



**Joint Newark & Essex County
Welfare to Work Committee Meeting**

50 South Clinton Street, Room 2070
East Orange, New Jersey

Minutes from Meeting: June 4th, 2019

<i>Adameczyk, Aleksandra</i>	<i>Manager, Welfare to Work</i>	<i>Manzo, Dominick</i>	<i>DFD</i>
<i>Alexander, Mary</i>	<i>Supervisor, E Time</i>	<i>Mirda, Betty</i>	<i>GED/DTE</i>
<i>Beckford, Jasmyne</i>	<i>NWDB</i>	<i>Montford, Julius</i>	<i>Director DEDTE</i>
<i>Bell-Taylor, Kelli</i>	<i>NWDB</i>	<i>Orr, Curtia</i>	<i>Newark Works</i>
<i>Brodie, Linda</i>	<i>DFD/SNAP</i>	<i>Porter, Stephany</i>	<i>Newark Works</i>
<i>Carvajal, Allyson</i>	<i>WDB Coordination</i>	<i>Richardson, Josephine</i>	<i>Newark One Stop</i>
<i>Castro, Betsy</i>	<i>DFD/SNAP</i>	<i>Rodriguez, Miriam</i>	<i>Newark One Stop</i>
<i>Epps, Joseph C.</i>	<i>NWDB</i>	<i>Schaeffer, Janine</i>	<i>ECWDB</i>
<i>Gilbert, Ethel</i>	<i>DFAB</i>	<i>Tyson, Margaret</i>	<i>Workforce NJ Mgr.</i>
<i>Herculues, Shevon</i>	<i>DFD</i>	<i>Weiner, David</i>	<i>Pres. Local 1081</i>
<i>High, Angela</i>	<i>DFD/SNAP</i>	<i>Weiss, Howard</i>	<i>ECWDB</i>

Welcome and Introduction

David welcomed everyone and introductions were made.
Minutes from the last meeting in March were approved.

Workfirst NJ

Julius Montford stated that the RFP release date was May 7, 2019. There was a Bidder's Conference on May 22nd and all the responses for Workforce NJ to work activities are due back by June 12th at 11AM. Julius stated that they have received the planning notice but not the notice of award. We are scheduled to receive ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) for to work activities including staffing costs. He noted that SNAP is separate from WFNJ. Staff is currently working on closing out existing contracts as some vendors have not submitted final billing, which was due yesterday. Some of the contracts will be extended for two (2) months because they cannot contract with new vendors without the "Notice of Obligation."

There is a final consolidation plan for the Essex County DTE to provide the "to work" activities for all GA, SNAP and TANF. Therefore, Newark Works will have no further responsibility after June 30th to place clients into "to work" activities. They can continue with existing clients however once those clients are finished they will be turned over to DTE. Going forward Employment Service will run the twenty-eight (28) day program for GA as well as the other workshops that they offer. There is a SOP for how the clients will be serviced and did a trial run May 1st.

Julius stated that as of today DTE has inputted into AOSOS (GA and SNAP) one thousand two hundred and twenty-nine (1,229) clients. Julius has instituted new procedure whereby a client will no longer be seen after 11:30am because of the data entry requirement. Also Mondays will be the only day to see clients who have completed the twenty-eight (28) day requirement. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday they will see general clients and Friday employed only.

They also have the Summer Youth Program, whereby they were focusing on TANF youth but it is open to "low income" youth and there are some thirty (30) slots still available. In their attempt to employ TANF youth once some of the parents found out that they were required to show up they pulled their kid out of the program.

The Essex County Job Fair was held May 23rd and was very successful. It was estimated that four thousand two hundred (4,200) attended. Prudential has ten (10) TANF clients on the list to be hired and UPS has eight (8) to be hired. This week they are transitioning to have one Employment Specialist working with the TANF employed clients focusing on retention and getting the support services that they are entitled to. Julius stated going forward DTE will become more specialized as a result of the clients we deal with.

DFD

Dominick Manzo stated that the participation rate for Essex County is still around twenty-two (22%) percent, which ranks 14th. He stated that they have been having bi-weekly meetings with Anibal Ramos, Ethel and Keisha Burnett to develop ways to increase the participation rate. One of the suggestions that came out of these meetings is to have one (1) case manager for all employed clients. This should allow for part time workers to add additional hours to meet the thirty-five (35) hour requirement. They are looking into having these clients volunteer at a location where their job is so they don't have to commute back to Newark. Since it is a volunteer site they would just need a letter stating that the person is there and the number of hours and who a contact person is. There is a special code used for this and there wouldn't need to have biweekly hours submitted and this is specific for TANF only. They are also looking into some other coding issues. Dominick is anticipating a jump in the participation rate for June.

The latest report is from February 2019 where the TANF numbers from Feb 2018-Feb 2019 and found the TANF caseload dropped twenty-three (23%) percent. Essex County has the most people on TANF with four thousand nine hundred (4,900). Hudson has thirty-five hundred (3,500) and Camden thirty-four hundred (3,400). Emergency Assistance also fell by a little over twenty (20%) percent. General Assistance has fallen fifteen point seven (15.7%) percent in the same period. Essex County has one thousand two hundred ten (1210) clients both employable and unemployable. The county with the next largest is Hudson with one thousand one hundred eight-three (1183). Dominick stated that he has seen months where the Hudson number is larger than that of Essex.

The counties with the largest number of employed TANF recipients are Essex with two thirty-eight (238), Camden one thirty-three (133) and Hudson one hundred eight (108).

Shevon stated that clients are getting employed and some are reaching their time limits, but the trend remains that the numbers are getting smaller. Some clients do get exempted through medical and they end up getting SSI but it is a very long process and could take a number of years.

Testing

Betty Mirda stated that as of June 30th they are no longer able to administer the TABE test. She is in the process of pivoting to give the CASAS test, which is a three (3) hour test and much harder and entirely on computer. Going forward all vendors must give the CASAS test as well because all clients must be pre and post tested on the same test. Many clients will need to be re pre-tested.

Howard asked for volunteers interested in evaluating the RFPs. **David, Ethel and Mr. Epps volunteered.**

Adjournment

There being no further business the One Stop Partners' meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by: Janine Schaeffer

NEXT MEETING DATE: September 10th, 2019