

**Report on Secure Jobs**

**April 2018**

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**Overview**

Pursuant to line-item 4400-1020 of the FY2018 General Appropriations Act, the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) is required to report on the status of the Secure Jobs program as follows:

“that the department shall report to the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means not later than March 15, 2018, by type of service or program provided on the: (i) housing situation, including the stability of housing, for program participants; (ii) employment status, including employment history, of program participants; (iii) total number of program participants; and (iv) number of program participants who are no longer receiving assistance under said item 7004-0101, 7004-0108, 7004-9024 or 7004-9316”

**Department of Transitional Assistance**

The mission of the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) is to assist and empower low-income individuals and families to meet their basic needs, improve their quality of life, and achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency. DTA offers a comprehensive system of programs and supports to achieve this mission, including food and nutritional assistance, economic assistance, and employment supports. DTA serves one out of every eight people in the Commonwealth including working families, children, elders, and people with disabilities.

**Program History**

Secure Jobs was created in 2013 through a partnership between the Fireman Foundation and the Massachusetts Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness to address both homelessness and joblessness by bringing together employment and housing agencies from across the state to help homeless families increase their level of economic self-sufficiency. Five partnerships were funded across the Commonwealth that brought together state agencies, homelessness providers, and workforce development agencies. The demonstration targeted families participating in the HomeBASE Rental Assistance program. By connecting housing and workforce development services, Secure Jobs offered the comprehensive support families needed to obtain employment.

The initial evaluation of the Secure Jobs demonstration program found that the program is the right fit for parents who are ready, willing and able to work, and that individualized service delivery is critical to success. Further, providing real connections to employers allowed participants to obtain employment, and strong retention services helped participants stay employed.

Between FY15 and FY17, the Legislature appropriated funding for the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to execute contracts with provider agencies to deliver requisite services for individuals and families receiving support from DHCD’s Emergency Assistance (EA) program, the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP), the HomeBASE program, or Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT).

**Current Status of the Program**

In the FY18 budget, administration of the program was subsequently assigned to DTA. Working collaboratively with DHCD, the program continues to serve individuals and families that are served by DHCD programs.

As existing vendor contracts near expiration, DTA is currently in the process of re-procuring services for the program. DTA is seeking qualified partnerships to provide a comprehensive and integrated array of employment supports, job training, and related services to homeless or previously homeless families receiving housing assistance from DHCD. Participants in Secure Jobs are expected to achieve outcomes across the following three key domains:

1. Education and Career
2. Housing and Economic Stability
3. Family Stability and Well Being

The theory of change for Secure Jobs is that a focus on employment can shorten the length of stay in shelter and expedite the attainment of permanent housing, contributing to upward economic mobility and family stability.

DTA is taking a “two-generation” (2Gen) approach to increasing economic mobility for families. This approach recognizes that outcomes for parents and children are intertwined and cannot develop independently of one another. Research has documented the impact of a parent’s education, economic stability and overall health on a child’s trajectory. Similarly, children’s education and healthy development are powerful catalysts for parents.

In addition to providers that utilize a 2Gen approach, DTA is seeking proposals from providers who can demonstrate a willingness and ability to:

* Act in partnership with participants to help them set and achieve personally meaningful goals on their path to economic stability;
* Meet each family where they are;
* Identify and meet the needs of the entire family; and,
* Be flexible and build in margins for error so participants can be supported in their individual path toward setting and achieving their economic and family goal.

Referral to Secure Jobs is generally made through housing agencies serving DHCD clients. However, provided that DHCD has verified eligibility, referrals may be made through one of DTA’s local Transitional Assistance Offices (TAOs), provider recruitment, other community agencies or self-referral.

Starting in FY19, Secure Jobs will have additional funding through DHCD’s Moving to Work (MTW) designation. Because of its focus on homeless and housing unstable families, Secure Jobs is considered a local non-traditional activity under the Moving to Work Program. Traditionally, Moving to Work is a demonstration program for public housing authorities (PHAs) to provide them the opportunity to design and test innovative, locally-designed strategies that use federal dollars more efficiently, help residents find employment and become self-sufficient, and increase housing choices for low-income families. MTW gives PHAs exemptions from many existing public housing and voucher rules and more flexibility with how they use their federal funds. MTW PHAs are expected to use the opportunities presented by MTW to inform HUD about ways to better address local community needs.

**FY2018 Secure Jobs Participants Served and Outcomes**

The following information is a summary of data pulled from an Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) system, which is a data collection source used by all Secure Job providers to track and input client data. Providers track client data upon initial assessment and enrollment and during the year, through ongoing case management on a monthly basis, to document the client progress towards eliminating homelessness and obtaining sustainable employment. DTA extracts a summary of inputted data from ETO for analysis. There are two datasets used for this analysis, one being the current dataset regarding the actively enrolled Secure Jobs participants and their initial assessment information, and the second dataset is a snapshot of the current caseload status and progress at the time the information was pulled. The information was pulled as of April 2, 2018.

* Based on the actively enrolled data, there are 298 participants in a Secure Jobs program at 7 different sites as of April 2018.

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| **Site Name** | **Total Participants Enrolled** |
| Community Teamwork, Inc. | 33 |
| Father Bills and MainSpring - Brockton | 58 |
| Jewish Vocational Services | 19 |
| South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC) | 7 |
| Southeastern Massachusetts SER-Jobs, Inc. | 18 |
| Way Finders, Inc. | 138 |
| Worcester Community Action Council | 25 |

* Based on the actively enrolled data, nearly 49% indicated they are residing in family shelters, through DHCD’s EA program, upon initial enrollment.
* Based on the snapshot dataset on the progress of current Secure Jobs caseload pulled on April 2, 2018, 13% of the Secure Jobs population or 42 Secure Jobs participants have a change in their housing situation after starting the Secure Jobs program.
* Of the total 298 active enrolled participants, 65% of the population has a history of employment and 12% of the population was actively employed at the start of the Secure Jobs program.
* Based on the snapshot dataset on the progress of current Secure Jobs caseload pulled on April 2, 2018, 38% of the Secure Jobs population or 120 Secure Jobs participants have attained employment after starting the Secure Jobs program.