



Joint Newark and Essex County

Welfare to Work/ Workforce Investment Board
East Orange, NJ
March 5, 2019

<i>Adamczyk, Aleksandra</i>	<i>Mgr, Welfare to Work</i>	<i>Mirda, Betty</i>	<i>GED/DTE</i>
<i>Alexander, Mary</i>	<i>Supervisor, E Time</i>	<i>Montford, Julius</i>	<i>Acting Dir. DEDTE</i>
<i>Allen, Tameka</i>	<i>Newark Works</i>	<i>Okere, Amanze</i>	<i>ECWDB</i>
<i>Beckford, Jasmyne</i>	<i>NWDB</i>	<i>Orr, Curtia</i>	<i>Newark Works</i>
<i>Bell-Taylor, Kelli</i>	<i>NWDB</i>	<i>Porter, Stephanie</i>	<i>Newark Works</i>
<i>Carvajal, Allyson</i>	<i>WDB Coord. & Support</i>	<i>Richardson, Josephine</i>	<i>Newark One Stop</i>
<i>Gilbert, Ethel</i>	<i>DFAB</i>	<i>Schaeffer, Janine</i>	<i>ECWDB</i>
<i>Grier, Betty</i>	<i>DOL</i>	<i>Weiner, David</i>	<i>CWA Local 1081</i>
<i>Hercules, Shavon</i>	<i>DFD</i>	<i>Weiss, Howard</i>	<i>ECWDB</i>
<i>Manzo, Dominick</i>	<i>DFD</i>		

Welcome

David Weiner opened the meeting with introductions.

Minutes from the September 2018 meeting were approved.

DFD

Dominic Manzo stated that he has the statistical report that DFD puts out which covers December 2017 to December 2018 and that it is a good time to review it. The TANF caseload statewide continues to go down by three thousand four hundred (3400) cases which amounts to twenty-two percent (22%). Essex has the most cases at fifty-four hundred (5400), Camden at four thousand (4000) and Hudson at Camden at thirty-seven hundred (3700). Essex has the most that have come off TANF and are employed at two hundred ninety-seven (297). They did a snapshot in December of TANF cases and found that they added one hundred seventy-eight (178) but closed two hundred twenty-two (222). The number of EA (Emergency Assistance) cases are down by almost seven percent (7%). Essex County has two hundred eighty (280) cases which would be a decrease from the previous year of twenty-three percent (23%). GA (General Assistance) is down by nineteen percent (19%). There are ten thousand six hundred sixty-four cases statewide. In Essex there is a total of twelve hundred (1200) cases seven hundred (700) of which are considered employable. Hudson County now has more GA clients than Essex. Dominic noted that most of the cases are being removed for employment or sanctions. In the past clients were reaching the seventy-two (72) month time period. But clients are not getting to this point and are getting off way before. The economy is good and people are getting jobs. He stated that here it is so apparent because the numbers were always very high.

The "participation rate" for Essex is twenty-four percent (24%), which is below the state average of twenty-nine percent (29%). Dominick stated that there have been meetings with Anibal Ramos in order to make suggestions on how the increase this rate.

There is a new medical form which highlights what the client can do. This was piloted in four counties and is not statewide yet. There is also an area where it asks the doctor if they are willing to testify that the individual will be out of work for twelve (12) months or longer. He stated the new form mirrors that which is used by Social Security Disability. He stated that more doctors are deferring work instead of putting people out for twelve (12) months. Ethel stated that if a doctor will not go to court the judge will rule in favor of the client. Ethel stated that DFD needs to either make payments to the doctors for their time to come to court or have

whoever is reviewing the “medical” to come to court. Dominick added that the number of clients seeking “medical” is also way down.

This year there is a ten percent (10%) increase in benefits to TANF and GA. Also, as the minimum wage continues to increase fewer people will qualify because there is a “means test.” July first the minimum wage will increase to \$10/hr.

Julius Montford stated that the Essex County Job Fair is scheduled for Thursday, May 23, 2019 and they are filled to capacity for employers. They will organize employers by sector this year.

Julius also stated that they have been approved for a Summer Youth Employment Training Program through the Department of Labor. The focus will be on TANF households, and will be shifting to intake shortly. The budget for this program is around two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) and we will be enrolling approximately eighty (80) youth. This program is for dependents of the TANF clients aged 16-24. The youth must show up to intake with their parent, and the parent must be in an activity for the youth to qualify. If the parent does not show up for an activity they are reserving their right to terminate the youth. They are looking for a Debit system to expedite the payments.

Julius also stated that there are still ten (10) vendors that are providing to-work activities for TANF, SNAP and GA. There is one (1) vendor on a thirty (30) day probation as a result of not doing paperwork for time and attendance correctly. Currently they are piloting a procedure where vendors with TANF clients will send us the data to enter into E-time because they were holding on to clients that should have been terminated. This also gives us greater knowledge about the timeliness of the entries.

He has been meeting with DOL and DFD regarding the GA/ SNAP issue. Effective July 2019, the only role that Employment Service will play will be the twenty-eight (28) day pre-enrollment. Anything regarding a client being in an activity will go through the fourth (4th) floor here at 50 South Clinton in the “To-Work Units”. They are currently working on the MOA between Newark and Essex County that need to be presented to DOL and DFD before the program is officially rolled out. He stated that it is also happening on the TANF side that all “to-work” activities will come through DTE. This will effectively remove Newark Works from the case management of TANF clients. He went on that the county is ultimately responsible for the participation rate.

He stated he is losing staff to retirements. Effective a week from now there will be two active units for Welfare to Work. There will be changes in staffing going forward.

The RFP will have an increase in the pay rate for vendors in the hope to increase the number submitting proposals. He stated he sends out an email looking for volunteers to read the proposals and usually only gets one (1) response. Vendors obviously cannot be on a review committee. Some are intimidated by the size of the packet but much of it is boiler plate.

Allyson Carvajal gave an update that there are ongoing meetings in addition to the Essex County/Newark ones there are “work group” meetings as well as something called “Renew WFNJ.” There will be policy updates coming out of these meetings.

Ethel Gilbert stated that West Orange is transferring their thirty (30) Welfare clients to the County. They will be doing what they can to make the transition run smoothly. West Orange was still handing out paper checks and they will need to be transitioned to EBT cards. West Orange is still responsible for those clients until April 1st. Ethel stated she is not aware of any exchange of payment for taking on these clients.

Adjournment

There being no further business the Welfare meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.

Respectfully submitted by
Janine Schaeffer

Next Meeting Date: June 4th, 2019