

Questions about the Transitional Jobs strategy

Q. What is Transitional Jobs?

A. Transitional Jobs, (TJ) is an employment strategy that utilizes temporary, wage-paid, real work, coupled with skill development and supportive services to transition people successfully into work.

Q. How are Transitional Jobs programs a type of “Subsidized Employment” program?

A. Transitional Jobs programs utilize “subsidized employment” through which people with little or no work experience and significant barriers to employment gain work experience while earning a wage and developing an employer reference. This experience, coupled with robust and holistic supportive services, soft and hard skill development, and linkages to education and training help prepare TJ participants to gain and be successful in work.

Q. What happens after the temporary, subsidized wage-paid job ends?

A. The goal of a Transitional Jobs program is that a person successfully transitions into unsubsidized, full-time work. This may be with the employer that the worker was working with during the subsidy period or a different employer. TJ programs work with a person to secure unsubsidized job placements once the person is prepared and ready to transition. The TJ program continues to support the person once they have secured unsubsidized work and is ready to secure another work placement or even subsidized employment again if necessary.

Q. What populations are served by Transitional Jobs Programs?

A. The hardest to employ job seekers. Transitional Jobs programs serve TANF recipients, disconnected youth, people experiencing homelessness, people who were formerly incarcerated, refugees, immigrants, veterans, non custodial parents and many other populations of people that struggle with chronic unemployment and hardship. Research has found that Transitional Jobs programs are most effective when targeted job-seekers with significant barriers to employment.

Q. What are the program elements of a Transitional Jobs program?

A. TJ programs are a flexible and adaptable employment strategy. *That said, TJ programs have the same core program components including:* Orientation/Assessment, Job Readiness/Life Skills Training, Case Management/Supportive Services, Subsidized Transitional Job (up to 6 months or longer if needed), Unsubsidized Job Placement, Retention Support, Linkages to Education/Training.

Q. What retention services are necessary to have in a TJ program?

A. The goal is for TJ programs to provide at least 6 months of post-program retention services. Research from P/PV indicates that the length of time in a retention/advancement program—receiving services for at least six months—was associated with working more months, working full time and having higher annual earnings. The intensity of program retention/advancement services—averaging three or more contacts with program staff per month—has been associated with having an increase in wages of \$1 or more per hour, working full time and having health benefits.

Q. Who administers Transitional Jobs initiatives?

A. TJ initiatives have been administrated by city, county, and state governments, non-profit organizations and occasionally for-profit organizations. Typically, the TJ program is run by non-profit organizations. Partners with expertise in various aspects of service provision and support services work together to ensure that the employment needs and supports of TJ participants are leveraged and provided seamlessly.

Q. How are participants referred to a Transitional Jobs program?

A. Depending upon the population targeted to receive Transitional Jobs program services and the funding stream utilized referrals may come from a variety of entities. TJ programs work with local TANF offices or workforce offices to refer participants who could benefit from TJ. TJ programs also partner with Departments of Corrections to recruit participants while they are incarcerated or soon-to-be released. Partnerships are also built with state or federal probation or parole offices. Participants may also be referred through collaborations with shelter services or subsidized housing projects.

Q. How have TJ programs been effective?

A. TJ programs have been shown to increase the likelihood that a person will get and keep employment, increase wages over time and reduce need for public assistance. In addition, rigorous random assignment evaluation by MDRC showed that TJ programs reduce reincarceration by over 40 percent for people engaged with a TJ program soon after release from incarceration. The economic and social cost savings to building and supporting successful TJ programs are significant. A recent return on investment analysis projected that the State of New York could save over \$106 million dollars in three years after an initial investment of \$47 million in Transitional Jobs programs for TANF recipients and the formerly incarcerated.

Q. What do TJ programs cost?

A. TJ programs vary in cost by the amount of the wage paid to participants and the length of time in a TJ program. On average, a TJ program costs just over \$7,000 per participant for a 3 month program up to \$24,000 per participant for a TJ program that is 12 months in length.

Q. Where can I find a Transitional Jobs program?

A. TJ programs currently exist in over 30 states across the country and in many metropolitan areas country.. Visit the NTJN website www.transitionaljobs.net to learn more about TJ programs across the

Questions about the Transitional Jobs strategy within TANF Emergency

Q. Can entities develop Transitional Jobs programs with TANF Emergency Contingency Funds?

A. Yes. Transitional Jobs programs are one type of “Subsidized Employment” program and are fully fundable and countable under the Federal HHS Guidelines. The National Transitional Jobs Network and many other national groups worked with HHS to ensure that all parts of a Transitional Jobs program were allowable uses of funds.

Q. Can participants in a TJ program work in exchange for their TANF welfare grant or other public assistance?

A. A rich body of research informs us that unpaid work experience programs or programs that mandate work for TANF benefits are ineffective at increasing consistent employment or raising wages for TANF recipients. The National Transitional Jobs Network does not support the practice of utilizing Transitional Jobs for either of these purposes for a number of reasons, including:

- 1) The worker is less likely to be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit – a critical income supplement.
- 2) The worker less likely to be captured in employment and earnings data.
- 3) The worker less likely to be paying income taxes on earned income.

Q. Who receives the ‘wage-subsidy’?

A. The National Transitional Jobs Network recommends that the “wage-subsidy” is paid directly to the TJ participant in the form of a wage-based payment equal to the state or federal minimum wage.

