

CRITICAL ACTIONS ON TANF:

Use TANF to create subsidized jobs and provide work supports for families living in poverty

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs should expand opportunities for families living in poverty to increase their incomes through work. Many of the adults in families experiencing homelessness and other very poor families face barriers to employment, including low levels of education, limited skills and work experience, poor health, lack of transportation or childcare, criminal records, and other challenges.

What are subsidized jobs?

Subsidized employment or transitional jobs programs are designed to overcome employment barriers by combining paid work and job skills training, and they often include additional support services. These jobs, created in partnership with public or private sector employers, provide income for participants as well as the opportunity to learn workplace expectations and skills in a real work environment. Participants also get current job references and help finding unsubsidized jobs. Subsidized employment programs are particularly effective for workers who have been unemployed for a long time.

What are the promising practices?

Researchers and practitioners have identified promising program models and a set of best practices that work to increase employment and incomes for people who have significant barriers to employment, including people experiencing homelessness. Some of the most promising approaches:

- ◇ Provide a pathway to greater economic security for families by offering training, coaching, and support services in addition to employment opportunities; and
- ◇ Work with employers to create or expand job opportunities that are accessible to people who want to work but face barriers to getting and keeping jobs in the competitive labor market

These programs help workers move beyond entry-level jobs and pursue opportunities for career advancement and higher earnings.

How can TANF help?

Funding from TANF programs, supplemented by support from philanthropy or other sources, may be used to subsidize a portion of the costs of wages, support services, and other programs costs.

For more information about creating employment opportunities for people experiencing homelessness, visit:

- ◇ [Working to End Homelessness Initiative](#)

For more information about using TANF to provide subsidized or transitional jobs, visit:

- ◇ [New Evidence That Subsidized Jobs Work](#)
- ◇ [Stimulating Opportunity: An Evaluation of ARRA-Funded Subsidized Employment Programs](#)