better service. Greater impacts.

The Housing and Employment Navigator model aims to:

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



Services become streamlined and are delivered seamlessly.

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

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

Deeper workforce. Stronger economy.

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

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

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

Promising Results in Assisting Families with Multiple Barriers

A 44-month project testing the Housing and Employment Navigator model demonstrated positive outcomes in helping homeless families **find a job, keep a job** and **secure stable housing**. A rigorous evaluation compared outcome data of project participants (Navigator Group) with a similar sample of homeless families that did not receive services (Control Group).



* Percentage reflects those working at 24 months after project enrollment

** Defined as earning wages



* Percentage reflects one or more instances of retention in the 24 months after project enrollment

** Defined as employed for at least 6 consecutive months



* Percentage reflects those obtaining housing by 24 months after project enrollment

** Defined as attained permanent housing, as indicated in Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

Source: Marc Bolan Consulting, “Housing and Employment Navigator Program Evaluation,” June 2017, Department of Labor Workforce Innovation Fund Grant Contract #IF-23252-12-60-A-53.

System Partners / Team Members

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

Project Partners

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

For More Information

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This document was prepared by Building Changes on behalf of the three regional Workforce Development Councils.