

HUD's Jobs Plus Pilot Program for Public Housing Residents: Ongoing Implementation Experiences



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Foreword

One of the strategic goals of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is to advance economic opportunity by encouraging self-sufficiency and financial stability among HUD-assisted residents. The Agency is committed to helping residents who live in public housing obtain the tools they need to become self-sufficient. The Jobs Plus program provides grants to public housing agencies (PHAs) to fund activities that promote work readiness, job placement, education, and financial literacy.

This study describes the lessons learned and the challenges experienced by the first nine public housing agencies that were awarded Jobs Plus grants beginning in April 2015. Observations from this evaluation have already influenced how the program is administered and new guidance for current and future grantees is being developed.

One question this implementation study attempts to answer is whether or not it is feasible to scale up the original Jobs Plus demonstration of the 1990s, which was the basis for the current program. This report shows that the first cohort of Jobs Plus grantees succeeded in implementing the program model. It additionally shows that sites were successful in completing Jobs Plus assessments with 61 percent of residents across the sites. Program participants were successful in participating in paid employment and increasing their earnings. Moreover, they experienced an average of \$103 per month in additional savings as a result of the program's financial incentive that allows tenants to increase earned income without it affecting their monthly rent payment.

High utilization of the rent incentive made it difficult for some sites to predict the exact portion of the grant that would be used to maintain the rent incentive. As a result, HUD will continue to refine its guidance relative to the income disregard, to better help grantees balance funding for the rent incentive with funding for services and staff needs.

The report also notes that some of the most significant challenges to the program's implementation were caused by Jobs Plus residents being relocated as a result of other housing programs. HUD has taken steps to clarify the requirements on relocation in its Notices of Funding Availability and through additional guidance documents.

We are encouraged by this report, as it shows that the program model for Jobs Plus is capable of being fully implemented in participating sites. The program also shows promise in aiding public housing residents on their path to self-sufficiency.

A study of program impacts is currently underway, and results are expected in 2021.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Appleton', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Seth D. Appleton
Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Executive Summary

Households receiving federal rental subsidies face major impediments to achieving self-sufficiency, including poor work histories, limited education, and significant personal and other challenges. To help address the issues of low-wage work and the concentration of poverty and joblessness in public housing communities, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and MDRC conceived Jobs Plus (originally “Jobs-Plus”) in the mid-1990s. The model encourages economic mobility by providing employment-related services, rent-based work incentives—so that initial earnings increases do not trigger immediate rent increases—and building a community context that supports work.

The original demonstration (1998–2003), which was the subject of a rigorous evaluation, found that the Jobs Plus housing developments that fully implemented all the components—that is, they offered the full package of Jobs Plus employment services, rent-based work incentives, and Community Support for Work—saw the program boost annual earnings.¹ New York City replicated Jobs Plus, initially at a public housing development in East Harlem (Jefferson Houses), and later in the Bronx as part of a Social Innovation Fund (SIF) initiative that also included San Antonio, Texas. New York City has since expanded the program to 26 developments. In 2015, the program became part of federal housing policy when Congress authorized \$24 million for the Jobs Plus Pilot Program, targeting public housing developments with a minimum of 250 nonelderly households. To date, HUD has awarded about \$76 million to 31 public housing agencies (PHAs) to operate Jobs Plus. Through 4-year grants, housing agencies were provided resources to implement the Jobs Plus model and to develop locally based approaches to increase earnings and advance employment outcomes for public housing families.

Following the first round of Jobs Plus grants, in 2015, HUD commissioned an implementation study (also referred to as a process evaluation) to document the early operational experiences of the first nine (or Cohort 1) public housing agencies to receive Jobs Plus funding. The nine housing agencies (or sites) in this cohort include Boston, Massachusetts; Charlotte, North Carolina; Chicago, Illinois; Cuyahoga, Ohio; Houston, Texas; Memphis, Tennessee; Roanoke, Virginia; St. Louis, Missouri; and Syracuse, New York. These sites represent a wide diversity in terms of size, site demographics, location, and other program features, offering an opportunity to understand the

¹ Bloom, Riccio, and Verma (2005); Riccio (2010).

program's implementation in different contexts. Two of the sites, Charlotte and Chicago, were Moving to Work (MTW) agencies, a designation that provides them more flexibility with how they can use their Federal funds.

This report, the second for this evaluation,² focuses on the implementation experiences of eight of the nine sites, through early 2018, about midway through the grant.³ It examines how program operations evolved over time, the types of implementation issues that continued to be challenging, the strategies devised to address them, resident participation levels, and the technical assistance and guidance that sites received to implement this complex initiative. In addition, this report also looks at site leaders' early thinking about program sustainability, given that their 4-year, nonrenewable Jobs Plus grants would end in 2019. Although this report does not capture the full 4-year grant period for the study sites, and their programs may evolve over the remainder of the grant period, their early implementation experiences are instructive for funders and current and future grantees about what it takes to learn, launch, and operate this program model.

Program Model

At its core, Jobs Plus is structured around three mutually reinforcing components, each of which focuses on improving residents' employment, earnings, and well-being. Since Jobs Plus was first launched in the 1990s, each replication has preserved the original framework, while making modifications to incorporate lessons and adapt the framework to new contexts—thus keeping intact the inspiration, theory, and rationale that shape this program. Similarly, the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Program is structured around the three original core components, with some adaptations.

1. **Employment-Related Services and Activities.** This component calls for employment-related services and activities to help residents secure and retain employment, including job search assistance, education programs, vocational training, and support services such as childcare and transportation assistance. Program services are provided onsite at a job center in the targeted housing development, while other employment-related services are made available through referrals to providers in the community.
2. **Rent Incentives.** Through this component, Jobs Plus attempts to counter any potential disincentive to work by allowing families to go to work or increase their earnings (or both) without a resulting increase in their rents, which would occur under normal HUD rules (that is, a higher net financial return from work while the program is in effect). For HUD's Jobs

² The first report, released in 2017, focused on the startup phase for the first nine sites, when their programs had been in operation for roughly 1 year. See Tessler et al. (2017) for sites' early implementation experiences.

³ This report focuses on eight of the nine programs in Cohort 1. The site in Houston was unable to participate in the field research activities because of the disruption caused by Hurricane Harvey.

Plus program, the rent incentive, called the Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID), offers a 100-percent disregard of incremental earned income from rent calculations for the duration of the 4-year program and is available to all residents of the Jobs Plus development.⁴

3. **Community Support for Work.** Inspired by a growing recognition of the importance of social networks and social capital, this component seeks to strengthen social ties and activities among residents to support job preparation and work efforts. Examples of mutual support include everything from sharing information about available jobs to carpooling to work to watching after each other’s children during different job shifts. Another function of the Community Support for Work component is to promote the message that “work pays” and that “employment goals are attainable,” thereby creating an environment where the theme of work is more pervasive than it had been previously.

A distinctive facet of Jobs Plus is its attempt to operate these mutually reinforcing components at *saturation levels*—that is, rather than target a small share of residents, Jobs Plus targets everyone who lives in the development and is of working age and able to work⁵. Further, the Jobs Plus employment services are uniquely situated to reap the benefits of being part of a *place-based* initiative because it is operated from within the community it serves. This affords opportunities for staff to know the context in which participants live, to know their families and provide them with ongoing assistance, and to have informal interactions at the housing developments.

One feature of the original demonstration that was not replicated in the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Program is the “mandatory collaborative,” a feature of the model promoting governance, accountability, and support that was intended to craft, fund, and operate this comprehensive initiative. Mandatory collaboratives in the original Jobs Plus sites included local public housing agencies, resident representatives, and local public human services and workforce development agencies, which worked together and were accountable to one another. It was deemed that each partner had something special to offer, but each was also limited in what it could do alone.⁶ In the HUD replication, sites were required to partner with their local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) or American Jobs Centers, or both, and were encouraged to build local partnerships and develop governance structures to manage the collaboration with partners.

⁴The JPEID differs from the rent incentives used in the original and non-HUD replication efforts by being uniform across all sites and being available for the full duration of the program. See Greenberg et al. (2015), and Bloom, Riccio, and Verma (2005) for descriptions of the rent incentives used in earlier iterations of the model.

⁵ The Jobs Plus Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) program defined working age as between 18–64. For the purpose of resident outreach targeting, the program initially defined working age as 18–65 and later changed this to 18–62.

⁶ Kato and Riccio (2001).

Key Implementation Experiences and Lessons

This implementation study covers the period from April 2015, when the Jobs Plus grants were awarded, to early 2018, when the sites were beginning to think through their sustainability plans. The study uses a range of qualitative and existing quantitative data to gain an understanding of Jobs Plus implementation for the first cohort of sites HUD funded to operate this program.⁷ During this period, roughly halfway into the 4-year Jobs Plus grant, the following key findings have emerged from the process study.

Staffing and Partnerships

- **At the end of the study follow-up period, sites faced some isolated challenges related to changes in staffing and management, procuring physical space, and managing partnerships, but the Cohort 1 sites were largely operating their Jobs Plus programs with a focus on improving management and program implementation.**

The Jobs Plus model requires programs to leverage the capacities of multiple public housing agency stakeholders and service partners to achieve its ambitious goal of implementing a multi-pronged program at saturation levels. It required hiring and training staff to implement the employment services and Community Support for Work components and coordinating with existing PHA staff to implement the JPEID. Partners were expected to strengthen Jobs Plus by advising on programming and implementation based on their different areas of expertise, and by making it easier for residents to access work-related support services.

Five sites chose to operate Jobs Plus with an *implementation partner*: a partner agency that plays an instrumental role in the overall management of Jobs Plus, employs case managers, and provides resources to deliver and operate the employment services component of Jobs Plus (involving case management, job development, and support services). In sites that implemented Jobs Plus with an implementation partner, that partner often had the capacity to offer services (for example, educational services or work-readiness training) that the PHA otherwise may have had to bring in other disparate entities to provide. As discussed later, several sites struggled to build effective partnerships with the local WDBs, a key partner for this intervention.

Technical Assistance

- **All sites expressed the need for clear and concrete technical assistance. Some of their technical assistance needs were particular to the implementation of and the rules around HUD's JPEID. Sites also looked for more guidance about strategies to**

⁷ The study relies on observational and interview data, aggregate Management Information System (MIS) and program participation and cost data reported by sites, and other site and program communication materials.

strengthen implementation of the employment services and Community Support for Work components of the model.

Technical assistance and guidance were primarily provided to the Jobs Plus sites through the HUD grants managers, with whom sites had monthly check-in phone calls, and who periodically visited the sites. The main role of the grants managers, however, was to monitor the sites' performance, and the technical assistance provided generally did not meet the sites' needs. HUD awarded a contract to Abt Associates to provide some very specific technical assistance deliverables, such as webinars and conferences. This study shows that all sites desired more locally tailored technical assistance, and although HUD encouraged sites to devote a portion of their budgets to procure their own technical assistance, most of the sites did not do that and expressed the wish that more hands-on assistance would have been available through HUD-identified contractors or experts.

Employment Services

- **By the end of year 2, across all sites, an average of 61 percent of the work-able residents had enrolled in Jobs Plus and completed an employment assessment—the closest measure of whether a resident has at least had an introduction or some exposure to the Jobs Plus offer.⁸ Enrollment rates ranged from about 25 percent in Boston to 92 percent in Chicago.**

Sites offered an array of employment services (mainly job preparation, job search, and job placement services through a Jobs Plus case manager, along with some occupational skills training), and services became more tailored to the individual in year 2 compared with the first year of program operations. The proportion of residents who received any kind of employment-related service *after* being assessed ranged from 23 percent in Boston to 68 percent in Roanoke. Not surprisingly, training enrollment and completion rates were low, although completion rates could increase over time.

- **Engagement with Jobs Plus case managers or program staff is largely resident-driven; most sites do not set expectations about the frequency with which case managers should meet with Jobs Plus participants.**

The Jobs Plus framework itself is not prescriptive about how case management services should be structured, and most sites did not seem to provide guidance to case managers about how frequently they should meet with participants after the initial assessment. Client contact tends to be “as needed,” left to the initiative of the resident or the judgment of the case manager, as opposed to there being a standard, more proactive practice in terms of frequency of contact with participants. Further, case managers appear to spend most of their time working with active participants,

⁸ This estimate excludes Memphis, as they reflect unique relocation circumstances due to their Choice Neighborhood Implementation grant.

although in some sites, the community coaches made efforts to engage (or re-engage) fewer active ones. Two sites that did set expectations required case managers to contact residents on their case-loads at least once per month.

- **The addition of dedicated staff or partners who played a job developer role has allowed sites to build stronger relationships with employers; as a result, job placement and matching in these sites have become more employer-driven.**

Across sites, there was more of an effort in the second year to develop relationships with employers and view them as customers who needed Jobs Plus as much as the residents did, determine who was hiring in which positions, and identify residents with appropriate skills for these jobs, compared with the first year of implementation. Likewise, the effort to find jobs that matched the skills and interests of residents increased.

- **Relationships with the local workforce agencies are less robust than envisioned.**

The Jobs Plus Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) mandated that grantees partner with local WDBs or other Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA) agencies. Despite their best efforts, some sites had nonexistent or, at times, tense relationships with their local WDBs. Even in sites that had fair to moderately strong relationships with their local WDBs or WIOA agencies, *the relationships often added little value to the Jobs Plus program*; many Jobs Plus participants could not pass the screening requirements to be eligible for WDB-funded training, which usually involved tests of academic proficiency at a certain grade level using assessment tools such as the Test of Adult Basic Education or Key Train.⁹ Although the 2014 WIOA legislation states, “WIOA adjusts performance expectations at state and local levels based on barriers to employment that people participating in the program face,”¹⁰ WDBs and WIOA agencies’ concerns about meeting performance standards could still have contributed to a lack of involvement with Jobs Plus. Even HUD was not in a good position to try to influence the involvement of the local WDBs with the Jobs Plus programs, because the decentralized nature of the U.S. Department of Labor and state and local workforce agencies made it hard for HUD to apply any leverage at the federal level.

- **Most interactions with residents related to employment were conducted in the Jobs Plus office. The place-based nature of Jobs Plus was seen primarily in interactions that took place in the onsite program office, rather than through informal conversations taking place in the community about work.**

⁹ “Under WIOA, training services may be provided if the American Job Center staff, including partner programs’ staff, determines after conducting an interview, an evaluation, or assessment, and career planning, that the individual: ... Has the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services...” DOL (2017: 5).

¹⁰ DOL (2014).

As noted earlier, because Jobs Plus is a place-based initiative, the designers of the original model hoped it would include opportunities for staff to know the context in which participants live, to know their families and provide them with ongoing assistance, and to have informal interactions at the housing developments. HUD seemed to emphasize the place-based nature of the Jobs Plus model less in the current iteration of the program—for instance, it was not a topic that was central to guidance materials from HUD or in other technical assistance activities such as conferences. As a result, Jobs Plus operated more like a traditional employment program, except that the program office was located onsite. Based on the way staff spoke about their interactions with residents, it appears that the programs may not have capitalized on place as originally envisioned—for example, by case managers seeing less engaged residents outside of the office and encouraging them to come in for an appointment, or by having case managers check in with newly employed residents in the evenings, when most traditional employment programs would be closed. While most interactions between staff and residents occurred by appointment in the Jobs Plus office, sites did report some residents dropping in without appointments, and appointments were easier to attend than appointments at offsite offices.

JPEID Implementation

The JPEID is intended to reduce disincentives to work by capping the amount of earned income included in the rent calculation. Following JPEID enrollment, any increases in earned income—wages, for example—will not result in higher rents for the remainder of the Jobs Plus program.

To receive the financial incentive, Jobs Plus program guidelines require participants to enroll in the JPEID, separate from enrolling in Jobs Plus. Residents could enroll in JPEID without enrolling in Jobs Plus if they want the financial incentive but not the other services. Four sites had residents enroll in the JPEID and Jobs Plus separately, and another four had them enroll in Jobs Plus and the JPEID simultaneously. Administratively, simultaneous enrollment appeared to be less complicated and burdensome than separate enrollment.

Soon after the program was launched, many sites messaged the JPEID as a “rent freeze,” which led to complications when residents increased their unearned income (for example, child support payments), which did result in a rent increase, so their rent really was not literally “frozen.” Jobs Plus programs have refined how they explain the JPEID to other staff members and to the residents of the targeted development. By the end of year 2, several programs eliminated the use of catchy slogans—like “rent freeze”—in favor of more indepth descriptions of how the JPEID operates.

Sites have also worked to improve communication both among Jobs Plus staff and between Jobs Plus and property management staff. The JPEID places additional burdens on property management in the form of tracking enrollment and calculating rents. Where Jobs Plus and property management are either co-located or within the same building, sites report closer coordination between the JPEID and Jobs Plus program services.

- **In Quarter 3, 2017, the percentage of work-able households with earnings disregarded varied from 6 percent to 40 percent across sites. On average, participants who received the JPEID had \$292 in rent disregarded in each month that they qualified for the JPEID; site-specific figures vary from \$245 in Charlotte to \$333 in Chicago.**

The number of eligible (that is, work-able) households that have both enrolled in the JPEID and had disregarded earnings varies significantly across sites. In quarter 3, 2017, Charlotte, Memphis, Roanoke, and Syracuse had the largest proportions of households benefiting from the JPEID, with each having at least one-third of eligible households with disregarded earnings. Two sites have fewer than 10 percent of eligible residents with disregarded earnings. The *average* across all sites is 28 percent of work-able households benefitting from JPEID.

Data on JPEID disregards that participants who have taken advantage of the incentive have saved a significant amount in rent—especially considering that some residents may have their baseline rents set at \$50 or less. As of September 2017, the eight Jobs Plus sites under study had disregarded over \$4 million (\$4,107,078) in rent through the JPEID.

- **Lack of—and at times conflicting—JPEID guidance hampered program performance, although sites appear to have overcome many issues that initially challenged implementation.**

In two instances, HUD guidance on the JPEID had to be reversed. The more significant of these reversals concerned JPEID reimbursement, where HUD’s guidance to shift reimbursements from the grant to the Public Housing Operating subsidy had to be rescinded because of appropriations law principles. This forced sites to re-adjust their grant budgets, and several sites had already spent or obligated some JPEID funds for other purposes, which necessitated further budget revisions.

Data collection for the JPEID has also been a significant burden across sites, as each site was tasked with developing its own data collection and reporting procedures. Although HUD and its technical assistance contractor, Abt Associates, provided quarterly webinars on the JPEID, site staff indicated that they would have preferred more one-on-one technical assistance in developing their JPEID tracking forms.

- **All sites have partnered with local organizations to offer financial empowerment classes, like budgeting and credit counseling. Resident engagement in these services remains low.**

Many sites have integrated financial empowerment services, such as financial literacy workshops and counseling services, with the JPEID, as these services can help residents save rent money that they would have had to pay if not for the JPEID. All sites have developed partnerships to offer these types of services, although the formality of these relationships varies. Additionally, Jobs Plus staff—especially case managers—play significant roles in providing these services. Despite these efforts, residents often appear more interested in employment services—which can provide more

immediate benefits—rather than financial empowerment services that can provide longer-term financial gains.

At the time data collection ended for this evaluation, sites were assessing whether they would be able to offer the JPEID through September 2019, when the Cohort 1 Jobs Plus grants end. Rent incentives in the HUD Jobs Plus effort are funded through each grantee’s budget, and some sites have exceeded their projected JPEID expenditures by a significant margin. As a result, they will either need to reduce services offered, forego JPEID reimbursement, or suspend the JPEID prior to the program’s expected end date. Uncertainty around JPEID expenditures—also driven by conflicting HUD guidance on the JPEID reimbursement—has made it difficult for sites to move forward with planning when to inform residents about the JPEID end date.

Community Support for Work

The Community Support for Work (CSW) component of Jobs Plus aims to strengthen work-supporting relationships within public housing communities so that as many residents as possible are engaged in meaningful work activities. It strives to create an environment where residents share expectations and aspirations for employment, as well as provide complementary mutual support to each other. Despite the language that clearly describes the *goals* of CSW in HUD’s NOFA, expectations for exactly *how* to implement CSW have been less clear. This continued struggle contributed to a challenging dynamic in which most sites are still grappling with how to fully implement and sustain CSW activities. During the study period, all sites began to implement a set of activities, events, and programs, and sites moved with various levels of priority to get a CSW strategy in place.

- **Sites relied on a mix of strategies to advance their CSW goals.**

Five different programmatic strategies were most frequently reported by staff as the core elements of CSW. These included community coaches; Jobs Plus enrollment, recruitment, and information-sharing activities; community events; social support and network building; and bridging to the broader neighborhood and metropolitan area. Most sites implemented a range of these activities, with some sites implementing all strategies while other sites concentrated efforts on the community coaches, enrollment, recruitment and information-sharing activities, and community events.

Most grantees understood the value of the “universal” approach—an orientation where CSW requires the commitment of all staff, residents, and partners—but struggled to implement it. In contrast, staff and resident leaders in Chicago and Charlotte were trained in community-building methods and started to change their approach to resident-led initiatives, reflective of the HUD guidance

that “PHAs should not assume that CSW is solely or even mainly the responsibility of the community coaches.”¹¹

- **The community coach positions remain task-oriented and less about fostering relationships among residents and partners.**

In every rendition of Jobs Plus, sites have recruited, trained, and supervised a small group of residents who encourage their neighbors to use Jobs Plus services and improve their employment situations. These residents, commonly referred to as community coaches or ambassadors, are considered “extension agents of the Jobs-Plus program through their day-to-day interactions with their neighbors in the development, communicating with them about work and training opportunities.”¹² In this replication, most sites supported one to three coaches to connect residents to the Jobs Plus program, to each other, and to job opportunities. As staff explained, however, the coaches needed extensive training and support, most often because this position was the first job a coach may have had in many years. For some sites, the community coach model amounted to a transitional jobs program that provided both on-the-job training and work experience for residents who otherwise faced challenges obtaining employment.

- **Most sites are in the “early” and “emerging” stages of conceptualizing their vision and operationalizing CSW programmatic strategies.**

Grantees vary widely in how they define and implement CSW. The sites in the early stage remain focused on using CSW for enrollment, recruitment, and information-sharing activities and have not implemented activities to foster a sense of community among residents and other stakeholders. Even the sites in the emerging stage, which have evolved more in either their vision of CSW *or* their implementation of a CSW strategy, have not yet institutionalized CSW to the extent that all staff and partners fully understand and support the implementation of CSW. Two sites appear to be entering the executing stage of implementation at the end of the second year of the program. CSW in these sites more closely reflects the model promoted by HUD. These two sites are MTW agencies and devoted considerably more resources to this component.

Overall, in the two sites where CSW was more effectively implemented, it demonstrated promise as a key contributor to strengthening relationships among residents and promoting resident engagement in work activities. Where CSW remained largely focused on outreach and some community events, it appears to have had limited influence on residents’ connections to work activity and to each other. For most sites, however, CSW remains something that happens within the confines of program activities and events, or by specific program actors such as the community coaches. The larger promise of the CSW element of the program remains in its potential to take

¹¹ HUD (2016).

¹² Kato (2004).

root as a *community* strategy expanding networks and messaging in a way that reinforces and advances the initiative’s work goals. Issues like community safety and the size of the developments are also important barriers to the effectiveness of CSW as a *community* strategy.

Gross Costs of Operating Jobs Plus

This study estimated the gross cost of Jobs Plus during the program’s second year of operation, which is as close to a steady-state period for which the data needed for the analysis were available. Gross costs refer to the total outlays to operate Jobs Plus—including resources beyond the Jobs Plus grant.¹³ Gross costs are important for budgeting and planning purposes and for assessing how program resources are distributed among employment-related services, Community Support for Work, other social services, and the JPEID; or for planning purposes as Jobs Plus expands to more PHAs across the country.

Costs are reported per resident, where “resident” refers to the average number of individuals who were eligible for Jobs Plus during the program’s second year. This measure can be useful for PHAs of various sizes to plan and budget for implementing Jobs Plus. It is useful for cross-site comparisons because it adjusts for the size of the PHAs. It is also useful for making comparisons between categories of program expenditures within a site.

- **During Jobs Plus’s second year of operation, the overall cost of the program, including the JPEID, ranged from \$2,291 to \$3,800 per resident in most of the sites. Costs paid by the Jobs Plus grant ranged from \$1,310 to \$2,954 per resident.**

The costs in two sites (Cuyahoga and Boston), where the programs were in considerable flux during the second program year, fell well below this range of costs. Although not entirely comparable, the costs of the original Jobs Plus program are somewhat similar to the costs of the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Program when Cuyahoga and Boston are excluded. The overall costs in the two SIF sites where Jobs Plus was launched earlier in the decade, however, were much less than in the HUD’s Jobs Plus Pilot replication, under \$1,000 during the program’s third year—differences primarily due to the much higher take-up of the JPEID and the more costly employment-related services provided by the HUD version of Jobs Plus.

- **In most sites, more than one-half of the overall program costs were paid for out of the Jobs Plus grant. Many of the developments leveraged enough non-grant investments to cover over 25 percent of overall costs, however, suggesting that funding for Jobs Plus may prompt additional local investment in serving public housing residents.**

¹³ Gross costs are not the same as net costs, which estimate gross costs less costs in the absence of the program. Because this study does not include an impact analysis, it was not possible to calculate net costs.

The Chicago PHA, an MTW site, was able to tap into funds that it had from other internal sources. Three other sites drew considerably on non-PHA resources available in their communities to provide services. Most of the sites, however, fund most of the employment-related services they provide out of their Jobs Plus grant, and all the sites, except Chicago, mainly fund CSW out of their grant. (Chicago, also an MTW site, did use a substantial portion of its Jobs Plus grant on CSW but also leveraged many other internal and external resources for CSW.) Indeed, Memphis and Cuyahoga relied almost entirely on their Jobs Plus grants for funding all the services they provide.

- **The provision of employment-related services generally accounted for one-fourth to one-half of the cost of Jobs Plus. The JPEID accounted for around one-third of Jobs Plus’s overall costs and considerably less in some sites.**

A relatively small portion of the overall costs in most of the sites (around 10 percent or less) resulted from providing Community Support for Work and administering the program (15 percent or less of overall expenditures). Relative to the other sites, Chicago and Charlotte spent a smaller share of their overall costs (less than one-fourth) on employment-related services. Chicago invested more heavily than the other sites in non-employment services (for example, clinical and wellness services, opportunities for youth, and support services for seniors). Compared with the other sites, Charlotte expended a considerable proportion of its Jobs Plus resources on CSW, and to a somewhat lesser extent, so did Chicago. Interestingly, except for Boston and Cuyahoga, the two sites in considerable flux, the absolute cost per resident resulting from the JPEID was similar across the sites during the second program year—about \$800 to \$1,000 dollars per resident.

Recommendations

This report documents many of the experiences and issues that arise in early stages of implementing complex programs. The findings also suggest several recommendations for a more robust implementation of Jobs Plus. Selected recommendations are highlighted here for policy and practice.

Employment Services

- **Strengthen delivery of employment services by developing targeted engagement strategies for the unemployed or underemployed, formalizing case management (and building staff capacity), and elevating the focus on employment retention and advancement.** Staff should be more proactive with inactive participants and not wait to be approached for services. Although Jobs Plus is more than a “by appointment” program, setting formal contact expectations would allow staff follow-up points after their initial meetings with clients. More structured case management would also help staff to follow up with residents to understand if additional support is necessary for those who have started working and whether those not yet working would benefit from job search assistance or supports. Also, staying in touch would allow staff to assess whether residents, once employed, faced challenges with employment retention or had opportunities for advancement and could benefit from additional assistance.

- **Strengthen ties with employers.** The job developers face considerable challenges finding job opportunities for residents with significant employment barriers and for breaking the preferential hiring practices of large employers. They may want to develop relationships with smaller employers, employers who have hired Jobs Plus participants, Jobs Plus service partners, and public agencies that may be looking to hire entry-level staff. They should consider these options while also trying to identify employment opportunities at larger employers. Given the time-limited nature of the Jobs Plus grants, it would be beneficial for programs to hire job developers earlier to begin building employer relations.
- **Strengthen engagement with the WDB and other workforce agencies.** Stronger coordination with the WDB and workforce agencies could help ensure that Jobs Plus participants can take advantage of the services available through them. This would require Jobs Plus staff to be more informed about the operations of and eligibility requirements for programs offered through these agencies and to have more direct lines of communication with their counterparts in respective organizations. It could also require working with residents to boost the skills they need to pass assessments that would enable them to participate in WDB-funded training programs. HUD should also look for ways to work with the Department of Labor to tighten the coordination between the local WDBs and Jobs Plus programs. The Jobs Plus sites should also look for opportunities to partner with other agencies that can provide a similar set of services, including, perhaps, the employment and training units of other public benefits programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

JPEID

- **Have accurate, clear, and consistent messaging.** Some phrases that may be easy to understand—like “rent freeze”—fail to accurately communicate how rent incentives operate and can hinder staff’s ability to build trust when participants feel that a promised benefit has been retracted.
- **Ensure tight coordination with property management staff.** Property managers play an important role in recruiting Jobs Plus participants. Program staff recommends early involvement of property management in the development of the local Jobs Plus program.
- **Make data systems and tracking tools available to sites by program launch.** To enable grantees to offer JPEID early in program implementation, HUD should provide the sites with data collection and tracking systems at the start of the program.
- **Allow programs more flexibility in JPEID enrollment processes.** Individual sites might be allowed to choose the method of enrollment from several options, including concurrent enrollment, such that no separate enrollment is necessary, or a separate enrollment process, as required in the program studied.

- **Prepare families for the end of the JPEID benefit.** Many sites have used financial empowerment classes to help prepare participants for the impending sharp rent increase they will experience when HUD’s Jobs Plus program ends. As part of thinking through program sustainability, as discussed later, HUD might consider whether a rent incentive could be folded into ongoing programs or rent policy and how to phase it out over time, which would allow families to gradually adjust to paying higher rents.
- **Reconsider the source of JPEID reimbursements.** Consider finding ways to separate the JPEID funding from the grant budget—for example, by reimbursing it from the Public Housing Operations Fund, like the standard Earned Income Disregard. This would protect service delivery resources but would require statutory change.

Community Support for Work

- **Sites need concrete direction from HUD about how to operationalize CSW.** Abstract conceptions and mixed messages about what counts as CSW impeded its implementation across sites. HUD could provide sites with clearer guidance about CSW operational activities, examples of successful strategies, and examples of how CSW strategies may vary with the stage of program implementation. Greater use of grantee peer-to-peer networking might benefit those who face common challenges with CSW or who are in similar implementation stages and could benefit from shared learning in real time.
- **CSW activities could include community building and supporting resident network-building.** CSW remains an effective strategy to promote program recruitment and share information about Jobs Plus services. Its power for influencing residents’ connections to work activity and to each other has remained relatively untapped. HUD and grantees might benefit from developing the capacity to “foster community and encourage residents to help other residents.”¹⁴
- **Jobs Plus staff, partners, and residents share responsibility for CSW.** Staff across different roles, including case managers, job developers, and property managers, need to share the responsibility of being part of sites’ CSW planning and implementation strategy. Even sites that designated specific staff members, such as coaches, to implement CSW should involve other stakeholders in the community to supplement CSW efforts.
- **Resident-led efforts require intentionality on the part of the staff.** Residents benefit when staff know how to support ongoing, meaningful opportunities for residents to share in the planning and facilitating of community change efforts, as well as develop trust that leads to sustained mutual support. Sites can also build on organic community support for work that may emerge among residents. Some sites reported that residents who started

¹⁴ HUD (2016).

jobs sometimes came back to announce to other residents involved in Jobs Plus activities that their employer was hiring. This kind of reporting back about new job experiences and other job opportunities by newly employed residents could be encouraged and expanded.

Integration of Components and Activities

- **Implement the three program components (employment services, JPEID, and CSW) so they are both complementary and interdependent.** Challenges in one area of Jobs Plus implementation could have “ripple” effects through other areas of work. For example, if the JPEID is not viable, CSW cannot act as a way of publicizing the availability of new rent rules to make work pay. If Jobs Plus cannot connect residents to higher-wage jobs or training opportunities related to career pathways, then working residents may not be interested in hearing about Jobs Plus through CSW activities—or participating in the program’s employment services. Although sites did take advantage of the potentially complementary strategies, these connections can be more vigorous and intentional.

Technical Assistance

- **Offer more intense upfront technical assistance.** A 4-year grant does not allow sites much time to learn and quickly ramp up a complex program. Timely and structured technical assistance aimed at the building blocks of the program would enable sites to launch their programs with a clearer understanding of the model and anticipate the types of implementation challenges they might face.
- **Identify best practices and provide concrete examples of success.** Sites’ technical assistance needs can vary. HUD could serve as a kind of “clearinghouse” of best practices and maintain a repository of concrete examples and resources for strengthening the service components. This repository could also include concrete examples of some positive ways in which each of the components can be mutually supporting and how strategies can capitalize on place.
- **Provide more uniform HUD grant management and technical assistance.** The HUD grant managers varied considerably in approach. It would help if all grant managers have the same understanding of overall Jobs Plus goals and the philosophy and theory of change for the program. The sites would also benefit if grant managers were held accountable for having regular, constructive communication with grantees.

Program Sustainability

As shown in this study, sites were making progress over time in getting all the components in place, with some doing better than others. These findings suggest the importance of supporting continuous improvement. Equally important is the issue of sustainability, especially in the context of a grant program that caused sites to shift focus on winding down halfway through the grant.

HUD provided 4-year, non-renewable grants to the sites to operate Jobs Plus. HUD's own thinking at the time of the launch, and more recently, was to provide one-time grants that would jump-start partnerships to enable the sites to draw on local resources and sustain elements of the program after federal funding ends. HUD recognized that it would be impossible for the PHAs to preserve the JPEID without federal funding and thus understood that sites would be able to preserve less than the whole model.

Sustainability memos that the Jobs Plus programs were asked to prepare for HUD, along with interviews conducted with program staff, provide some insights into sites' initial thinking about how they might be able to continue to operate Jobs Plus in the future. Their early thinking suggests the following.

- Identifying resources to continue case management and support services could prove to be difficult; instead, most sites are hoping to leverage existing resources from other programs, the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program, for example, for case management and support services.¹⁵
- To continue some type of rent-based work incentive, most sites expect that they will use other HUD instruments such as the FSS program's escrow savings account feature, if feasible.
- The sites' plans to preserve CSW efforts are less defined.

How these plans play out going forward—and whether sites sustain any aspect of the program—remains to be seen. The issue of time-limited funding, however, raises questions about the most feasible way to sustain Jobs Plus as an ongoing national policy and program. With fixed federal funding, it might be worth funding sites for somewhat longer periods to stabilize their programs and secure local sustainability funding; this way, local stakeholders would be more deeply invested in maintaining the program after federal funding ends. Given the circumstantial evidence from the original demonstration that rent incentives may have played a key role in generating the program impacts, it may be possible for federal rent policy to include features that provide an incentive to work (such as the triennial recertification feature being tested in HUD's Rent Reform demonstration for Moving to Work sites).¹⁶ With a strong financial incentive folded into rent policy, housing agencies, local workforce agencies and service providers, and funders may be able to come together to support the other core components of Jobs Plus and create sustainable programs. Collaboration in the original Jobs Plus demonstration, which involved mandatory partners, was an effort to build that type of sustainability on the non-rent incentive components of the model.

¹⁵ The FSS program, also funded by HUD, offers case management services and a long-term escrow account to help families increase their earnings and make progress toward self-sufficiency.

¹⁶ See Riccio, Deitch, and Verma (2017).

Using program data, this report documents the extent to which residents were exposed to Jobs Plus, participated in program services, and earned the rent incentive. These data, however, cannot speak to questions about the program's effects on raising employment or earnings. Toward that end, HUD has commissioned a second study, being led by MDRC, to conduct an impact assessment of its Jobs Plus scale-up effort. This study will examine the impact of Jobs Plus on households' earnings and employment outcomes in the first 24 sites to receive HUD funding to implement Jobs Plus—including the nine in the Jobs Plus implementation study. Initial employment and earnings impacts, covering 1 to 2 years of follow-up, will become available in 2019.

Based on the experiences of HUD's Jobs Plus Pilot programs, and the eventual findings on the program's impacts, HUD and Congress will need to make decisions about whether this program becomes a part of the HUD's portfolio of efforts to encourage and support employment leading to eventual economic mobility of public housing residents. Presumably, this report and the upcoming impact evaluation findings will provide the information to help inform these choices.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Households receiving federal rental subsidies face major impediments to self-sufficiency, including poor work histories, limited education, and substantial personal and other challenges. To help address the issues of low-wage work and high levels of unemployment in public housing developments, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Rockefeller Foundation, and MDRC conceived Jobs Plus (originally “Jobs-Plus”) in the mid-1990s. The model encourages economic mobility by providing employment-related services, offering rent-based work incentives—so that earnings increases are not triggers for increasing rent—and building a community context that supports work.

Following the original demonstration, which operated from 1998 to 2003, New York City replicated Jobs Plus, initially at a public housing development in East Harlem (Jefferson Houses), and later in the Bronx as part of a Social Innovation Fund (SIF) initiative that also included San Antonio. New York City has since expanded the program to 26 developments. In 2015, Jobs Plus became part of federal housing policy when Congress made available approximately \$24 million for the Jobs Plus Pilot Program. Through grants, these resources were meant to develop locally-based approaches to increase earnings and advance employment outcomes such as work readiness, employer linkages, job placement and counseling, educational advancement, and financial counseling for their public housing families. Since it was first launched, each replication of Jobs Plus has made slight modifications to the original model to incorporate lessons learned and adapt to new contexts.

To date, HUD has awarded more than \$76 million to 31 public housing agencies (PHAs) to operate the model as part of its Jobs Plus Pilot Program.¹⁷ This report highlights the early experiences of the first nine grantees awarded Jobs Plus grants, beginning in 2015, and focuses on their implementation experiences about midway through the 4-year grant. The early implementation experiences of these grantees can be instructive to current and future housing agencies about what it takes to learn, launch, and operate this program model. The original demonstration (1998–2003), which was the subject of a rigorous evaluation, found that program operators faced many daunting implementation challenges, and only the Jobs Plus developments that fully implemented all the components—that is, they operated programs of reasonable quality and offered the “full package” of

¹⁷See Appendix A for a list of the sites funded and their respective grant amounts.

Jobs-Plus employment services, rent-based work incentives, and Community Support for Work (CSW)—saw the program boost residents’ annual earnings.¹⁸

This report is the second of two reports. The first report, released in 2017, focused on the startup phase, from April 2015 to October 2016, for the first nine sites, when their programs had been in operation for roughly 1 year.¹⁹ That report focused on their early experiences launching Jobs Plus and the progress made by getting staff in place, building partnerships, delivering services, and structuring the program on the ground. This second report focuses on eight of those nine programs (Houston was unable to participate in the field research activities because of the disruption caused by Hurricane Harvey²⁰), and examines how they evolved over time, the types of operational issues that continued to be daunting or challenging, the strategies devised to address them, resident participation levels, and the technical assistance and guidance sites receive to implement this complex initiative. In addition, this report also begins to look at sites’ early thinking about program sustainability as they approach the end of their 4-year, non-renewable Jobs Plus grants. HUD provided one-time funding for each grantee, which meant that they would have to decide what, if any, aspects of the program they could make available after the federal funding ended. These topics and more are discussed in the body of this report.

The Origins and Evolution of the Jobs Plus Model

Jobs Plus was designed to (1) help people living in public housing increase their employment and earnings; (2) help foster the emergence of a broader mix of incomes within those places; and (3) improve residents’ quality of life as a result of the gains in employment and earnings.²¹ In the two decades since it was first designed and tested, Jobs Plus has become one of HUD’s main strategies for addressing the economic mobility needs of residents within public housing communities. As described later, through its replication and evolution, Jobs Plus is structured around a framework with core components and operational principles, which are meant to work together to improve the economic circumstances of public housing residents and help make their housing developments better places to live (Figure 1.1 illustrates the scale-up of the program). Varying forms of evaluation have accompanied each replication of Jobs Plus, providing important contexts for observations and lessons emerging from the program’s most recent scale-up efforts.

¹⁸ See Bloom, Riccio, and Verma (2005) for a detailed description of the original Jobs-Plus model and its results based on a random assignment evaluation. Longer-term results are available in Riccio (2010). For more publications on Jobs Plus, see <http://www.mdrc.org/project/jobs-plus-community-revitalization-initiative-public-housing-families#related-content>.

¹⁹ See Tessler et al. (2017) for information on sites’ early implementation experiences.

²⁰ See Tessler et al. (2017) for information on Houston’s early implementation experiences.

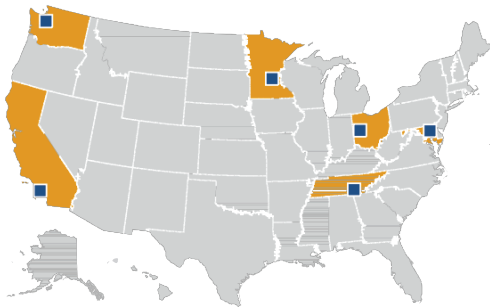
²¹ Throughout this report, descriptions of the original model draw on several previously published reports, including: Riccio (1998); Kato and Riccio (2001), Bloom, Riccio, and Verma (2005), Blank and Wharton-Fields (2008), and Greenberg et al. (2015).

Figure 1.1 | The Evolution of Jobs Plus

1990s

PROGRAM DEVELOPED

Jobs Plus was developed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), The Rockefeller Foundation, other private funders and family foundations, and MDRC to address the growing concentration of joblessness, underemployment, and poverty in public housing communities.



1998–2006

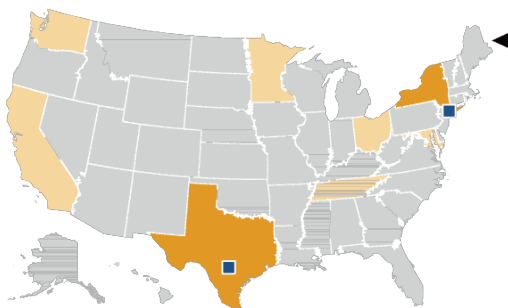
TESTED IN SIX CITIES

An MDRC study of six public housing authorities, located in different housing and labor markets, found that nondisabled and working-age residents in the three developments that fully adopted Jobs Plus earned 16 percent more than residents in comparison developments in the same cities.

2009

REPLICATED IN EAST HARLEM

Because of its success, New York City established the nation's first replication of Jobs-Plus in East Harlem.



2011

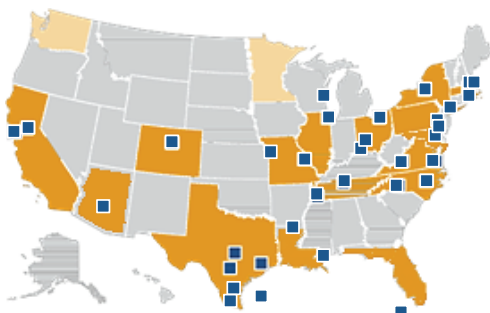
REPLICATED IN TWO MORE CITIES

The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City and NYC's Center for Economic Opportunity used Social Innovation Fund money to replicate Jobs Plus in the Bronx and San Antonio. MDRC conducted an implementation study that offered analyses of program experiences and costs.

2013

EXPANDED IN NEW YORK CITY

The city of New York announced a \$24 million investment in Jobs Plus, increasing the program's reach into 26 of the city's public housing communities.



2015-2018

HUD LAUNCHES NATIONWIDE REPLICATION

HUD has selected 31 housing authorities across the country for an expansion of Jobs Plus.

The Original Model

To help improve the well-being of residents of some of the poorest communities in the country, the designers of Jobs Plus conceived of a broad, multi-component intervention.

1. **Employment-related services and activities.** This component calls for employment-related services and activities to help residents secure and retain employment, including job search assistance, education programs, vocational training, and support services such as childcare and transportation assistance. Program services are provided on site at a job center in the targeted housing development, whereas other employment-related services are made available through referrals to providers in the community.
2. **Rent-based financial incentives to help “make work pay.”** By reducing the extent to which higher earnings from work resulted in rent increases, which could discourage work, the rent-based incentive offered by Jobs Plus was designed to enable families to see a higher net financial return from work. In its original form, Jobs Plus either offered a flat rent—one that did not rise with household income, but had staged increases over time—or an income-based rent set lower than the usual 30 percent of income stipulated by HUD.²² To further encourage steady employment, several sites allowed residents to earn credits toward a free month’s rent by staying employed for a certain duration or to have some of their rent diverted into a special savings account that they could later redeem.
3. **Community Support for Work (CSW).** Inspired by a growing recognition of the importance of social networks and social capital, this component sought to strengthen social ties and activities among residents to support their job preparation and work efforts. Examples of mutual support include everything from sharing information about available jobs, to carpooling to work, to watching after each other’s children during different job shifts. Another function of the CSW component was to propagate the message that “work pays” and that “employment goals are attainable”—thereby creating an environment where the theme of work was more pervasive than it had been previously. CSW typically involves recruiting, training, and supervising a small group of residents (referred to as community coaches) who encourage their neighbors to use Jobs Plus services and to try to improve their employment situations.

Jobs Plus brings these three mutually reinforcing components together under one comprehensive initiative to boost employment levels for public housing residents, support those who are already working, and help those who become employed to stay employed and advance.

²² The demonstration included safety-net provisions for residents who lost jobs (for example, the option for residents to revert from a Jobs Plus flat rent to the normal public housing income-based rent if they could no longer afford the flat rent). See Blank and Wharton-Fields (2008) for details.

To more fully appreciate what makes Jobs Plus distinctive from other employment initiatives, however, a few other key features of the model are worth noting. To transform the communities in which Jobs Plus was implemented, the core components were implemented at *saturation levels*—that is, not just targeted toward residents who enroll in the program, but to all working-age residents living in the development. Technically, the concept of reaching saturation does not necessarily mean that all eligible residents were to formally enroll in the program’s employment services. Rather, residents could also be exposed to—or benefit from—a multi-pronged initiative, such as through the rent incentives the PHAs administered or by CSW activities, which might increase their awareness of job opportunities, encourage them to act on their interest in working, and, possibly, get help from neighbors in ways that can support their efforts to work. The saturation strategy, thus, allowed programs to create broad awareness of—and make available—services, incentives, and supports through Jobs Plus.

Further, Jobs Plus services were located and offered at the housing development, so participants could reap the benefits of readily accessible on-site services. This dimension of Jobs Plus also offered opportunities for staff to know the context in which participants live, know their families, and have informal interactions at the housing developments. Additionally, being situated on-site allowed Jobs Plus to bring a vast array of services—and service providers—closer to the community and provide supports and services to residents in an ongoing way, even after they found work.

To undertake and sustain such a complex, place-based initiative, Jobs Plus required sites to form local *collaboratives*—an explicit recognition on the part of the designers that no single entity could achieve the goals of combating joblessness and poverty in these communities, and that bringing together a broad group of stakeholders could build stronger and better funded programs that might be more likely to be sustained after the demonstration ends. Thus, these collaboratives included the PHAs, resident representatives, welfare agencies, and workforce development agencies, and were seen as a way to promote governance, accountability, and support, and to operate this comprehensive initiative. In this way, collaboration became another important cornerstone of this model, and one that allowed a broad range of stakeholders to come together in pursuit of common goals.

The original Jobs Plus initiative operated in six developments from 1998 to 2003. MDRC served as the technical assistance provider and assisted them in working through numerous design choices and decisions.²³ Although program offices opened their doors soon after the demonstration was

²³ The six cities in the original Jobs-Plus demonstration were Baltimore, Maryland; Chattanooga, Tennessee; Dayton, Ohio; Los Angeles, California; Seattle, Washington; and St. Paul, Minnesota. These sites were chosen through a national competition to participate in the demonstration. For the evaluation, the six public housing developments in

launched in 1998, it was approximately 2 more years (longer than expected) before Jobs Plus evolved into a more mature intervention. Several reports document the implementation experiences of these sites, but one important finding from the early evaluation is that in the three sites where the model was fully implemented,²⁴ residents earned 16 percent more per year than residents in comparison developments, an effect that endured for the 7 years of follow up.²⁵ These results showed that it was feasible to operate the Jobs Plus model, and that, under certain circumstances, it produced positive impacts for residents of these communities.

Initial Replication Efforts

In 2009, nearly a decade after the original demonstration ended, New York City replicated Jobs Plus in Jefferson Houses. The effort laid the groundwork for the SIF replication when the Jobs Plus framework was undertaken in two other locations.²⁶ In 2011, the San Antonio Housing Authority (SAHA), in Texas, and BronxWorks, a community organization in New York City, received 5-year grants to implement Jobs Plus.

As part of bringing the Jobs Plus framework to their communities, the program operators modified certain ways in which aspects of the model were implemented—the rent incentive, for example—while keeping intact the inspiration, theory, and rationale that shape this program. In the original demonstration, housing authorities had the ability to develop a variety of rent incentives, because they were all Moving to Work (MTW) sites with the authority to do so.²⁷ In the SIF Jobs Plus, BronxWorks was only able to use a preexisting HUD benefit known as the Earned Income Disregard (EID), which was limited in its ability to serve as an effective rent incentive.²⁸ Conversely, SAHA had MTW status and, in response to the limitations of the EID, developed a modified EID that, among other things, extended the benefit for a longer period.

the six cities were chosen randomly and then were compared with similar developments, in the same cities, that did not participate in the program.

²⁴ Four of the six original Jobs Plus sites implemented programs of reasonable quality. In three of those four sites—Dayton, Los Angeles, and St. Paul—Jobs Plus had a positive effect on earnings. The fourth site, Seattle, also experienced earnings effects, but they disappeared when a federal HOPE VI renovation relocated residents. See Bloom, Riccio, and Verma (2005) for more on the Original Jobs Plus Demonstration.

²⁵ The 7 years included 4 years of full-program operations, which included a 2-year rollout period, plus a 3-year post-program period.

²⁶ The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, along with the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity, spearheaded this effort.

²⁷ Moving to Work is a demonstration for PHAs that, among other things, gives PHAs exemptions from many existing public housing and voucher rules and more flexibility with the use of federal funds; among the goals is allowing for the PHAs to design and test innovative strategies to help residents find employment and become self-sufficient.

²⁸ The EID enables eligible public housing residents to receive a disregard of new wages from their rent calculations. The EID is limited to 2 years and decreases in value after the first year.

This SIF experience resulted in important operational and implementation lessons but demonstrated that, outside the context of a pilot, other operators, working within their own unique settings, could implement the Jobs Plus framework, even if in modified form.²⁹ As in the original demonstration, the providers found that the three components of Jobs Plus—and especially their integration and coordination with each other—were sometimes difficult to manage in practice. Both providers also generally placed residents in low-wage work and struggled to find ways of helping residents who were already employed. They also saw low receipt of rent-based financial incentives, but these incentives were hard to implement and were also not as flexible as the incentives in the original Jobs Plus demonstration.

In 2013, New York City’s Human Resources Administration launched nine additional Jobs Plus programs across the city. These programs are serving 26 New York City Housing Authority developments and are being funded mostly out of the city’s budget with tax dollars. This city’s investment of about \$24 million acknowledges the continued need for comprehensive employment services and supports for public housing residents.³⁰

HUD’s Scale-Up of Jobs Plus

As the program was scaling up in New York City, HUD, in 2014, issued a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) announcing the availability of \$24 million for the Jobs Plus Pilot Program “to develop locally-based approaches to increase earnings and advance employment outcomes for Public Housing residents.”³¹ Targeting the initiative at residents between the ages of 18 and 64, HUD also identified the types of developments that would be eligible for Jobs Plus grants: developments that served at least 250 households (excluding elderly-only households); that demonstrated high levels of unemployment (at least 50 percent of the eligible households did not include wage earnings); and, because of the place-based nature of the program, and to ease access for residents and staff, the units had to be within a quarter-mile radius of each other (this disqualified scattered sites that did not meet the required radius).³²

Keeping with the original demonstration, the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Program (also referred to in this report as the HUD Jobs Plus replication or HUD’s version of Jobs Plus) envisioned a place-based, saturation initiative, with a three-pronged strategy—employment services, rent incentives, and CSW—to bolster residents’ economic mobility efforts. Although local providers could shape the

²⁹ Greenberg et al. (2015).

³⁰ See New York City Housing Authority (2017) for more. In 2017, NYCHA was awarded a HUD Jobs Plus grant.

³¹All references in this report to the “Jobs Plus NOFA” or the “NOFA” refer to the 2014 NOFA for the first nine sites funded to operate this program (HUD, 2014).

³² Some of the eligibility criteria, related to development size, for example, changed for subsequent cohorts of sites funded to operate Jobs Plus.

scope of three components and how they would be delivered, HUD's funding announcement set some new expectations.

- The rent-based financial incentive, or the Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID), would allow a total (or 100 percent) disregard of incremental earned income from rent calculations for the entire period of the Jobs Plus grant, and all working-age residents in the Jobs Plus development would be eligible to earn this incentive. Further, all Jobs Plus sites would be required to implement the same type of rent incentive.
- Another departure from the original demonstration was the role of the mandatory collaborative and its governance function, described earlier in this section. Consistent with the spirit of collaboration, however, and acknowledging its importance for a comprehensive initiative, HUD required PHAs to establish formal service delivery partnership agreements with the local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) and American Job Centers (or One-Stop Career Centers) and encouraged partnerships with other key social service agencies within the community.³³ These partnerships could include both informal and contractual arrangements to support the programs within their respective communities, but the governance of the Jobs Plus program was largely left to the discretion of the lead grantee, which was the PHA in the case of the sites in this evaluation.

HUD selected its first cohort of Jobs Plus Pilot Program grantees in April 2015 (see Figure 1.2), which are the subject of this report. The nine PHAs (or sites) include: Boston, Massachusetts; Charlotte, North Carolina; Chicago, Illinois; Cuyahoga, Ohio³⁴; Houston, Texas; Memphis, Tennessee; Roanoke, Virginia; St. Louis, Missouri; and Syracuse, New York. Criteria of interest that HUD identified in the NOFA included strong ties to community organizations, local employers, foundations, and citywide workforce agencies; local referral networks with community partners; streamlined and tailored hiring processes for local employers based on their needs and open positions; and experience running adult education programs, lease-compliance programs, and other workforce and economic self-sufficiency programs to meet the needs of public housing residents.³⁵ PHAs were chosen because their proposals scored highest with these criteria. As discussed in the next chapter, these sites represent a wide diversity in terms of size, site demographics, location, and other program features, offering an opportunity to understand the program's implementation experiences against different backdrops. Two of the sites, Charlotte and Chicago, were MTW sites, a designation that provides them more flexibility with how they can use their federal funds.

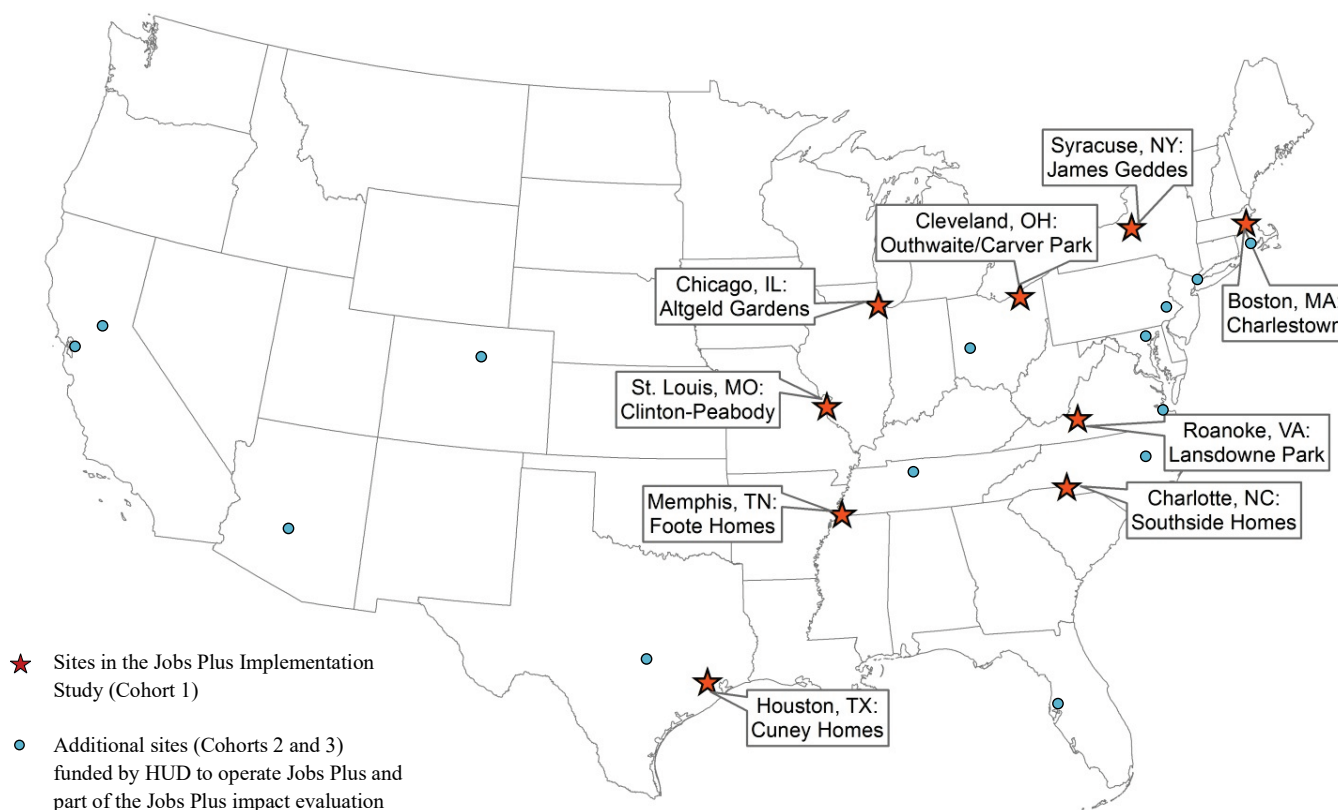
³³ Formerly known as Workforce Investment Board (WIB), Workforce Development Board (WDB) is the new name given to the governing body under the Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA).

³⁴ The Cuyahoga PHA serves the Cleveland metropolitan area.

³⁵ HUD (2014).

Each site was awarded 4-year, non-renewable grants, for the period from April 2015 to March 2019. Later sections of this report discuss HUD’s thinking for proceeding with a time-limited funding approach and how sites are beginning to think about the post-Jobs Plus phase.

Figure 1.2 | Public Housing Agencies and Developments in HUD’s Jobs Plus Pilot Program Implementation and Impact Evaluation



The Broad Goals of the Evaluation

Alongside the scale-up of Jobs Plus, in 2015, HUD commissioned an implementation study of its replication effort.³⁶ The goal of this study is to document the start-up of the Jobs Plus Pilot Program, its early outcomes, and its costs through a comprehensive process study that examines the experiences of all the sites in the first cohort to be across all nine developments. As in any replication effort, a

³⁶ The MDRC-led evaluation team includes the Center for Urban and Regional Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities at Case Western Reserve University.

basic question of interest is to understand how the Jobs Plus framework is operationalized and implemented in new settings to help public housing residents make progress toward economic self-sufficiency. Thus, this study explores how grantees structure their programs and implement the core components of the model—and what, if any, additional adaptations they make to integrate the model into their communities. Within the context of a place-based initiative, the evaluation also explores how sites attempt to saturate the developments with messages and services related to work and how residents respond to or participate in the program. Given the central role of collaboration, the evaluation looks at the types of partnerships assembled and how they are leveraged to support the goals of the initiative. The operational and implementation challenges, and the strategies devised in response, are also examined to understand how programs mature over time. Finally, the evaluation looks at the costs of implementing Jobs Plus and how the sites and HUD are thinking about program sustainability, particularly considering time-limited and non-renewable 4-year grants.

The process study focuses on the implementation experiences of the first nine Jobs Plus Pilot Program grantees and lays the groundwork for future assessments of the program.³⁷ Questions about the replication effort's effectiveness in boosting employment and earnings of residents in Jobs Plus developments, however, are beyond the scope of the process study. Such questions will be examined as part of a Jobs Plus Outcome evaluation, a separate HUD-funded evaluation that will determine whether Jobs Plus is effective in the long run, and when the model is widely replicated around the country. The outcomes evaluation, discussed in more detail later in the report, will assess the effects of Jobs Plus on residents' employment and earnings outcomes in the 24 sites that received HUD funding in 2014, 2015, and 2016 to replicate the program. The same study will also assess the longer-term (18 to 20 years, and possibly longer) earnings gains of the original Jobs Plus demonstration and whether the gains in residents' earnings from the original Jobs Plus demonstration translate into long-term improvements in their children's employment and earnings. The observations and lessons from the process study of the first nine sites can inform efforts in the subsequent cohorts and inform the analysis and findings of the outcomes study.

The Jobs Plus process evaluation uses a mixed-methods approach, drawing on qualitative and quantitative data. As in any replication effort, a basic question of interest is to understand how the Jobs Plus framework is operationalized and implemented in new settings. Thus, this study explores how grantees structure their programs and implement the core components of the model—and what, if any, additional adaptations they make to integrate the model into their communities. Within the context of the place-based nature of the initiative, the evaluation also explores how sites attempt to saturate the developments with messages and services related to work, and how residents respond to or participate in the program. Given the central role of collaboration, the evaluation looks at the types of partnerships assembled and how they are leveraged to support the

³⁷ Additional cohorts of grantees selected to operate Jobs Plus are not part of the implementation evaluation.

goals of the initiative. The operational and implementation challenges, and the strategies devised in response, are also examined to understand how programs mature over time. Finally, the evaluation looks at the costs of implementing Jobs Plus and how the sites and HUD are thinking about program sustainability, particularly considering time-limited and non-renewable 4-year grants.

An interim report, released in 2017, focused on the early roll-out experiences of the nine sites, highlighting their early start-up experiences. That report showed that in the first 18-month period, all sites in the evaluation had begun implementing the core components of the Jobs Plus model. They had begun developing partnerships, tapped into existing networks, sought new partners, and structured both formal and informal agreements. Given the program's focus on employment, most sites had also developed partnerships with their local WDBs and education, training, and support services organizations but did not have in place strong employer connections. The sites were mainly offering general pre-employment services that were not especially tailored to meet the specific needs and skills of individual participants. Given that participants were focused on finding work, staff were also challenged to engage and prepare them for career-path jobs. The JPEID appeared to be effective in piquing resident interest in Jobs Plus and getting them connected to program services. Many sites found it challenging to implement this component, however. Grantees have also launched various types of discrete CSW activities, but most expressed a need for more clarity about what counts as CSW. Across the board, program staff voiced the need for more frequent and concrete guidance and clearer program standards to guide their implementation of Jobs Plus.

This final deliverable reports on the evaluation period, from mid-2015 to early 2018. It is informed by a range of data sources: two rounds of site visits, which include indepth interviews with key PHA and program staff and observations of practice; case studies in three sites; interviews with HUD staff and HUD's selected technical assistance provider; quarterly program monitoring data or other memos prepared for HUD by the sites;³⁸ observations of standing site check-ins with HUD; and program expenditures data. The first round of site visits was conducted in the fall of 2016, and the second round of site visits were conducted between October and December 2017, a little over 2 years after these grantees began to operate Jobs Plus.

Structure of this Report

This report unfolds in a set of eight chapters. Chapter 2 describes the nine sites in this evaluation, their staffing strategies, the types of informal and formal partnerships created, and the technical assistance resources available to the sites operating Jobs Plus. Chapters 3 to 5 detail the

³⁸ The Jobs Plus grantees submit quarterly reports to HUD by drawing on data from their property management and case management information systems, their accounting systems, and their Public and Indian Housing Information Center data systems. The data drawn from these reports are not fully fact-checked by HUD, and therefore, are used selectively throughout this report.

implementation experiences for each of the core components of Jobs Plus: employment services, financial incentives to promote work, and Community Support for Work. These chapters also include recommendations for practice. Chapter 6 turns to a discussion of program costs. Chapter 7 examines how sites are envisioning the post-Jobs Plus funding period and the sustainability planning effort they are engaged in with HUD. Chapter 8 summarizes key lessons and recommendations from across various facets of program implementation.

Chapter 2

Sites, Program Structures, and Partnerships

Because Jobs Plus is a place-based initiative, the characteristics of the developments and their surrounding communities are important backdrops with which to view how each site implemented the Jobs Plus program. The sites were located in large, midsize, and small cities with varying labor markets, housing markets, and social conditions, providing an opportunity to evaluate how Jobs Plus was encountered in a variety of contexts. Additionally, the sites themselves ranged in size and residential mobility rates, each presenting its own challenges to implementation of the program. The Jobs Plus sites were given a fair amount of flexibility in the design and structure of their program operations, in part to enable them to respond to their varying local contexts. This chapter describes the sites and their local communities, the staffing and partnership structures they put in place to operate their programs, and the technical assistance that was available to help them to implement the Jobs Plus model.

Local Context and Variation of Jobs Plus Sites

Site and Community Characteristics

Table 2.1 highlights selected characteristics of the sites at the start of the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot replication in 2015.³⁹ It shows site demographics, development features, and the settings in which the sites are located. Households in all but two sites are predominantly non-Hispanic Black. Boston and Syracuse include a sizable Hispanic population. All but two sites are in neighborhoods experiencing extreme poverty rates.⁴⁰ The Cuyahoga development, for example, is in neighborhoods with 73- and 77-percent poverty rates⁴¹, whereas Syracuse is at 65 percent. Residents in these developments may face particularly high barriers to employment. In contrast, the Boston site is in a neighborhood with a lower poverty rate (29 percent) among the sites in the evaluation. In seven

³⁹ Houston was unable to participate in the second round of field research activities because of the disruption caused by Hurricane Harvey and is thus not included in this analysis.

⁴⁰ Place-based approaches to urban policy—such as the Jobs Plus Pilot Program—have been described as responding to the concentrated economic distress faced by residentially segregated neighborhoods by coordinating community stakeholders to design and implement a program with a targeted awareness of community resources, characteristics, and needs (Price, 2011).

⁴¹ Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority met the criteria for combining the Outhwaite and Carver Park developments. This combined site is referred to throughout the report as Cuyahoga.

of the study sites, wage income was the main source of income for fewer than one-third of residents. The average annual household income in these sites ranged from \$6,206 at the Outhwaite development in Cuyahoga to about \$15,579 in Boston. The sites are also located in diverse housing markets. The Boston site, for example, is in a major metropolitan area with a relatively tight housing market—rents are high, and vacancy rates are low (not shown).⁴² These local conditions are part of the context behind the Boston Jobs Plus program’s focus on training and skill-building, as described later in this report. Likewise, the other sites also designed their programs with their local economic contexts in mind.

**Table 2.1 | Site Characteristics and Local Context at Baseline
Cohort 1 Sites: 2015**

Housing Development(s)	Public Housing Agency								
	Boston	Charlotte	Chicago	Cuyahoga ^a	Memphis	Roanoke	St. Louis	Syracuse	
Characteristics	Charles town	Southside Homes	Altgeld Gardens	Outhwaite	Carver Park	Foote Homes	Lansdowne Park	Clinton-Peabody	James Geddes
Resident Characteristics									
Total residents ^b	2,645	852	3,551	1,616	1,859	973	771	966	887
Work-able residents ^c	1,020	321	1,319	1,490		316	295	350	452
Average annual household income (\$)	15,579	7,882	13,117	6,206	7,253	7,773	8,481	7,526	10,348
Wages as primary source of income (%) ^d	45	21	40	22	27	24	32	32	19
Single-headed household with children (%)	45	52	59	61	63	54	50	70	36
Black (non-Hispanic) (%)	33	97	98	97	97	99	80	99	48
Hispanic (%)	40	2	1	2	2	1	4	0	39
White (%)	18	1	0	1	1	1	15	1	12
Development Characteristics									
Subsidized units available (N)	1,096	385	1,959	712	741	420	300	358	470
Mobility rate (%) ^e	10	11	10	15	14	9	24	24	13
Length of residency (years) ^f	9.1	10.2	12.3	7.7	7.8	13.8	4.6	6.6	7.9

⁴² HUD (2017a).

**Table 2.1 (continued) | Site Characteristics and Local Context at Baseline
Cohort 1 Sites: 2015**

Characteristic	Public Housing Agency								
	Boston	Charlotte	Chicago	Cuyahoga ^a		Memphis	Roanoke	St. Louis	Syracuse
	Charles town	Southside Homes	Altgeld Gardens	Outhwaite	Carver Park	Foote Homes	Lans-downe Park	Clinton-Peabody	James Geddes
Local Economic Context									
County unemployment rate (%) ^g	4.1	5.2	6.0	5.1	5.1	6.1	3.8	4.9	4.9
Local fair market rent for two-bedroom (\$) ^h	1,454	831	1,093	764	764	832	732	816	792
Local Poverty Rate (%) ⁱ	29	47	64	77	73	67	40	47	65

NOTES:

- ^a Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority met the criteria for combining the Outhwaite and Carver Park developments. This combined site is referred to throughout the report as Cuyahoga.
- ^b Total number of people reported as living in the development at the date of the 2015 Picture of Subsidized Households snapshot.
- ^c Self-reported data from sites, October 27, 2015.
- ^d Percent of households where the majority of household income is derived from wages and/or business.
- ^e Percent of households who entered the development less than a year from the date of Picture Subsidized Households snapshot.
- ^f Average months since households moved in as the difference between the admission date and date of Picture Subsidized Households snapshot. (Excludes zero values.)
- ^g Percent unemployment at the county level, annual average (Bureau of Labor Statistics: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2015).
- ^h The local metropolitan area used to determine Local Fair Market Rent for a two-bedroom unit.
- ⁱ Percent of the population living below poverty level in the census tract surrounding the Jobs Plus Development (Census 2010 designation).

SOURCE: HUD User Dataset for Assisted Housing: National and Local, Picture of Subsidized Households, unless otherwise noted. Data records characteristics as of December 31, 2015.

Bureau of Labor Statistics: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2015.

Jobs Plus Funding

HUD awarded grants totaling about \$24 million to the first nine Jobs Plus sites. Table 2.2 shows the funding levels received by the sites. Six were awarded \$3 million each, and three sites received smaller grants.⁴³ Grants were not based on the size of the development (shown in Table 2.1), yet all the sites were still expected to saturate their developments with an awareness and availability of the three core Jobs Plus components. For instance, Roanoke, as well as Chicago, were both

⁴³ The smaller grants were a result of funding availability.

awarded \$3 million, but Roanoke serves 295 work-able residents while Chicago has 1,319 work-able residents. Meeting saturation goals could be especially challenging in larger developments, in which the programs needed to reach more residents with the same or lower funding amount as smaller developments.⁴⁴

Another element that is relevant for understanding resource availability for program implementation is that two of the sites, Charlotte and Chicago, are participants in HUD’s Moving to Work (MTW) demonstration, which allows them greater fiscal flexibility to design and test innovative self-sufficiency strategies or to navigate operational and budgetary challenges in implementation.⁴⁵ Their MTW advantage interacted with Jobs Plus implementation in a number of ways, a dynamic that is explored in this report (for an example, see Box 2.1).

**Table 2.2 | Jobs Plus Finding, Program Structure and Other Relevant PHA Initiatives
Cohort 1 Sites: 2017**

Public Housing Agency	Funding (\$) ^a	MTW Status	Implementation Partner ^b	Staffing		Program Enrollment ^c		Other PHA Initiatives ^d
				Case Managers	Job Developer	Jobs Plus Office	Property Management	
Boston	1,977,607		X	2	2 ^e	X		FSS
Charlotte	2,224,786	X		3	1	X		Work Requirement, RAD
Chicago	3,000,000	X	X	5 ^f	2	X	X	Work Requirement
Cuyahoga	3,000,000			2 ^g	2	X		RAD
Memphis	3,000,000		X	5	2	X		Choice Neighborhoods, ROSS
Roanoke	3,000,000			2	1	X	X	
St. Louis	3,000,000		X	2	1	X	X	
Syracuse	1,977,607		X	3	1 ^e		X	ROSS

FSS = Family Support Services. MTW = Moving to Work. PHA = public housing agency. RAD = Rental Assistance Demonstration. ROSS = Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency.

⁴⁴ To set more reasonable outcomes expectations, the number of work-able residents used in HUD’s performance monitoring measures was capped at 600 for the three largest developments: Boston, Chicago, and Cuyahoga. Grantees used this target of 600 in developing work plans and performance goals.

⁴⁵ Moving to Work (MTW) is a demonstration program for PHAs that provides 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. https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/mtw.

Notes:

- ^a Funding depicts Jobs Plus Pilot Grant Award, April 2015. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Services (HUD), 2015b.
- ^b Implementation partner refers to a partner agency that plays a role in the overall management of Jobs Plus, employs case managers, and provides resources to deliver and operate the employment services component of Jobs Plus (involving case management, job development, and support services). Cuyahoga ended the contract with their employment services implementation partner in 2017.
- ^c Each site developed a process to enroll participants in Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID; at Property Management) and in Jobs Plus services (Jobs Plus Office, Group Orientations). Where residents primarily began enrollment into Jobs Plus are summarized here.
- ^d This does not include all PHA initiatives. The initiatives summarized here were found to coincide with Jobs Plus implementation.
- ^e The case managers in these two sites also served as job developers.
- ^f Jobs Plus members had access to more than 30 case managers through Family Works, an agency subcontracted by the Chicago Housing Agency (CHA) to run the resident services department in Altgeld Gardens. Administrators at CHA partnered with Family Works to implement the Jobs Plus program in the Chicago site.
- ^g Cuyahoga case management staffing was in transition from partner to housing authority case management during data collection, so it's not clear how many case managers are currently on-site. Prior to the transition, two case managers were on-site (reflected here).

Sources: Jobs Plus Process study data collection, including field research, monthly grantee check-in calls, and direct communication with sites.

Box 2.1

Jobs Plus in a Moving to Work Agency: The Charlotte Housing Authority

The Charlotte Housing Authority (CHA) joined Moving to Work (MTW) in December 2007, branding its program as *Moving Forward*. MTW agencies may combine different federal funding streams—such as public housing operating funds, Housing Choice Voucher subsidies, and public housing capital fund grants—into a single, flexible account. The Moving Forward program comprises several initiatives, three of which are particularly pertinent to Jobs Plus implementation: a work requirement, expanded partnerships, and rent reforms. Furthermore, MTW fiscal flexibility allows the CHA to shift its HUD operating funds into programs, such as Jobs Plus.

The CHA has instituted a work requirement at the Jobs Plus development. The policy requires work-able households to work—or participate in work-related activities (for example, community service, education, or training)—for 20 hours a week. The CHA's work requirement was initially implemented at only five public housing sites, none of which are the Jobs Plus site, in January 2014. In May 2017, the CHA began expanding the work requirement to its remaining non-elderly developments, including the Jobs Plus development. The first households would receive sanctions for non-compliance in March 2018.

Jobs Plus and other CHA staff noted a couple ways in which MTW participation facilitated Jobs Plus implementation, including:

Fiscal flexibility. CHA leadership has shifted over \$60,000 in MTW flexible funding to support Jobs Plus, not including the renovation of the Jobs Plus offices. More than one-half of that figure (\$36,050) was dedicated to fund childcare slots for participants who gain employment. Other uses of MTW funding were for telephone and internet service at the Jobs Plus office, bus passes for participants, and staff training.

Experience providing supportive services. As part of the initial work requirement at five developments, CHA offered on-site supportive services to residents through CHA-employed case managers, and developed a case management model that prioritizes support given to families by category of need. It was able to apply this case management model to Jobs Plus participants, and in doing so could hire in-house case managers rather than contract out to a third-party provider.

Innovative Partnerships. MTW flexibility has allowed CHA to develop partnerships with local non-profits. Prior to Jobs Plus, the CHA had developed a Center for Employment Services, which partnered with a local employment agency (Grace Mar) to provide residents access to job training, coaching, and placement. Having those relationships in place prior to implementation meant that Jobs Plus staff could refer clients to employment services early in the grant period.

As the development will continue to be subject to a work requirement after Jobs Plus, the CHA will continue providing residents supportive services—funded in part through MTW single fund account flexibility. Those services will be available to all residents, although case managers will prioritize working with work-able households paying minimum rent.

Redevelopment, Relocation, and Resident Mobility

Several sites underwent or were planning for redevelopment and relocation projects while Jobs Plus was in operation (see Table 2.2). The degree to which these other initiatives affected Jobs Plus implementation varied substantially.

Requirements of the active Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) project in Charlotte conflicted with the Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID), which is discussed further in Chapter 4.⁴⁶ As part of the Chicago Housing Authority's MTW strategy, the Chicago site was going through a major redevelopment process, which renovated and opened 218 units in the development in 2017. These newly opened units likely contributed to the 20 percent move-in rate demonstrated in Chicago in 2017⁴⁷, up from the 10 percent rate of new move-ins in 2015 (Table 2.1). Due to the work requirement in this site (described later), the screening of applicants for these newly renovated units was stringent and required new move-ins to be employed or develop and fulfill a 90-day plan to meet the work requirement. The new move-ins likely contributed to the higher employment levels demonstrated in 2017 (percent of households in which wages were a major source of income increased from 40 percent in 2015 to 50 percent in 2017⁴⁸), in part due to this screening process.

In Memphis, the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) significantly affected Jobs Plus implementation.⁴⁹ Beginning in March 2016, Memphis began a complete relocation of residents and subsequent demolition of the Foote Homes development. By January 2017, all Jobs Plus residents of Foote Homes had been relocated to other neighborhoods.⁵⁰ Jobs Plus management and staff at this site devised a "node strategy," in which each case manager and an accompanying community coach were responsible for one of five geographical zones. Although this was a creative strategy, Jobs Plus could not operate as a place-based initiative at this site after residents were moved out of the development. The concurrent operation of CNI and Jobs Plus allowed this site to leverage both grants and staff capacities to support residents in this transition. On the other hand, these two programs have differing goals, and the urgent issues that arose from the relocation, and which CNI aims to address, strained staff's capacity to focus on the employment goals of Jobs Plus. Thus, in some ways, the Memphis Jobs Plus program is a departure from what was envisioned for a more

⁴⁶ RAD allows for much-needed renovation of public housing while also converting those developments to project-based Section 8 housing (<https://www.hud.gov/RAD>). It sometimes involves relocation of residents for up to a year while public housing developments are being renovated, which would violate the fundamental principle of Jobs Plus being a place-based program, although this was not the case for Charlotte. In Cuyahoga, some residents elected to be relocated off site for the RAD conversion that was taking place (Carver Park).

⁴⁷ HUD (2017b).

⁴⁸ HUD (2017b).

⁴⁹ Memphis was awarded a \$30 million Choice Neighborhoods Grant in September 2015, shortly after being awarded the Jobs Plus grant.

⁵⁰ Some residents ported out of Memphis and were thus no longer eligible for Jobs Plus services.

traditional Jobs Plus program, but it provides an example of program implementation against a backdrop of extensive redevelopment and resident dislocation.

High levels of resident mobility could also affect the fabric of the community. Sites experiencing higher residential turnover require staff to continually introduce new residents to the program, and they have less time to follow-up with residents who tend to move out quickly. Baseline mobility rates—the percent of households who were in the development less than a year—were as high as 24 percent in two sites and as low as 9 to 10 percent in three sites (see Table 2.1). In developments with high residential turnover, residents may not be fully exposed to the benefits of Jobs Plus and the intended benefits of the program may not translate to progress in the development and community more broadly. For example, Chicago, St. Louis, and Roanoke—sites with relatively high resident turnover—reported new move-ins were a source of Jobs Plus enrollments more than other sites, demonstrating that staff time in these sites went toward introducing new residents to the program. On the other hand, certain sites reported that new tenants moving in may face different challenges from long-term residents—for example, they may have more work history or be only recently unemployed—and be more prepared to take advantage of the employment and training services of Jobs Plus.

Work Requirements

Two of the sites, Chicago and Charlotte, both MTW agencies, had instituted work requirements for their residents. In Chicago, where work requirements have been in place since January 2009, all eligible adults⁵¹ were required to engage in employment or employment-related activities for at least 20 hours per week.⁵² The work requirement in Charlotte was enforced in five developments beginning in January 2014. In 2017, the Charlotte Housing Authority expanded the housing developments subject to this requirement, including the Jobs Plus site.⁵³ To avoid sanctions, all non-disabled heads of households are required to engage in work or work-related activities, such as job training or community service, for a minimum of 20 hours per week. Failure to comply could lead to a series of sanctions, starting with a 3-month probationary period (during which an “Improvement Plan” is developed). Following that, families can lose one-half of the rental subsidy for 6 months, followed by their entire rental subsidy for 6 months. Both sites had instituted case management services to help residents with their employment needs before the work requirements went into effect.

⁵¹ The work requirement applies to adult members of public housing households, ages 18 to 54, or age 17 and not attending school full time, unless the resident is eligible for exemption or Safe Harbor Status.

⁵² This requirement applies to all developments in the Chicago Housing Authority portfolio. For more on Chicago’s work requirements see Chicago Housing Authority (2017).

⁵³ See Rohe, Webb, and Frescoln (2015) for an analysis of the effects of the work requirement policy for this site.

Staffing and Program Structure

The Jobs Plus model requires programs to leverage the capacities of multiple public housing agency (PHA) stakeholders and service partners to achieve its ambitious goal of implementing a multipronged program at saturation levels. Stakeholders include, but are not limited to, PHA management, property management, case managers, and service providers. Past iterations of Jobs Plus have shown that programs often needed 1 to 2 years to reach operating scale, with improvement often noted over time.⁵⁴ At the time of field visits (end of year 2), sites faced some isolated challenges related to changes in staffing and management, procuring physical space, and managing working service partnerships, but the programs were largely operational and working to improve management and service practices.

Staff Roles and Arrangements

Jobs Plus required hiring and training staff to implement the employment services and Community Support for Work components and coordinating with existing PHA staff to implement the JPEID. The staff involved with the day-to-day implementation of program services typically consisted of *case managers*, who are expected to link residents with employment-related services, such as education, training, and support services; *job developers*, who are expected to interface with employers and link residents with available jobs in the community; *community coaches*, who are residents of the developments hired to promote Jobs Plus and the resident-to-resident discussion of work in the community; and *property management*, who handle leasing issues for the PHA and are involved in the day-to-day implementation of the JPEID.

Most sites had established at least one staff member who played a job developer role since the end of year 1, and case managers in Boston and Syracuse dually conducted case management and job developer duties (see Table 2.2). A few sites used grant funds to bring in additional full-time staff to deliver particular services on-site (either through subcontracting partner staff or, less commonly, by hiring directly through the PHA). For example, Cuyahoga directly hired a youth program coordinator to develop a Jobs Plus component targeted to youth⁵⁵ and contracted two full-time financial coaches on site, and Boston contracted a full-time financial coach to deliver financial empowerment services. A couple sites leveraged other PHA grants (Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency [ROSS]) to fund case management and support

⁵⁴ Bloom, Riccio, and Verma, 2005; Greenberg et al., 2015.

⁵⁵ This is another example of local adaptation of the Jobs Plus program, as the Cuyahoga site had a significant youth population. Sixty-one and 63 percent of households in the Outhwaite and Carver Park developments, respectively, were single-headed households with children (defined in HUD user Assisted Housing dataset as one in which a spouse was not present and one or more children under 18 years was present). See Table 2.1.

staff. For example, Memphis leveraged a Choice Neighborhoods grant to employ a health and an education specialist.⁵⁶

Six sites initially contracted out case management services, five of which entered an arrangement in which a partner agency employs the case managers and largely operates the employment services component of Jobs Plus (see Table 2.2, Implementation Partner). Cuyahoga recently ended its contract with a sub-contractor and assumed the responsibility of delivering case management. The Charlotte and Roanoke PHAs employ their Jobs Plus case managers.

Staffing remained relatively stable at most of the sites. Two sites—Charlotte and Roanoke—experienced little to no staff turnover, while Boston experienced significant changes to staffing and management up until the end of year 2, and Cuyahoga has continued to experience changes to staffing and management, which delayed and/or disrupted these sites' trajectories of implementation.⁵⁷

Partnerships

Partnerships are critical to running successful Jobs Plus programs that can provide a variety of quality services to support residents, who may have multiple barriers to finding sustainable employment. Partners were expected to strengthen Jobs Plus by advising on programming and implementation based on their different areas of expertise, and by streamlining access to work-related support services for residents. According to HUD's Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), a successful Jobs Plus program—

...is collaboratively designed and implemented by high-performing local housing authorities, residents of public housing developments, Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and

⁵⁶ The Choice Neighborhoods program leverages significant public and private dollars to support locally driven strategies that address struggling neighborhoods with distressed public or HUD-assisted housing through a comprehensive approach to neighborhood transformation. Local leaders, residents, and stakeholders, such as public housing agencies, cities, schools, police, business owners, nonprofits, and private developers, come together to create and implement a plan that revitalizes distressed HUD housing and addresses the challenges in the surrounding neighborhood. The program helps communities transform neighborhoods by revitalizing severely distressed public and/or assisted housing and catalyzing critical improvements in the neighborhood, including vacant property, housing, businesses, services, and schools. (<https://www.hud.gov/cn>)

⁵⁷ Boston hired two case managers and a financial coach in quarter 2 of 2017. Prior to this, program management staff from the Adult Basic Education program and Jobs Plus community coaches supported program operations (outreach, enrollment, job search, and placement). In Cuyahoga, program management changed whereby the housing agency moved to hire case managers directly, ending a subcontract with their case management sub-contractor.

American Job Centers (also known as One-Stop Career Centers), local businesses and employers, and other organizations that provide supportive services within that community.⁵⁸

As observed during the first 2 years, partners played a variety of roles: *service delivery*, by providing support services or trainings on site or by referral off site; *governance*, by assuming responsibility for making binding decisions in program design and implementation; *advisory*, by offering information or recommendations for those with decisionmaking authority to consider; and *technical assistance*, by providing more pointed consultations on service approach and delivery, including staff training.⁵⁹ Some partners played multiple roles, even when those resources were provided in-kind. For example, a behavioral health partner in St. Louis, a member of that site's Community Advisory Board, also became directly involved in offering Jobs Plus staff bi-monthly training and provided mobile counseling services directly to residents on a regular basis, thus playing advisory, technical assistance, and service delivery roles.

Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), which established the contracted or in-kind resources that partners were expected to bring, were important tools for leveraging resources,⁶⁰ but holding partners accountable to MOUs and performance benchmarks required active management. Accountability mechanisms for both formal and informal partnerships included collecting performance data and holding partner meetings. Partner advisory meetings, in which partners, stakeholders, and Jobs Plus staff met monthly or quarterly to discuss program performance and operational updates, were another form of keeping partners engaged and accountable. These partner meetings, along with more ad-hoc communication streams, were a way of coordinating service delivery and policies and increasing buy-in among partners to the mission of Jobs Plus. These meetings provided the opportunity for partners to make recommendations for implementation, take part in decisionmaking processes, or to participate in case conferences on individual residents. Some sites reported diminishing engagement and attendance at partner meetings since the start-up phase when program operations and partner roles were being developed, but improvements to systems of data reporting and management were also reported at this later stage of implementation. Engagement of a broad network of partners and local service providers in Boston, Roanoke, and Syracuse was

⁵⁸ HUD (2014). In July 2014, after the Jobs Plus NOFA was released, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) was signed into law, superseding the Workforce Investment Act. Under WIOA, the term "Workforce Investment Board" (WIB) was replaced with the term "Workforce Development Board" (WDB), but the two entities serve the same purpose: to "coordinate and align workforce programs to provide coordinated, complementary, and consistent services to job seekers and employers." Likewise, the term "One Stop Career Center" was replaced with the term "American Job Center." (<https://www.doleta.gov/WIOA/Overview.cfm>.)

⁵⁹ HUD also encouraged sites to contract with outside agencies for technical assistance.

⁶⁰ St. Louis cited difficulties getting partners to sign MOUs, which affected their ability to hold them accountable. This also raises some challenges related to sustainability.

relatively strong, compared with that of other sites. Program directors at Syracuse and Roanoke noted the importance of a history of working relationships to the success of program partnerships and a commitment among all providers to serving vulnerable populations in these smaller-sized cities.⁶¹

Partnership Structures

As noted in Chapter 1, the original Jobs Plus demonstration mandated a partnership collaborative, which required collaboration across the PHA, the welfare department, the Workforce Development Board (WDB), and resident representatives to design and implement Jobs Plus. The only required partnership in the HUD replication was with the local WDB or American Job Center. Sites had to establish an MOU with the WDB describing the roles and responsibilities of the PHA and WDB, respectively, and how they would maintain this working relationship (HUD 2014).⁶² The WDB could play both an advisory role (attuning Jobs Plus programs to the local economic context and opportunities) and a service role (directly providing or funding training and employment opportunities). Variations in the role and level of engagement of the WDB are discussed further in Chapter 3.

According to the NOFA, sites could create *formal partnerships*, in which they subcontracted with partner organizations to deliver services, and those partners would be reimbursed by the Jobs Plus grant, or *informal partnerships*, in which partner organizations could provide in-kind services, prioritize Jobs Plus members referred to them for their services, or play an advisory role, but would not receive funds through the Jobs Plus grant—although PHAs could still establish MOUs with these “informal” partners. Given the flexibility offered to sites, there was much variation in the partnership structures and experiences across sites.

Five sites—Boston, Chicago, Memphis, St. Louis, and Syracuse—chose to operate Jobs Plus with an *implementation partner*: a partner agency that plays a role in the overall management of Jobs Plus, employs case managers, and provides resources to deliver and operate the employment services component of Jobs Plus (involving case management, job development, and support services). Case managers are the linchpin of the Jobs Plus program, as they are the gateway for resi-

⁶¹ Roanoke and Syracuse are the smallest cities in the demonstration at populations of 99,837 and 143,396, respectively. (<https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2017/demo/popest/total-cities-and-towns.html>.)

⁶² HUD did not reinstate the original mandatory collaborative, in part because Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) was seen as less relevant in the current policy context.

dents to receive employment services, and they interface with both community coaches and property managers (staff primarily responsible for delivering the Community Support for Work [CSW] and JPEID components, respectively).

The governance structure and degree of collaboration between PHA leadership and the implementation partners varied, but in all cases, the PHA was the fiduciary agent of the Jobs Plus grant. In St. Louis and Memphis, the partner agency largely operated and managed the Jobs Plus program and other programs operating out of the resident services departments of those PHAs.⁶³ Syracuse and Chicago established a more collaborative governance structure with their implementation partners. The partnership between the Syracuse Housing Authority and its implementation partner, the Center for Community Alternatives, exemplifies a collaborative governance structure in which program management at the PHA and implementation partner agency confer with one another on almost all program decisions (Box 2.2 further describes this partnership). In Boston, the subcontractor employs the case managers and PHA leadership directly supervises them and manages day-to-day operations.

When managed successfully, operating Jobs Plus with an implementation partner had the benefit of leveraging the resources of both agencies. In Chicago, for example, Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) uses its financial flexibility afforded through the MTV status to provide comprehensive resident supportive services under a program called FamilyWorks. CHA contracts out these services to Metropolitan Family Services (MFS), a local nonprofit human service organization, which is hired to run FamilyWorks and the Jobs Plus program at Altgeld Gardens. MFS offered comprehensive case management, clinical services, and other supports to all Altgeld Gardens residents prior to Jobs Plus. The Jobs Plus program was then able to leverage all the FamilyWorks services for Jobs Plus enrollees, and those case managers continue to provide services to residents regardless of their level of involvement in Jobs Plus.⁶⁴ Following a HUD site visit in year 1, CHA and MFS made changes to enhance service coordination by integrating the client intake, staffing, and reporting components of Jobs Plus and FamilyWorks, which resulted in the rebranding of the entire Altgeld Gardens Development as a Jobs Plus site. In both Syracuse and Chicago, the PHA administrator responsible for managing Jobs Plus, or other senior PHA leadership, had longstanding working relationships with the partner agency, which significantly contributed to the successful navigation of this collaborative leadership structure.

⁶³ The implementation partner in St. Louis is the WDB agency for the city.

⁶⁴ FamilyWorks is a comprehensive case management program that supports families as they strive for self-sufficiency. Family Works provides employment and education services, opportunities for youth, lease compliance, clinical and wellness services, and senior support services to families.

Box 2.2

Operating Jobs Plus with an Implementation Partner: Syracuse Housing Authority

The Syracuse Housing Authority (SHA) partnered with Center for Community Alternatives (CCA) throughout the grant writing process and implementation of Jobs Plus.

The partnership between these two agencies stemmed from:

- **A history of a successful working relationship.** The Program managers at the Housing Authority and Partner Agency have a long-standing (15–16 years) working relationship in different projects and capacities. The SHA is committed to serving populations with a criminal history background, and CCA is the regional agency devoted to this work.
- **Operational ease.** Due to union and requirements for government agencies in New York state, hiring in-house case managers for Jobs Plus would have been cost-prohibitive. Thus, subcontracting case management and employment services significantly lowered the housing agency's bottom-line. Due to the lifespan of time-limited grants, hiring and training in-house case managers would have been costly in terms of time, and unemployment benefits would have to be factored in. Further, the two agencies had partnered on grants before, which facilitated the proposal and negotiation process.

What makes it work?

- **Communication and skilled management.** Many agreed that the lines of communication they developed are crucial to this partnership. They know one another, how each other works, and are comfortable raising and resolving issues smoothly. The program director from the housing authority and program managers from CCA communicate frequently. All staff, including property management and case managers, have an open line of communication to the PHA Program Director: "It's not a rigid system," explained the CCA Program Manager.
- **Data management.** The customized data management system was an important resource CCA offered this partnership. It's critical to have a flexible data management system developed and to discuss how information will be shared, making it clear from the upstart of not just what the expectations are but how they will be upheld and communicated.

Lessons learned.

- **Clear roles, boundaries, and expectations.** Through extensive trial-and-error, the different component staff have reached a "synergy" with established boundaries and intersections of components. Minor frustrations arose on the part of both parties due to the different organizational culture in a small non-profit versus a large public agency.
- **Include CSW in the sub-contract.** The community coach position was not given much attention during the proposal stage, as a result it was inadequately budgeted. Further, no sense of shared responsibility existed for making CSW work: it was not clearly operationalized and did not fit neatly into their outcomes. Both agencies came to see the value of CSW for supporting employment services and recommend including this position in the sub-contract.

CSW = Community Support for Work; PHA = public housing authority

In sites that operated Jobs Plus with an implementation partner, that partner often had the capacity to offer a menu of employment-related services (for example, educational services or work readiness training) that the PHA otherwise may have only been able to provide by coordinating with multiple outside organizations. In describing why they chose to operate Jobs Plus with an implementation partner, one program director explained, "We are not a case management entity, and people get in trouble trying to make themselves something they're not." Charlotte and Roanoke,

two sites that did not choose to operate Jobs Plus with an implementation partner, had some case management capacity available or relevant experience from previous self-sufficiency initiatives the PHA had operated, which had established employment partnerships key to the implementation of Jobs Plus and brought important operational lessons, such as qualities to look for in hiring well-suited staff.

Subcontracted partners that were not full implementation partners provided particular “services that are not already available (either by service type or amount) to residents of the community.”⁶⁵ For example, Cuyahoga initially structured its service delivery by subcontracting with four separate agencies to operate case management, job development, financial empowerment services, and the CSW component. This approach to service delivery proved difficult to manage; as a result, in year 2 they ended contracts with the case management and CSW partners and were restructuring the program such that PHA administrators managed operations of case management and the CSW component. (See Box 2.3 for more on this approach).

Informal partners (those that were not subcontracted to provide services) included agencies in higher or adult basic education, training providers, human service agencies that provided services to support residents and help remove employment barriers, and faith-based or philanthropic organizations that offered support services and/or materials (such as food, clothing, furniture, or child-care). The role of these partners was largely to provide in-kind services and supports, either on site or by referral. Many of these agencies served the same population and offered services that were already available to residents, and they usually also shared similar missions and visions for how to help residents improve their employment outcomes and other facets of their lives. Jobs Plus aimed to deepen these existing working relationships and customize services to residents, often by providing services on site. These partnerships were expected to ultimately lead to the sustainability of the program.⁶⁶

Other informal partners, such as city agencies or other local governing officials, played an advisory role to provide knowledge of the local economic and/or political context and available opportunities. Establishing and strengthening these relationships could also potentially support programs in finding resources to sustain services beyond the grant. In Boston, for example, core advisory partners affirmed their ongoing commitment to working with the Charlestown development and acknowledged the role Jobs Plus has played in growing a web of partnerships between the housing agency, community and technical colleges, training programs, and the WDB.

⁶⁵ HUD (2014: 7).

⁶⁶ HUD (2014: 5).

Program Coordination and Management

Jobs Plus is a complicated program, and administering it well requires strong coordination and buy-in from all staff levels, including PHA leadership, property management staff, and Jobs Plus and partner staff. Several programs developed management practices to establish and strengthen collaboration across offices and partnerships, while others struggled in this area.

Several factors helped to keep all key players and stakeholders engaged in and committed to delivering as strong a Jobs Plus program as possible. For example, many sites held standing

Box 2.3

Partnering for Service Delivery: Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority Experience

At the start of the grant, the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) entered in grant-funded contracts with four agencies: general and job development services, financial empowerment services, case management, and community support for work (CSW). Jobs Plus allowed the partners to fulfill their individual organizations' missions and visions and reach more individual residents through Jobs Plus than they would have in their standard service-delivery process. However, this arrangement did not ultimately facilitate a smooth and cohesive supportive service structure for residents, and at the end of Year 2, CMHA terminated contracts with their CSW and case management partners.

Challenges

- **Compartmentalization of partner roles.** Partners had to balance between staying within their contracted scopes of work and providing a broader range of services to residents that their organizations typically offer.
- **Competition for resources.** With overlapping service provision goals, partners typically compete for both funding and clients outside the Jobs Plus context. This was a source of tension.
- **Different organizational cultures and processes.** Despite program leadership's efforts at reconciling differences, incompatible organizational cultures and processes made it challenging to build consensus around implementation expectations, including communication, referrals, service delivery, level of investment in individual participants, and the vision for Jobs Plus.
- **Lack of a shared data system.** This made reporting requirement a burden, for partners and CMHA.

Lessons Learned

- **Clarity around scope and expectations:** Earlier engagement of partners could build a deeper understanding of their services (and performance expectations) and how they fit into the broader goals of the program.
- **Expectations for coordination and collaboration:** A shared agreement around how they will work together to implement Jobs Plus (including shared buy-in and vision from the start) and how they will address any gray areas in service provision or administrative processes would help partners manage tensions.
- **Opportunity to revisit and revise scopes of work:** Establishing formal check-ins with partners to revisit Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) would help maintain accountability with roles and responsibilities and provide an opportunity to terminate a partnership.
- **Finding high-quality partners.** Time-limited grants do not provide enough time to get partners fully on board. Finding high-quality, long-term partners efficiently that can quickly be fully in tune with expectations around Jobs Plus was stressed as integral to success.
- **"Less is more."** CMHA surmised that working with as few partners as possible may have allowed them to avoid many of the challenging inter-partner dynamics that they experienced. Contracting with a partner who can fulfill as many components as possible of Jobs Plus with the PHA focusing on its strengths as a housing authority may lend itself more to smoother processes and service delivery.

Jobs Plus coordination meetings with staff and stakeholders, which facilitated case conferencing, performance management, and other aspects of internal coordination. Additionally, co-location of Jobs Plus and PHA property management offices facilitated coordination among these different stakeholders by providing opportunities for impromptu case conferencing and communication and, in some instances, physical “hand-offs” of residents from one service or component of the program to another. Offices were closely co-located in Chicago, Roanoke, St. Louis, and, beginning in 2018, Syracuse.⁶⁷

Data management was an operational challenge that lingered into late-stage implementation for most sites. Collecting performance data across property management and Jobs Plus offices and partners was described as time consuming by a few sites. Some sources of complication were a lack of clear and shared understanding of the measures being collected, different data systems, and the time required to enter and compile data. Sites had to establish a system for JPEID data management (discussed further in Chapter 4) and a case management system for reporting employment and support services. At the time of field visits in year 2, all but one site had incorporated a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to record and manage the delivery of employment-related services—a significant improvement from the interim report observations—which bolstered data quality and coordination with service partners. One benefit offered in the close implementation partnership in Syracuse was the customized CRM that the Center for Community Alternatives (who partnered with the Syracuse Housing Authority to implement Jobs Plus) developed at program start-up. In addition to tracking case management data, this system allowed for close coordination between property management Jobs Plus staff, in that property management could access the system to enter residents newly enrolled in the JPEID to notify case managers to follow-up with them.⁶⁸ For the later cohorts of the HUD Jobs Plus replication, HUD made strong recommendations to sites to establish these data systems at start-up. A couple of sites recommended that staff in the Jobs Plus program, housing agency, and partner agencies involved in data reporting be involved in early discussions on performance management to establish a clear and aligned understanding of data definitions and collection processes.

⁶⁷ For the first 2 years, the Jobs Plus office in Syracuse operated out of a relatively small townhouse removed from the central building where the property management office is located. Throughout 2017, the Syracuse Housing Authority procured and prepared a larger office space for the Jobs Plus program in the same building as property management. This space included a large computer lab, a communal room, and offices for case managers and program management to hold confidential sessions with residents.

⁶⁸ See Chapter 4 section on JPEID enrollment for more detail.

Program Enrollment and Engagement

Depending on the design of the local Jobs Plus program, residents can be reached in multiple ways. Residents could learn about the program when they visit the property management office (for example, for an annual recertification), through the Jobs Plus office, or through contact with a community coach or community events, after which Jobs Plus staff would be expected to follow up and engage them in services. Sites developed different systems for enrolling residents in Jobs Plus and the JPEID, requiring a degree of coordination between the Jobs Plus and property management offices, which is discussed further in Chapter 4. Residents' formal introduction to Jobs Plus often began at the Jobs Plus office in four sites, in the property management office in one site, and the responsibility for enrollment was shared between Jobs Plus staff and property management in the three sites where the offices were co-located (see Table 2.2).

This concept of formal enrollment into the program, while helpful for performance management and to gain a sense of the reach of the program, does not fully capture the “saturation” concept of Jobs Plus, which aims to touch all residents in the development in both formal and informal ways. The informal interactions between program staff (including community coaches) and residents and resident-to-resident interactions are difficult to measure but are integral to the design and operation of Jobs Plus. For example, the Jobs Plus staff might never know about or report on a resident who learns about a job opening from a neighbor and then applies for the job and is hired, but this would be a perfect example of Jobs Plus achieving one of its goals: to foster informal interactions among residents that lead to employment. For example, word-of-mouth was cited at several sites as a source of new enrollment into the program at this stage of program implementation.

Delivery of Technical Assistance

HUD awarded a contract to Abt Associates, a research and technical assistance organization, to provide specific deliverables to HUD, such as webinars and conferences. While this technical assistance provider was not expected to provide direct technical assistance to the Jobs Plus sites, the webinars and conferences did provide some limited assistance to the sites in terms of helping them understand HUD's intentions for various aspects of the program. For more tailored technical assistance, HUD encouraged the sites to designate a portion of their budgets to procuring their own technical assistance providers. Although a few sites did this, most did not and instead relied primarily on monthly check-in phone calls with the HUD grants managers for guidance. The main role of the grants managers was to monitor the sites' performance, however, and the technical assistance provided generally did not meet the sites' wishes. Sites all desired more technical assistance, and most expressed the wish that this kind of tailored assistance would have been provided more directly by HUD. Sites' needs for and receipt of technical assistance related to particular components of Jobs Plus are discussed in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

The next chapter describes the evolution of Jobs Plus employment services, the sites' various approaches to delivering those services, the services provided, and the successes and challenges sites faced in delivering employment services.

Chapter 3

Employment Services

Introduction

This chapter describes the evolution of Jobs Plus employment services for the HUD Jobs Plus replication sites over the course of implementation between April 2015, when the first cohort of nine public housing agencies (PHAs) began operating the program, and the fall of 2017, when the research team conducted its last round of visits to the sites. It explores the degree to which services were individualized for the Jobs Plus developments' diverse residents and what each site's overall approach was to providing services. The chapter also describes which services were provided, and by whom; whether and how services were provided to meet saturation goals and take advantage of the place-based nature of the program; participation levels; and successes and challenges.

The original Jobs Plus demonstration called for “employment-related services and activities to help residents secure and retain employment, including job search instruction, education programs, vocational training, and support services such as childcare and transportation assistance.”⁶⁹ Jobs Plus was expected to “*inform* all working-age residents in the development about its employment services and activities—drawing also on residents' networks to spread the message—and to then *accommodate* all residents who come forward for these services and activities, instead of requiring them to compete for a limited number of slots.”⁷⁰ The notion of saturation suggested that no one in the development should be turned away from receiving services. It also implied that not every resident would need or want a full complement of employment services; rather, the program should provide residents just what they need, when they need it, in both formal and informal ways. For example, unemployed residents and those with limited work experience might require the most intensive employment-related services, while individuals who were already working might be encouraged to work toward a raise or promotion and take advantage of the Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID), and residents who became employed but lost their jobs might learn about other job openings from a neighbor. Because participants lived where the Jobs Plus program was being offered, the early thinking was that employment-related services and information might be delivered not only in the Jobs Plus program offices during business hours, but also informally in the development as residents and staff passed by each other. Additionally, residents could benefit from

⁶⁹ Kato (2003).

⁷⁰ Kato (2003).

being able to receive employment services long after traditional programs would “exit” them from their caseloads.

The expectations for how Jobs Plus would deliver employment services evolved only slightly since the original demonstration, although various emphases and nuances emerged with each iteration in the language describing the program. The Social Innovation Fund (SIF) replication of Jobs Plus expected the model “to get as many residents as possible to use Jobs Plus services and to infuse the entire housing development with messages about the availability of employment and the opportunity for help in obtaining it.”⁷¹ This description makes clear that the programs were expected not only to “inform” and “accommodate,” but rather also to actively recruit and engage residents and encourage as many as possible to participate in services. According to the 2014 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the HUD Jobs Plus replication, the purpose of the program was “to develop locally-based, job-driven approaches to increase earnings and advance employment outcomes through work readiness, employer linkages, job placement, educational advancement, technology skills, and financial literacy for residents of public housing.”⁷² The NOFA also emphasized career pathways, work experience, and access to training, and it specified that programs should partner with their local Workforce Development Board (WDB) and American Job Centers to provide these services. The 2014 description of employment-related services reflected the evolution of approaches to employment services generally among workforce professionals during that time, with more of a focus on being demand-driven and shaped by employer involvement, and with an emphasis on financial literacy.

Key Findings

In brief, the findings from the implementation analysis of the Jobs Plus employment services component suggest that, 2 years into program operations, the following occurred.

- Most sites emphasized job readiness and placement over skills training.
- The use of assessments and attempts to tailor employment strategies to the individual and varied needs and skills of residents, increased relative to the first year of program operations.
- Relationships with employers increased and deepened substantially in the second year of operations, largely due to the sites either hiring dedicated staff or securing partners who played a job developer role, and job placement and matching became more employer-driven.

⁷¹ Greenberg et al. (2015).

⁷² HUD (2014).

- Although several sites had expressed an interest, earlier in program operations, in eventually transitioning residents from focusing on jobs to focusing on training and careers, only one site—Roanoke—seemed to have done that successfully.
- Case management was largely resident-driven; most sites did not set expectations about the frequency with which case managers should meet with Jobs Plus participants.
- The original model intended for Employment Services to take advantage of the place-based nature of the program to a greater extent than occurred in practice. For example, it was envisioned that staff would walk around the development and informally engage residents about how work was going. In practice, most discussions with residents about employment were more formal and took place in the Jobs Plus office. This is related to the challenges with implementing the Community Support for Work (CSW) component and integrating it with the Employment Services component of the program.

Approaches to Employment Services

Many public housing residents have an immediate need for employment and income and may not prioritize, at least right away, participation in education or training. For the HUD Jobs Plus replication programs, this presented a challenge: Should the programs help residents get into jobs quickly, although they may not be the kinds of quality jobs envisioned by the NOFA, or should they encourage residents to delay employment while building skills first, to obtain a better-quality job with more career advancement opportunities? Around 1 year into program implementation, all sites provided general pre-employment services such as job-readiness assessments, résumé writing assistance, and interview preparation, as well as job search assistance and job placement services. Practitioners at most sites talked about the need to also offer career and advancement opportunities, even if at first the focus was on “survival jobs” (that is, low-skill, low-paying jobs), and in some cases they hoped to be able to turn to a focus on advancement with some residents after they gained employment and at least some basic income to meet their immediate needs. Boston and Chicago were the two sites where staff particularly emphasized training and advancement as important components of the program from the outset. At that stage of implementation, relationships with employers were not widespread, and most sites did not have a staff member or partner who was especially focused on employer relationships and job development.

Two years into program implementation, job readiness and placement remained the primary focuses of most programs, but job placement was increasingly coordinated with employers as sites strengthened their relationships with them, largely by adding dedicated staff or partners who played a job developer role. Across sites, the effort increased in the second year, compared with the first year of implementation, to develop ongoing relationships with employers and view them as customers who needed the job developers’ services as much as the residents did. The effort to determine who was hiring and in which positions and to identify residents with appropriate skills and match them to these jobs also increased. Likewise, the effort to identify jobs that matched the skills and interests of residents increased; in other words, the matching went in both directions. Sites offered these employer-focused job placement services either through case managers, some

of whom spent part of their time building relationships with employers, or on-site job developers or employment specialists, who dedicated significant time to developing relationships with employers but also worked directly with residents to place them into jobs. Boston and Chicago continued their emphasis on placing as many residents as possible into training (described in more detail later), and Roanoke joined them.

Service Flow

The pathway to receive employment services varied widely across the sites and included residents learning about Jobs Plus (and the employment services) from flyers, events, community coaches, the property management office, and word of mouth. The property management office had a particularly important role across many sites in directing residents toward Jobs Plus case managers to receive employment services, as many residents came to the property management office to sign up for the JPEID as their first point of entry to Jobs Plus. The gateway to employment services across most sites occurred via the program's case managers. Residents interested in taking advantage of employment-related services—such as developing a training and services plan; job readiness, job search, and job placement services; and education and training opportunities—would, in most cases, meet with a case manager, complete an assessment of skills and barriers, and then be referred to appropriate services.

Regardless of each site's overall approach to providing employment services, which generally tended to emphasize either job placement or training (although usually both were available), staff across more sites described offering services that were more individualized than what they described offering in the first year of the pilot. Specifically, they described more assessment, more attempt to learn about participants' interests and skills, and more effort to work with participants to develop an appropriate employment plan. This type of assessment would be required to do a better job of matching residents with appropriate job openings, which became more of an emphasis later in implementation as outreach to employers increased. The assessment also helped identify the need for services to address barriers, which remained a key focus of employment services. Barriers included lack of education, criminal records, other legal issues, health problems, language barriers, lack of childcare, and lack of transportation. Employment challenges were addressed through referrals for services, coaching by Jobs Plus staff, expunging records, and strategic placement into certain jobs (for example, manufacturing employers tend to hire people with criminal records more than employers in some other industries). Although job developers and employment or workforce specialists (who go by a variety of titles) primarily worked with residents on issues and activities related directly to employment, such as résumé writing, interview preparation, referrals to training, and job placement, the Jobs Plus case managers conducted the assessments, helped residents develop training and services plans, and made referrals to services such as adult basic education and high school equivalency programs, legal services, and childcare services, to address barriers.

Most sites did not seem to provide guidance to case managers about how frequently they should meet with participants after the initial assessment, which aligns with the more individualized employment plans and services. It tended to be “as needed,” left to the initiative of the resident or the judgment of the case manager, as opposed to a standard practice in terms of frequency of contact with participants. Most case managers spent most of their time working with active participants and made little effort to engage (or re-engage) less active participants. Two sites that did specify how frequently case managers were expected to meet with participants were Roanoke and Memphis, which, as described later, expected all case managers to reach out to residents on their case-loads at least once per month.

Job Placement Focus

The emphasis on job placement by most sites—often into low-paying jobs, such as food service, retail, and hospitality—was consistent with a focus on moving unemployed residents into jobs, as opposed to helping employed residents advance. Jobs Plus staff often mentioned placement into low-paying jobs as the only option for a large portion of residents, many of whom had no high school diploma or equivalent certification, minimal or inconsistent work history, and sometimes a criminal history, and who were often not interested in or prepared to participate in skills training.⁷³ Although some emphasis was placed on helping underemployed residents gain more stable employment, very little effort was made to engage residents who already had stable employment and help them advance into higher-paying jobs. In this way, the HUD Jobs Plus replication sites were similar to the sites in the SIF replication, in that the services that were promoted were primarily targeted to the unemployed residents of the development. The case managers in Syracuse reported that they spend about 40 percent of their time focused on reaching out to employers, where their focus is on working “to sell the individuals and just create that working relationship and try to get them on board to hiring the folks that we serve.” The balance of their time is spent working with residents on activities such as coaching on how to complete a job application, how to prepare for an interview, and how to fill in gaps in employment. Although their Jobs Plus program offered some training programs with partners, including a culinary arts program that they particularly promoted, participation was low. Said one staff member, “We have 200 and some-odd members in the [Jobs Plus] program; we’ve gotten five people through [the culinary arts program], which I think is great. That’s more than we’ve gotten through any other training program.” Likewise, one training partner reported that while they make many different occupational skills training programs available to Jobs Plus participants, they have had only 10–15 residents take advantage of these programs.

⁷³ Staff reported that residents often mentioned that they wanted or needed a job right away and therefore were not interested in training. Staff also reported that many residents did not meet the basic academic skill-level or other screening requirements for many occupational skills training programs.

Other sites had similar experiences. St. Louis has a dedicated job developer whose goal is to get people jobs that are a good fit so they will stay in their jobs and not quit. Although the program's original goal was to get residents into careers, with a focus on training, staff realized that most residents were not interested in training or able to pass the screening requirements and just wanted "survival jobs," a desire not unlike that of many residents involved in the original Jobs Plus demonstration. As a result, the program no longer emphasizes training or careers, despite St. Louis's Jobs Plus program being operated by the local workforce agency, although it will make referrals to training for residents who are interested in training and can pass the necessary screening requirements.

The program director in St. Louis summed up this dilemma very clearly.

"When we first came in, our objective was to help residents get into careers, which is why the training piece was so important, especially for those who have never been in training, who didn't have marketable skills, or never worked before. So that was really our goal, that full time, permanent job. They can keep going up the career track. Boy, has that changed, because, number one, we [no longer] have the training piece. I mean, people are not ready for that.⁷⁴ And we see most of our residents, they really just want survival jobs, even when we help them get a job that is permanent and can be permanent because they've never worked and because they shoot themselves in the foot, they can go from job to job. We've got people who ... owe child support, so they keep jumping around. It's just that whole stability piece is really difficult. So ... actually now we're at a point where we just need to get you a job, you know, and that was not the original intent at all."

Because of residents' lack of interest or inability to screen into many training programs, the St. Louis Jobs Plus program focuses primarily on helping people find immediate employment, largely through the direct coaching of the job developer and relationships he has developed during the second year of the program with multiple large employers. As one staff member described the job developer, "... he's really honing in and really stresses on building relationships with employers where he can pick up the phone and say, 'Hey, I got a person for you, are you hiring?' Or they'll call him and say, 'Hey, do you have any people?' So, he's really good at doing that, building the relationship with the HR hiring manager." The program also offers a class to learn to use a computer, a computer lab for people to do job searches, and job fairs, along with other employment-

⁷⁴ Training referrals are available, but most people cannot meet the minimum requirements to enroll in training, such as having a high school diploma or equivalency certificate or passing the Work Keys assessment.

related services, although one staff member reported that “a lot of people don’t come and take advantage of the services.”⁷⁵

Charlotte has one employment specialist on site who is employed by a partner organization, and through her, the Jobs Plus program has increased its outreach to employers substantially in the second year of the program. As in St. Louis, the Charlotte program focuses primarily on job placement, and not particularly into career path jobs. As one staff member said, “My thought was we’re going to get folks on a career path, but we have found that it’s more about getting jobs because when we sit down and talk with an individual, it’s, ‘I want a job. I want a job. I want a job.’ And we’re like, ‘No, what about a career? Let’s do some exploration, and let’s do this.’ They’re not interested in doing that.” As a result, the program focuses on developing job placement opportunities and has relationships with employers in healthcare, customer service, call centers, warehousing, security, food service, and hospitality. According to one staff member, however, the commitment among residents to take these jobs and stay with them is low: “The problem is the employers are there, but getting the [Jobs Plus] members to commit ... How do you get the members to actually want to follow through if they ... *do* have the skill sets to follow through? You know, life happens, so, that’s where we are there.” The program also has a partnership with Goodwill to provide a paid retail training experience, but interest is low; additionally, its budget only allows them to enroll four residents in this program per quarter, so its reach is very limited. Case managers primarily work with residents on job readiness activities such as résumé writing and interview preparation.

The Memphis Jobs Plus program’s employment-related services focus primarily on job readiness and job placement; interest and participation in training, the most popular of which is a certified nursing assistant (CNA) class, is low. Due to the pressing needs related to relocation, many residents turn to the case managers more for immediate support services, such as help with landlord-tenant issues or with paying for utilities, than for employment-related services, such as access to training or job placement services. Employment-related services are provided primarily by the Jobs Plus program’s two workforce specialists. Although they are dedicated to developing relationships with employers, they reported that this has been challenging, because they generally cannot meet the employers’ needs and expectations with Jobs Plus residents. According to one staff member, the workforce specialists “spend a lot of time doing résumé writing and just really coaching the residents along the way to really try to help them understand the importance of having a livable wage job as opposed to just having a job. Try to think long-term. We understand you have utilities you have to pay, but let’s think long-term as well. It may be best to invest in a 6-

⁷⁵ As noted in Table 3.1, during the reporting period for this study, 27 percent of work-able residents in St. Louis received job search assistance services, and 26 percent were enrolled in employment readiness services. The services mentioned by this staff member could be included in “post-assessment services;” 59 percent of work-able residents in St. Louis received these services.

months training program. You really get a great job in something you're passionate about as opposed to just getting a job." Despite this encouragement, however, the workforce specialists reported that many residents would prefer temporary jobs or other non-career-track jobs; therefore, the specialists were working on developing relationships with several temp agencies.

Memphis stands out as one of only two sites that set goals for frequency of contact between Jobs Plus staff and participants: they aim to meet with all participants on their caseload at least once per month, and they conduct extensive follow-up once residents are hired and start working (once a week for the first month, then every 2 weeks for the next month, and then at the end of the third month). Although this close post-employment follow-up is at least in part a function of the need to work harder to keep in touch with residents because of the Choice Neighborhood relocation, it could also position the Jobs Plus program to help residents retain their jobs and find new employment quickly if they lose a job. It remains to be seen whether these post-employment services in Memphis might also help prepare some residents to advance into better-paying jobs in the future.

Cuyahoga's employment services are focused primarily on job readiness with some job placement, and training is not offered at all, as no training funds are available from the local WDB. The partnership with the WDB has not lived up to expectations, and most partners have not delivered on their expected commitments.⁷⁶ Dedicated staff from two partner organizations work together to deliver Personal and Professional Development (PPD), which is a series of job readiness and financial literacy classes. One of these partner organizations has relationships with some employers and works to connect Jobs Plus residents to jobs. These employment services staffs do their best to tailor services to residents' needs and help them become job-ready, but many residents have multiple barriers, and for the first year of program operations, the case management services were especially weak.⁷⁷ As a result, many residents did not get the support they needed to be ready to benefit from the employment services.

Notably, the job placement services offered by these five sites, except for Memphis, generally did not extend to post-employment retention or advancement services. Many staff mentioned in interviews that job retention is a challenge for many participants, especially those who had been unemployed for some time before starting to work with the help of Jobs Plus, but the retention services being offered were barely discussed. Staff spoke generally about the challenge of engaging residents, and it is common that, once employed, residents are even harder to engage. Although many

⁷⁶ The relationship with the WDB is described in more detail in this chapter.

⁷⁷ Case management during the first year was operated by a partner that, according to staff, did not understand the Jobs Plus/public housing population and was unable to adapt as necessary to provide strong case management services. During the second year of operations, the Jobs Plus program was still working with the PHA's resident services case managers to acclimate them to the Jobs Plus program.

staff still expressed a preference to move residents into career-oriented employment eventually, most seemed to accept that this would not come to fruition for most residents soon.

Training/Career Focus

The three sites that were intentionally focused on training—Roanoke, Chicago, and Boston—had the highest proportion of work-able residents enrolled in training: 9 percent, 9 percent, and 11 percent, respectively. Roanoke, which started its program with a focus on getting residents into “survival jobs,” joined Boston and Chicago with an explicit focus on occupational skills training in the second year of operations, with the goal of helping people advance into better-paying, more career-oriented jobs. Although the five sites discussed earlier had also expressed an interest in making this transition in their work with residents over time, Roanoke appears to be the only site that did so as of fall 2017. The program has especially marketed training to residents who began working and have retained their job for 180 days, demonstrating that its priority truly is to move people up from entry-level, low-paying jobs. The case managers work to connect residents with a variety of training programs that will meet their interests, including health care, information technology, construction, manufacturing, and food and beverage services, and reports that CNA, building maintenance, and auto technician training are among the most popular. Roanoke also provides job readiness assistance, in both one-on-one and classroom settings, and job placement services. The employment specialist has strong relationships with local employers and brings a variety of employers on site regularly for hiring events. Roanoke stands out as the other site, in addition to Memphis, that stipulates that case managers should meet with enrolled Jobs Plus residents with a certain frequency: case managers attempt to meet with all enrolled residents at least once per month, and they meet more frequently with higher-needs residents.

Chicago’s employment services approach is also very individualized and based on residents’ goals and barriers. Through its partnership with the local workforce agency, and that agency’s partnerships with multiple training providers, residents are connected to skills training programs that meet their interests. By focusing on skills training, however, which generally has minimum education requirements, Chicago’s Jobs Plus program engaged more with residents who had relatively fewer barriers. At the time of interviews, staff reported that only 10–15 residents were participating in skills training programs; however, 87 had enrolled in total up until that point. Chicago also offered a life skills class, assistance with interview preparation, and on-site hiring events to meet some of the needs of residents who were not interested in or qualified for training.

Based on an assessment of the local labor market, who is hiring, and what types of jobs would pay the best, given residents’ overall skill level and qualifications, the Boston Jobs Plus program offers on-site training in home health care and hospitality. Although the program emphasizes training, particularly in these two sectors, it is also resident-driven and will work with a resident on direct job placement or training in other sectors, if that is the resident’s wish. The Jobs Plus case managers also spend a portion of their time developing relationships with employers, and they work to match residents to available jobs. They try to be creative in how they develop opportunities for

residents who may need work experience, particularly to get into a field of interest. One staff member described an example of this kind of creativity: “I remember someone came in and wanted to do something with computers, and wanted a job with computers, zero experience. She (the case manager) is like, ‘I don't want to discourage him.’ I'm wracking my brain, she's like, ‘Best Buy, they're hiring. He gets to play with computers all day to get that experience.’ He was so excited. He never thought about that. So it's a retail job, but he's in the field (working with computers).”

Participation in Employment-related Services

Completion of an assessment by a Jobs Plus case manager is likely the best measure of whether a resident has at least had an introduction (or exposure) to the available employment services offered through the program. As shown in Table 3.1, programs reported a range of assessment completion

**Table 3.1 | Participation in Employment Services
Cohort 1 Sites: Quarter 2, 2015–Quarter 3, 2017**

Characteristics/Outcomes (%)	Boston	Charlotte	Chicago	Cuyahoga	Memphis	Roanoke	St. Louis	Syracuse
<u>Participation</u>								
Completed assessment ^a	24.5	69.4	91.7	30.7	-	70.6	73.1	49.2
Received post-assessment services ^b	22.6	63.4	47.6	.	38.6	67.6	59.2	46.6
Provided job search assistance ^c	23.8	35.8	28.7	17.7	27.2	47.1	26.9	35.2
Enrolled in employment readiness ^d	17.3	31.2	16.2	15.8	11.1	23.4	25.6	4.9
Enrolled in training/certificate ^e	11.1	6.2	8.9	0.8	3.8	8.9	1.4	4.5
Completed program (%)	7.0	0.3	7.7	0.7	2.2	5.8	1.1	3.4
Enrolled in HSE	7.0	12.7	0.2	1.0	4.4	9.6	7.5	1.0
Completed HSE	2.8	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.0
Enrolled in college degree program	0.6	6.8	2.7	0.7	1.3	2.7	0.3	0.6
<u>Job Placement^f</u>								
Began new part-time employment	3.7	21.1	14.8	7.4	19.6	27.6	10.3	11.5
Began new full-time employment	2.8	18.7	8.8	4.6	12.5	17.0	21.3	23.8
90 days continuous employment ^g	0.3	1.1	20.7	1.1	22.0	23.7	4.4	13.6
<u>Other Services Received^h</u>								
Criminal records assistance	4.2	2.4	0.7	0.2	0.0	0.4	4.1	9.0

Physical health care access	3.4	17.6	0.8	0.1	0.0	1.1	0.3	1.8
Behavioral health care access	6.4	4.1	1.4	1.5	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.0
Childcare assistance	9.8	14.9	1.1	0.8	0.0	3.2	8.5	0.0
Transportation assistance	1.6	45.5	13.1	7.4	14.2	21.6	16.3	10.9

HSE = high school equivalency.

Notes: The table presents rates during a 30-month period. The rates are calculated based on the number of work-able residents living in the development. Because the data on the number of work-able residents are available only on a quarterly basis, the rates reflected in the table use the quarter in which the public housing agency (PHA) reported the highest number of residents. Rates not calculated because accurate data are not available for site participation measures marked by - .

^a Generally, this is the first activity undertaken when a resident decides to work with a Jobs Plus case manager to increase his or her earnings.

^b Any service conducted after the initial assessment, even if provided during the same visit, such as job search services, referral to a job training program, coaching about options for basic or technical education, childcare, or transportation.

^c Services provided directly by Jobs Plus staff or through referral to a partner organization, including: one-on-one job search coaching, resume review and assistance, assistance in identifying appropriate job openings, and referral to specific job openings.

^d Employment readiness programs provide specific work-related skills generally considered necessary in order to be successful as entry-level workers.

^e Programs that provide specific job skills training, whether or not they lead to a certification.

^f Number of participants who were unemployed and began part-time (31 hours or less) or full-time (at least 32 hours) employment after becoming a Jobs Plus participant.

^g Number of participants who became employed or moved to a new job, for which the PHA has confirmation received during the quarter, of continuous employment for 90 or more days.

^h Assistance services provided by Jobs Plus program or partner organizations.

Source: Evaluation team calculations based on data from the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Data Visualization Tool.

rates, from about 25 percent of their work-able residents having completed an assessment in Boston to 92 percent in Chicago.⁷⁸ The proportion of residents who received any kind of employment-related service after being assessed ranged from 23 percent in Boston to 68 percent in Roanoke. These services could include job readiness training, job search assistance, or referrals to occupational skills training. Program data on education and training reported by Jobs Plus staff affirm what staff told researchers during research visits: interest and participation were low. Proportions of residents who ever enrolled in a training program ranged from 1 percent in Cuyahoga to a high of 11 percent in Boston, which had a specific emphasis on training. Not surprisingly, training completion rates were even lower. Likewise, enrollment in and completion of high school equivalency (HSE) programs was also low; completion of an HSE credential was reported to range from 0 to 3 percent. Boston was the only site that mentioned an interest among non-residents, such as family and friends of Jobs Plus-eligible residents, in participating in the program; the site accommodated this by hiring—with outside funds—a former Jobs Plus community coach to serve as a case manager for these non-residents, who were not eligible to be part of Jobs Plus. Boston staff were proud of developing this way to serve everyone in the community.

⁷⁸ For performance monitoring purposes, HUD capped the number of residents that Boston, Chicago, and Cuyahoga were responsible for targeting for Jobs Plus at 600. The calculations shown in Table 3.1 are based on the total number of work-able residents, not the 600 cap. Because data on the number of work-able residents (the denominator) are available only on a quarterly basis, the calculations use the highest number of work-able residents reported by the PHA. The source data are reported by the sites and are not verified by the evaluation team.

Capitalizing on “Place,” Integration of Program Components, and Reaching Saturation

Employment services were envisioned to be delivered differently in Jobs Plus from other more traditional employment programs because the program was located in the place where the participants lived. As described earlier, the model assumed that residents might not only receive services in the Jobs Plus office, but that they might also receive more informal employment-related information and advice outside of the office, when running into a case manager or crossing paths with other residents in the development. For a variety of reasons, including, perhaps, that the CSW element of the program did not come to fruition as envisioned, for most sites, Jobs Plus operated much more like a traditional employment program, with the exception that the program office was located onsite. Most interactions with residents around employment were conducted in the Jobs Plus office, rather than through informal conversations about work taking place in the community.

HUD seemed to emphasize the place-based nature of the Jobs Plus model less in the current iteration of the program; for instance, it was not a topic that was central to guidance materials from HUD or in other technical assistance activities such as conferences. Based on the way staff spoke about their interactions with residents, it appears that the programs may not have capitalized on place as originally envisioned; for example, by case managers seeing less engaged residents outside of the office and encouraging them to come in for an appointment, or by having case managers checking in with newly employed residents in the evenings, when most traditional employment programs would be closed. Although most interactions between staff and residents occurred by appointment in the Jobs Plus office, sites did report some residents dropping in without appointments, and appointments were easier to attend than appointments at offsite offices.

Because the program did not take advantage of being place-based in the fullest way, however, it may have missed an opportunity to try to achieve another goal of the program, which was to reach saturation and serve as many people in the development as possible. Just like in most voluntary social service programs, case managers devoted most of their time to working with residents who were seeking services and actively engaged and committed. They generally were not told by their supervisors to proactively reach out to less-engaged residents, and although supervisors described receiving technical assistance from HUD and Abt Associates (HUD’s technical assistance provider, whose role is discussed in Chapter 2) related to CSW and the JPEID, they did not describe seeking or receiving technical assistance on how to deliver employment services.

It is likely that many staff understood the goal of saturation to be to inform as many residents as possible about the availability of Jobs Plus services, which sites did try to do, often through their community coaches and CSW activities. The high assessment rates, also an indicator of program exposure or attachment, suggest that a good portion of the residents did know about the program. The staff did not feel compelled to try to engage inactive residents, however, as long as those residents knew the program was there if they were interested. Without actively promoting the take-up and completion of services and activities, it could be challenging to offer certain on-site services that require a critical mass of participants, such as job readiness or skills training classes. As a

result, taking a “training-first” approach may not fit as well with a saturation model as a job placement approach, which is more individualized and does not require a critical mass of participants to have the same skills or goals or to agree to participate in the same set of activities; this may explain why the job placement approach was more popular among sites. In fact, a more inclusive approach for a program trying to reach the largest number of residents possible would be one that incorporates both job placement and training, to meet the varying interests and needs of residents.

Workforce Development Board (WDB) Partnerships

While the NOFA mandated Jobs Plus programs to partner with local WDBs or other Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA) agencies, as discussed in Chapter 2, relationships with the WDBs and WIOA agencies were not as strong as envisioned in some sites, minimal-to-poor in one site, and practically nonexistent in another site. One likely contributing factor that sites had in common was that their residents often could not pass the screening requirements to be eligible for WDB-funded training, which usually involved tests of academic proficiency at a certain grade level using assessment tools such as the Test of Adult Basic Education or Key Train.⁷⁹ Another is that WDBs and WIOA agencies are typically concerned about meeting performance standards, which are often harder to meet with lower-skilled participants, which describes many Jobs Plus residents. The sites where the relationship with the local WDB seemed strongest were Boston and St. Louis. In Boston, the Jobs Plus program director and the PHA Director of Community Services (who oversees Jobs Plus) both have a close working relationship with the WDB liaison and have direct and open lines of communication. The WDB advises the program on regional employment trends and opportunities and on individual participants’ cases. It provides career services, hosts job fairs, and often gives Jobs Plus participants priority. The local WIOA agency serves as the implementing partner for Jobs Plus in St. Louis; while the WIOA agency and the PHA worked together to write the Jobs Plus grant proposal, and the partnership developed into a very strong one, changes in leadership at the WIOA agency in the second year of the program have led to challenges in the partnership.

Four sites had fair to moderately strong relationships with their local WDBs or WIOA agencies, in which those agencies had liaisons who worked with the Jobs Plus program, but the relationships added little value to the Jobs Plus program. In Chicago, two WIOA-funded community agencies served primarily as liaisons to connect residents to training providers. Training participation, at least at the time of the research visit, however, was low. Consequently, the value of the connections made to training by the WIOA agencies is questionable. In Charlotte, although the site has a fairly strong relationship with the local workforce agency, residents were mostly eligible for its job readiness class; they tended not to be eligible for or interested in training. Memphis’s WDB had a

⁷⁹ “Under WIOA, training services may be provided if the American Job Center staff, including partner programs’ staff, determines after conducting an interview, an evaluation, or assessment, and career planning, that the individual: ... Has the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services...” DOL (2017).

dedicated staff person who worked with Jobs Plus participants and funded training, but few had interest in training. As a result, perhaps, of the low interest in training and the relocation process in Memphis, the relationship with the WDB has weakened over time. At the beginning of year 3 of Jobs Plus implementation, Syracuse had a new WDB contact who was beginning to attend monthly partner meetings. Together with the Jobs Plus program, the WDB contact was working to identify training that would prepare residents for positions in industries with anticipated job growth in the region. Interest in training was low, however, and Jobs Plus staff indicated that residents would have a hard time meeting eligibility requirements for these trainings.

Two sites had negative relationships or practically no relationship at all with their local WDB. Roanoke's local WIOA provider was supposed to serve as an intermediary in both approving Jobs Plus participants to receive WIOA funds and to pay for their training. Instead of expediting this for Jobs Plus participants, the provider instead seemed to make the Jobs Plus participants the lowest priority, by failing to respond to inquiries from Jobs Plus participants or staff and being very slow to process their paperwork. Cuyahoga essentially had no relationship with their local WDB. Cuyahoga's main contact with the WDB retired before the end of Jobs Plus program operations, and although the site still received some information from the WDB about some possible programs of interest to Jobs Plus participants, the Jobs Plus program and the WDB did not coordinate to provide services or training to residents.

Even for sites that had productive relationships with their WDB partners, the value of those partnerships, which were intended to connect Jobs Plus participants to training programs and training dollars that would lead to career-oriented jobs, can be questioned, when most sites were not promoting training, and most participants were not interested in training or necessarily even career-track jobs. Although WDBs can also provide job search and placement services, which it could potentially do in Jobs Plus by out-stationing WDB staff at the Jobs Plus developments a few designated days each week, most sites provided these services through their own staff or other partners, perhaps missing an opportunity to extend the program's reach and get closer to achieving saturation. Even HUD was not in a good position to try to influence the involvement of the local WDBs with the Jobs Plus programs, since the decentralized nature of the U.S. Department of Labor and state and local workforce agencies made it hard for HUD to apply any leverage at the federal level. Unlike during the original demonstration, local Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) agencies were not involved in any of the sites, likely reflecting low levels of TANF receipt in the Jobs Plus PHAs. Local Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment & Training programs, the employment program operated by the Food and Nutrition Service, were not connected to sites either, although SNAP receipt was likely fairly common in Jobs Plus developments.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Although the HUD Jobs Plus replication had intended for the program to help residents start on a career pathway, which it envisioned would involve work experience and access to training through

partnerships with the programs' local WDBs, this did not come to fruition. It may simply be unrealistic for most residents of Jobs Plus developments, although it could have been realistic for some residents and could be for an increasing number of them as the program matures. It is challenging to be both flexible and responsive to participants' needs and interests and to try to guide participants toward a career pathway that is realistic and achievable. Often, the number of industries that were hiring was small and unmatched to residents' aspirations. Bringing residents' desires and local labor market opportunities into alignment was a significant challenge.

Despite some sites' best efforts to promote training that could potentially set people on a career pathway, residents made it very clear that they needed jobs right away and were not interested in or able to make these longer-term investments in training. Even when some residents may have been willing or able, many could not pass the screenings that are often required to get training through the workforce system. Meanwhile, short-term training, which might be more accessible to more residents, tend to be for low-wage jobs, like CNA positions.

In the absence of training to boost skills, placement into anything but low-wage jobs was very challenging for the Jobs Plus sites. Many residents do not have high school diplomas or much in the way of skills or work experience, and efforts to promote high school equivalency certification were met with low participation. It is also hard for job developers to develop relationships with employers when they are working with a relatively disadvantaged population; if employers have a certain number of jobs to fill, they expect the Jobs Plus job developer or employment specialist to have skilled and qualified people to fill the jobs, and the residents usually do not have the skills.

Given these challenges and the implementation experiences of the Jobs Plus sites, Roanoke rises to the top in terms of implementing a strategy that seems realistic and promising. The program there deliberately aimed to get residents into the best employment it could initially, even if that employment was in low-wage work, and then to build on that work experience to move people up into better-paying jobs later, often by building skills through various training programs. The Jobs Plus program in Roanoke takes a multi-pronged approach to moving residents into employment by having strong relationships with multiple training providers and multiple employers, ensuring that residents with a variety of interests and experiences can find a good fit with the right kind of training and into the right kind of job, which will benefit both the resident and the employer. Relationships with partners that deliver support services were also strong, and the program makes extensive use of partners to deliver support services. Its case management is relatively high-touch, with the program's intention of having case managers reach out at least monthly to participants and even more frequently to individuals with more barriers, creating the best possibility of helping participants overcome barriers so that they can be successfully employed. Moreover, Roanoke had \$3 million to serve 283 work-able residents, the smallest number of work-able residents among the four sites that received the same size grant, and significantly fewer work-able residents than two of those four. They also experienced very little staff turnover. A better relationship with its WDB could make Roanoke's program even stronger.

In future cohorts or replications of Jobs Plus, the programs could benefit from HUD guidance that suggests a similar approach to that taken by Roanoke. It is likely unrealistic that most sites can be successful with a program that emphasizes career pathways right away for all or even most residents. An approach that takes a longer view, aiming to get residents into jobs right away but then continuing to work with them to increase their skills and move them into better-paying jobs, may have more of a chance of being successful. A more structured approach to case management, with an expectation for a certain frequency of contact and more proactive outreach by Jobs Plus staff, could help programs achieve these goals with their residents.

The next chapter discusses the Jobs Plus rent incentive, including its structure, implementation, take-up by residents, and plans for the phase-out of the program.

Chapter 4

The Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard

Introduction

The Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard, or JPEID, is one of the three core components of the Jobs Plus program. The JPEID is intended to reduce disincentives to work by capping the amount of earned income included in the rent calculation. Following JPEID enrollment (which may or may not coincide with enrollment in the formal Jobs Plus program, as discussed later in this chapter), any increases in earned income, wages, for example, will not result in higher rents for the remainder of the Jobs Plus program.⁸⁰

Although every iteration of Jobs Plus has included a rent incentive, the JPEID differs from those incentives used in both the original Jobs Plus program and in the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) replication by being both uniform across sites and providing a full earned income disregard for the entire duration of the program. Most staff members believe that the JPEID is crucial to their program's overall success, and they find it effective for getting residents 'in the door' and interested in the overall Jobs Plus programs.⁸¹

Since roll-out, sites have continued to modify their JPEID practices to ensure a smoother implementation. Some programs stopped referring to the JPEID as a "rent freeze" as residents took this to mean their rents would not go up regardless of the source of income increases. In addition, two sites modified their JPEID enrollment procedures following HUD guidance. One site asked for, and received, public housing agency (PHA) assistance to revamp their JPEID data practices to ensure that they were collecting and reporting accurate information.

JPEID receipt levels are relatively high compared with receipt of the rent incentives in the two earlier iterations of Jobs Plus, although they vary considerably across sites. In the third quarter of 2017, roughly 22 percent of eligible households, ranging across sites from a high of 40 percent to a low of 6 percent, were taking advantage of the JPEID, meaning they had enrolled in the benefit, increased their earned income, and earned the rent incentive.⁸² Those benefitting from the JPEID averaged nearly \$300 per month disregarded in rent in months when they qualified for the JPEID. Because most JPEID beneficiaries did not qualify for the JPEID every month during the study

⁸⁰ In other words, the additional earned income is disregarded for the purposes of calculating household rent.

⁸¹ Tessler et al. (2017).

⁸² As discussed earlier in Chapter 1, the analysis in this chapter excludes Houston.

period, the monthly average among beneficiaries, accounting for months in which they received no benefit, is approximately \$103 between quarter 2, 2015, and quarter 3, 2017.⁸³

Despite these relatively high receipt numbers, JPEID implementation at many sites remains hampered by cumbersome enrollment processes and data collection practices, inaccurate messaging to residents, and confusing or contradictory HUD guidance. Although programs are only beginning to plan for JPEID expiration, several sites are concerned about exhausting JPEID funds prior to the grant ending. Best implementation practices include developing effective communication, ensuring coordination between Jobs Plus and property management staff, and planning for smooth implementation.

Key Findings

- **Sites adopted one of two enrollment procedures for the JPEID.** At four sites, residents must enroll in the JPEID and Jobs Plus separately, while four other sites enroll residents in Jobs Plus and the JPEID simultaneously. Administratively, simultaneous enrollment appears to be less complicated and burdensome than separate enrollment.
- **Incomplete, conflicting, and contradictory HUD guidance hampered JPEID implementation at many sites.** JPEID administration was complicated by shifts in HUD guidance about how the JPEID would be reimbursed to PHAs and their changing position on automatic enrollment procedures. Sites also struggled to understand how the JPEID interacts with other HUD programs, like Family Self-Sufficiency, Rental Assistance Demonstration, and Choice Neighborhoods.
- **The number of participants benefitting from the JPEID varies considerably across sites. Residents who have had their rent disregarded are saving a considerable amount.** The percentage of work-able households with earnings disregarded varied from 6 percent to 40 percent across sites in the third quarter of 2017, whereas residents who benefited from the JPEID between quarter 2 of 2015 and quarter 3 of 2017 had approximately \$292 of rent disregarded in each month that they qualified for the JPEID. This suggests a significant savings for participants who took advantage of the JPEID.
- **Engaging residents in financial empowerment activities and modifying their budgeting behavior has been a challenge.** All sites partnered with local agencies to offer services like budget and credit counseling. Resident engagement in these activities has been low, however, and staff expressed concerns that those services would not have a lasting impact on residents' financial behaviors.

⁸³ For each site, the total rent disregarded was divided by the product of the number of households with earnings disregarded through the JPEID and the number of months between quarter 2, 2015, and quarter 3, 2017 (30 months), based on data from the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Data Visualization Tool. The average amount disregarded was \$103 across all sites.

- **Sites are beginning to plan for the end of the JPEID.** As of late 2017, two sites reported having a firm expiration date, but most are at an early planning stage. Uncertainty over future JPEID expenditures, which are affected by new enrollments and changes in household income, appear to be complicating expiration planning among all sites. Expiration planning challenges have complicated messaging to residents about the timing and implications of expiration.

Structure and Intent of the JPEID

Many believe that the rent policy in the public housing program, which sets rents at 30 percent of adjusted household income, discourage resident work efforts.⁸⁴ Because approximately one-third of any increase in earned income goes toward rent, some residents may avoid seeking employment or increasing their wages. Policy-makers hope that earned income disregards, such as the JPEID, will counteract such employment disincentives by allowing households to keep more of their earnings and “make work pay.”

Prior Experience with Jobs Plus Rent Incentives

Rent-based employment incentives for work-able public housing residents can take many forms, and prior Jobs Plus demonstrations incorporated several variations with quite different results. In the original demonstration, each site designed its own rent-based incentives. Most sites opted for either flat rents, some of which escalated over time, or income-based rents below the 30 percent of adjusted income standard.⁸⁵ In the case of flat rents, residents had the option of reverting back to income-based rents if their income fell.

Implementation of those rent incentives was delayed, however, due to negotiations between HUD and Congress about how to reimburse foregone rental revenue. As a result, most sites did not implement rent incentives until 2 years after the program began. Overall, 48 percent of participants benefited from these incentives; however, this figure varied from 19 to 77 percent across sites. Several sites complemented rent incentives with other financial incentives, such as escrow and rent credits.⁸⁶

In the SIF replication, the rent incentive was the already authorized, but little-used, Earned Income Disregard (EID). EID implementation is complex, and staff reported difficulty explaining

⁸⁴ Olsen et al. (2005) and Painter (2001).

⁸⁵ Miller and Riccio (2002)

⁸⁶ Bloom, Riccio, and Verma (2005).

it to residents.⁸⁷ EID rollout was delayed as staff contended with modifying standard rent calculation procedures. In addition, the EID's incentive, a 100-percent disregard the first year and up to 50 percent in the second, was not as attractive as the original demonstration. Taken together, these issues help explain the very low benefit rates from the EID in the two SIF replication sites: 3 percent in San Antonio and 1 percent in the Bronx.⁸⁸

Key Elements of the JPEID

Unlike the original Jobs Plus demonstration, the rent incentive in the HUD Jobs Plus replication was prescribed in the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and is the same across all sites. The JPEID provides a 100-percent disregard of any additional earned income from the time participants enroll in JPEID to the end of the grant. Thus, participants' rent contributions do not rise following an increase in earned income, thereby completely removing the implicit 30 percent "tax" on increased earnings.

According to Section 2(a) of the 2014 Jobs Plus NOFA:

All targeted residents in the Jobs Plus development are eligible to receive the JPEID benefit, but they must sign up for the Jobs Plus program, even if they do not actively participate in other Jobs Plus activities. (HUD, 2014: 4)

As residents can benefit from the JPEID from the time they enroll through the end of the demonstration, those who sign up earlier have the potential to benefit longer.

The NOFA also specifies that HUD will reimburse sites for JPEID costs (such as administration and forgone rent revenue) through their Jobs Plus grants. The NOFA required applicants to estimate the amount of forgone rent and to include that figure in their proposal budgets. To trigger reimbursements, sites must calculate participants' rents both with and without JPEID and provide those figures to HUD. Thus, although rent contributions will not rise with increases in wage income, residents must continue to report all income increases, wage or non-wage, in the same manner as they did before enrolling in the JPEID.

⁸⁷ A notable challenge to explaining and implementing the EID is that the benefit is suspended when residents lose their employment. The EID "clock" then re-starts when the resident gains employment once again. Staff must not only calculate residents' baseline and EID rent, but must also track how many months residents have benefitted from the EID. In contrast, the JPEID does not have this "clock," and the benefit extends throughout the period of the Jobs Plus grant.

⁸⁸ Over time, even as sites worked through early EID implementation challenges, not many eligible residents took advantage of this incentive. Greenberg et al. (2015).

Implementation Experience

Program staff noted several challenges encountered in implementing the JPEID. These include: (1) establishing JPEID enrollment procedures; (2) establishing data collection and reporting mechanisms; (3) clearly communicating JPEID to residents; (4) receiving consistent HUD guidance on JPEID program regulations; and (5) unique challenges experienced by individual programs, such as uncertainty over how JPEID was to be calculated and the resident accountability. This section describes each of these implementation challenges as well as how program staff addressed them.

Establishing JPEID Enrollment Procedures

As mentioned earlier, the Jobs Plus program guidelines explicitly required participants to enroll in the JPEID in addition to their formal enrollment in Jobs Plus. To fulfill that requirement, local programs developed their own enrollment processes, sometimes altering them in response to HUD guidance. Those enrollment processes followed one of two models.

1. **Separate enrollment in Jobs Plus and JPEID.** In four instances, Jobs Plus staff members enrolled residents in the program and then referred them to the property manager's office to enroll in the JPEID, which entailed entering data for the residents in a separate JPEID tracking system, described later. In other instances, residents could enroll in either Jobs Plus or the JPEID first and would be referred to other staff to complete their enrollment.
2. **Simultaneous enrollment in Jobs Plus and the JPEID.** In four sites, when Jobs Plus staff enrolled residents in the programs, they forwarded their information to property managers, who then enrolled them in JPEID. This allowed residents to avoid a separate visit to the property management office.

The first approach, non-simultaneous enrollment in Jobs Plus and the JPEID, was used in Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, and Roanoke. There, participants had to enroll separately in Jobs Plus and JPEID. In Charlotte and Chicago, residents enroll in Jobs Plus first and are then referred to the property manager to enroll in JPEID. In Roanoke, residents can enroll in either Jobs Plus or the JPEID first, and they are then referred to the other office (either Jobs Plus or property management) to enroll in the other component. Due to Boston beginning to offer the JPEID later, many residents had already enrolled in Jobs Plus before the JPEID was offered.

In contrast, simultaneous enrollment is arguably less complicated and less burdensome on both residents and staff. Cuyahoga, Memphis, St. Louis, and Syracuse enrolled participants simultaneously. Syracuse holds orientations where representatives from Jobs Plus and property management provide information on Jobs Plus and the JPEID and sign participants up at those meetings. The orientations occur twice a month, but staff are willing to provide a one-on-one orientation and enrollment if requested. St. Louis enrolls residents in the JPEID when they are initially assessed for Jobs Plus services, while Memphis enrolls residents when they sign up for Jobs Plus. Although

residents in Memphis enroll in both Jobs Plus and the JPEID at the same time, the original enrollment form did not specifically ask residents if they wanted to enroll in the JPEID, so HUD asked them to re-contact participants to get their explicit permission.

In all but one site, work-able household members are enrolled individually in JPEID, so if two work-able adults are in the household, each one needs to enroll in the program. The Boston program, however, enrolls the entire household in the JPEID when *any* household member enrolls in the JPEID. Staff from Boston cited administrative efficiencies as the reason for making this change. This process, however, is at odds with HUD guidance specifying that each individual household member must enroll in JPEID for their wage income not to count toward rent calculations.

HUD later stopped two previously-utilized enrollment processes. First, in two sites, property managers were enrolling residents in the JPEID when they reported any income increases. Their JPEID enrollment would be back-dated so that the higher wage income would not result in an increased rent. When learning of this practice, however, HUD informed these sites that it was not consistent with program regulations, and that practice was stopped.

Second, to simplify enrollment procedures and help sites meet saturation goals, in late 2016, HUD advised sites that they could shift to automatic JPEID enrollment. If adopted, all eligible residents would be enrolled in the JPEID without having to sign up for it. Although this approach was consistent with the Jobs Plus goal of saturation, most of the sites decided not to move to automatic enrollment. Reasons for not doing so include wanting to engage with prospective program participants to discuss the services available to them, and concerns over whether their budgets could cover all work-able residents taking advantage of the JPEID. HUD subsequently changed its position and informed the sites that automatic enrollment was not consistent with program regulations.

Data Collection and Reporting

Data collection and reporting has been a significant administrative burden for many sites. Unlike case-management data systems, where programs have adopted commercial software, like Tracking-At-A-Glance (TAAG) or Visual Homes, each site developed its own JPEID tracking process. Staff at several sites noted that their processes were cumbersome; in fact, one program continues to use a manual, pen-and-paper process to calculate the JPEID. Regarding the effort required reporting quarterly JPEID data to HUD, one systems analyst noted: “it can take several full days of work to just get the data moved over.”

Over time, however, sites have made substantial progress in improving how they track the JPEID, and program administrators at two sites have used JPEID data to deliver services more effectively. For instance, case managers can motivate residents to participate in financial empowerment activities by mentioning how much they are saving in rent; one staff member noted that “we have to

start preparing [residents] for saving ... your rent may be \$75, but then it may jump to \$800 [after the JPEID ends].”

As an example of improved data tracking, the Charlotte program asked for and received assistance from Charlotte Housing Authority staff to establish a more robust JPEID tracking system and to analyze prior rent data to identify how much rent each participant should have disregarded. This process took several months, and after its completion, staff felt like they had a much better understanding of which participants were enrolling in the JPEID and how much they were saving in rent.

Communicating JPEID

Jobs Plus programs have refined how they explained the JPEID to other staff members and to the residents of the targeted development. In the early implementation period, some sites messaged the JPEID as a “rent freeze,” which led to complications when residents increased their unearned income (for example, child support payments). Thus, a few programs eliminated the use of catchy slogans like “rent freeze” in favor of more in-depth descriptions of how the JPEID operates.

Sites have also worked to improve communication both among Jobs Plus staff and between Jobs Plus and property management staff. One site developed an advisory document that property managers provide to residents that accurately explains the JPEID. At some sites, though, not having Jobs Plus and property management offices co-located led to continued communication and coordination challenges. It appears that sites where Jobs Plus and property management are either co-located or within the same building, such as Roanoke, Chicago, and St. Louis, led to closer coordination between the JPEID and Jobs Plus program services.

Sites have also developed policies for enrolling youth who turn 18 and hence are eligible for the JPEID. Per HUD and PHA policy, any wage income of youth turning 18 is included in the household rent calculation;⁸⁹ in other words, youth are not automatically enrolled in the JPEID, even if the head of household has already enrolled. Staff in Memphis actively reach out to enroll 17-year-olds in JPEID so that when they turn 18, their incomes will not affect their household’s rent. As mentioned earlier, Boston has applied its household-level enrollment to all youth living in a household where another member is enrolled in JPEID.

HUD Guidance on JPEID

As sites began implementing the JPEID, they encountered several issues that were not anticipated nor covered in HUD’s initial program guidelines and sought HUD guidance. HUD had several ways of providing that guidance, including monthly calls between the grant managers and the Jobs

⁸⁹ This excludes earnings in excess of \$480 for each full-time student aged 18 or older.

Plus program directors, a series of documents with frequently asked questions (FAQs), memos, webinars, and presentations at the annual conference.

Relevant to the JPEID component of Jobs Plus were four JPEID FAQ documents published between July 2015 and October 2017. The main questions addressed in these documents are:

1. How to handle Jobs Plus enrollees who were already enrolled in the EID.
2. Whether each household member had to sign-up for the JPEID.
3. What happens to participants' rents if their incomes decrease?
4. How to establish baseline rents.
5. Whether residents who were not enrolled in the JPEID were eligible for Jobs Plus services.

HUD's initial guidance had to be reversed in two instances. First, the original plan for reimbursing JPEID was through line items in Jobs Plus budgets. At the beginning of the program, each site had to estimate foregone rental revenues and establish a budget line to cover those costs. On October 7, 2016, however, the sites were informed via an Accounting Guidance memo that future JPEID expenditures would be reimbursed through the Public Housing Operating Funds, as is the case with the EID. This change was made to free up Jobs Plus grant funds, which could be used to support other components of the program. One important implication of this change was that sites did not have to worry about the number of residents enrolled in JPEID, since the reimbursements were no longer limited by the amounts set aside in their budgets.

Approximately 1 year later, however, sites received a letter from HUD stating that its earlier guidance on JPEID reimbursements was "incorrect and must be rescinded . . . based on appropriations law principles." Moving forward, sites would once again be reimbursed for the JPEID through their grants, not through Public Housing Operating Funds. Moreover, HUD would recapture any JPEID reimbursements that had been provided through Public Housing Operating Funds under the previous guidance. Program staff mentioned that this reversion increased administrative burdens including having to readjust their grant budgets to shift money back to the JPEID line item. In addition, some sites had already spent or obligated some JPEID funds for other purposes, causing one site to exceed the grant budget for JPEID with no method of being reimbursed by HUD for disregarded uncollected rent. Other sites had to cancel planned expenditures, such as hiring an additional case manager or paying for technical assistance. The financial impact of requiring JPEID to be reimbursed from the grant varies substantially at each site based on the volume of enrollment. For example, in Chicago, more than 450 households have benefitted from JPEID. Although the average disregard per unit month is similar to the average of all sites, the significant enrollment outcomes have resulted in a cumulative disregard amount that exceeds the total grant award. Finally, PHA staff members expressed concern that the reprogramming of funds would, due to lack of funds, force them to terminate the JPEID program before the end of the grant period.

The second important change in program regulations involved the use of automatic enrollment. As mentioned earlier, the authorization for Jobs Plus specified that residents had to sign up for the program to receive the JPEID benefit. Sites interpreted this language to mean that each individual had to visit the Jobs Plus or property management office to enroll in the program. Some PHA staff worried, however, that this interpretation was limiting the number of residents taking advantage of JPEID. The prospect of sites moving to an automatic enrollment process was discussed at the March 2016 Jobs Plus Conference and, shortly thereafter, HUD provided sites with information about adopting automatic enrollment, leaving them to decide whether to do so. In a March 2, 2017 webinar, HUD officials discussed the potential benefits and drawbacks of automatic enrollment. Between then and the publication of the September 2017 FAQ, however, HUD rescinded this option. Among the first cohort sites, only Houston adopted automatic enrollment. Reasons given for not adopting automatic enrollment include fears of overspending their budgets if all residents received the JPEID and losing an opportunity to engage residents through the enrollment process.

In a few sites, staff members were concerned that HUD has not provided enough guidance, specifically around interactions between the JPEID and other HUD programs, such as Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS), Choice Neighborhoods Initiative relocation, and the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD). Regarding FSS, sites were at first unsure of whether FSS program participants would be able to continue to receive their escrow payments while also benefiting from the JPEID income disregard. HUD guidance was that residents could choose to continue receiving FSS escrow payments or JPEID income disregard, but not both. In addition, some staff members were unsure whether residents would be able to transition to FSS escrow following the end of the JPEID program.

Confusion around RAD and Choice Neighborhoods largely pertains to how the JPEID will be reimbursed for participants in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program. This is primarily an issue for the Memphis and Charlotte sites, as residents in Memphis were displaced from the original development during redevelopment and most relocated using HCVs. With RAD in Charlotte, the site converted from public housing to Project-Based Vouchers. It does not appear that HUD anticipated HCV participants receiving the JPEID and had not prepared guidance for how sites were to be reimbursed for them.

Site-specific Implementation Issues

The Boston and Roanoke Jobs Plus programs had unique challenges in implementing their JPEID programs. In late 2016, the Boston program had not implemented the JPEID due to its uncertainty over how the JPEID would work; staff indicated they did not want to rollout the JPEID only to have to change how it was implemented. Staff promised “rent credits”—that is, future discounts on their rent in the amount of JPEID they would have earned—to residents who had enrolled in Jobs Plus and increased their earned incomes. These credits were to be paid when the confusion over JPEID was resolved. As of late 2017, Boston had implemented the JPEID and was calculating

rent credits for all participants. In fall 2017, a letter was sent to all residents to inform them that the JPEID was actively being offered.

The Roanoke Jobs Plus program found that a large proportion of residents who were benefiting from JPEID had unpaid rents. Toward the beginning of the program, Roanoke had developed a participation agreement that forgave back rent if residents enrolled in Jobs Plus and attended a certain number of financial empowerment courses. Although staff believed these agreements were effective in increasing resident participation in Jobs Plus, the site continued to struggle with many residents who were behind on their rents, even among households benefitting from the JPEID. Thus, after receiving approval from HUD, staff at the Roanoke Jobs Plus program sent a letter to all participants stating that, if they were not current with their rent as of January 1, 2018, they would lose their JPEID benefit. Moving forward, the staff at Roanoke intend to continue enforcing this policy on a quarterly basis.

Take-up and Engagement

Quantitative and qualitative data are utilized to measure take-up, engagement, and saturation of the JPEID. Quantitative data are obtained from the Jobs Plus Data Visualization Tool, which includes quarterly data reported by the sites, covering the period from April 2015 to the third quarter of 2017, as well as additional data for quarter 3, 2017, obtained by MDRC from the sites; the evaluation team has not independently verified the quantitative data the sites made available. Qualitative data are drawn from interviews conducted during the research team's site visits.

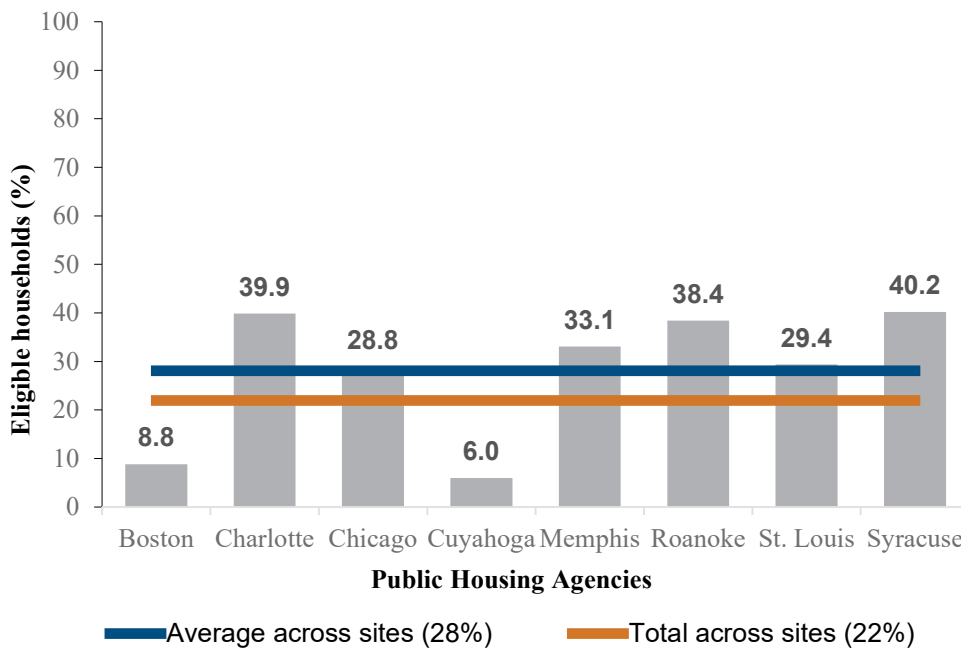
Regarding the receipt of the JPEID, the number of eligible (that is, work-able) households that have both enrolled in the JPEID and had disregarded earnings in quarter 3, 2017, varies significantly across sites (see Figure 4.1).⁹⁰ In quarter 3, 2017, Charlotte, Memphis, Roanoke, and Syracuse have the largest proportion of households benefiting from the JPEID, with each having at least one-third of eligible households with disregarded earnings. Two sites have fewer than 10 percent of eligible residents with disregarded earnings. During this timeframe, although the *average* across all sites is 28 percent of work-able households benefitting from JPEID, the total for all work-able households across the eight sites is 22 percent; this lower figure is a result of some very large developments (namely Boston and Cuyahoga) having lower numbers of households benefitting from the JPEID.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Data on the number of eligible households were not available for the full study period, so the percentages of households benefitting from JPEID is reported only for the last quarter of the study period.

⁹¹ Another possible explanation for the lower percentage in Boston is that more residents were employed prior to Jobs Plus implementation. As noted elsewhere in this chapter, some staff believe that the JPEID is not as appealing to already-employed residents as it is to unemployed residents.

Less variation exists, however, in the average amount of rent disregarded among residents benefiting from the JPEID, that is, among those residents who have both enrolled in the JPEID and increased their earned income (see Figure 4.2). Using data available for this analysis, it appears that, on average, participants who received the JPEID have \$292 in rent disregarded in each month that they qualified for the JPEID program; site-specific figures vary from \$245 in Charlotte to \$333 in Chicago. Because most JPEID beneficiaries did not qualify for the JPEID every month during

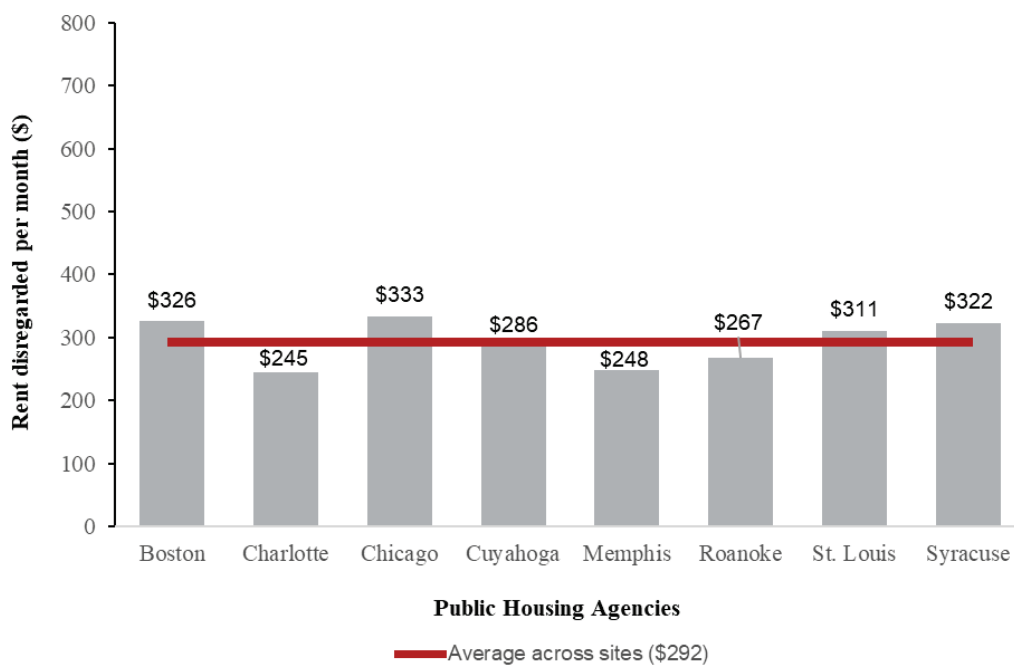
Figure 4.1 | Eligible Households with Earnings Disregarded by Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard Cohort 1 Sites: Quarter 3, 2017



Notes: Eligible households include households with at least one work-able adult. These data cover only households with earnings disregarded in quarter 3, 2017. Data are not available to calculate the percentages of households with any earnings disregarded for the full study period; percentages for the full period are expected to be higher.

Source: Evaluation team calculations based on PHA quarterly expenditure and JPEID reports to HUD, and supplemental reports from PHAs.

**Figure 4.2 | Average Amount of Rent Disregarded Per Beneficiary Household Per Month Received
Cohort 1 Sites: Quarter 2, 2015–Quarter 3, 2017**



Notes: Site calculation reflect the average amount of rent disregarded within beneficiary months among those households that benefited. These data do not account for months in which households did not have rent disregarded due to gaps in employment or otherwise.

Source: Evaluation team calculations based on data from HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Data Visualization Tool.

the study period, the monthly average among beneficiaries, accounting for months in which they received no JPEID benefit, is approximately \$103.⁹² These figures suggest that participants who have taken advantage of the JPEID have saved a significant amount in rent, especially when one considers that some residents may have baseline rents of \$50 or less. As of September 2017, the eight Jobs Plus sites under study had disregarded over \$4 million (\$4,107,078) in rent through the JPEID program.

Staff believe that certain types of residents are more likely to benefit from the JPEID by enrolling and increasing their incomes. Some believe it has helped unemployed residents more because they are able to enroll in JPEID and lock in very low rents. Others argued that already-employed residents benefitted more, because it was easier for them to increase their incomes than it was for unemployed participants to find work. Both groups can take advantage of the JPEID, either by

⁹² The monthly average amount of rent disregarded per beneficiary household, accounting for months in which they received no benefit, ranged from \$86 to \$155 across the PHAs. This corresponds to an average reported increase in earned income ranging from \$287 to \$517 per month, depending on the PHA, between quarter 2, 2015, and quarter 3, 2017.

securing new employment or by increasing their hours worked. This suggests that the JPEID may have broad appeal across different types of residents.

Conversely, some groups were said to be less likely to see the benefit of the JPEID. Some staff members mentioned comparatively small groups at their sites who are comfortable paying minimum rent and are not motivated to find employment; thus, the JPEID did not appeal to them. One noted that mothers with small children were focused on childcare responsibilities and less likely to enroll in and benefit from the JPEID. A staff member in Syracuse said that “we do find difficulty with say the younger households . . . that have children because it’s so hard to pull them away from all their responsibilities.”

Financial Empowerment

Many sites have closely integrated financial empowerment services with the JPEID. The goal of these services is to help residents save additional income received through the JPEID and build financial security. Many staff members noted, however, that JPEID does not always translate into savings because no mechanism forces residents to save all or a portion of the disallowed earned income. Without this mechanism, some staff members said that many residents have struggled to see the “big picture” of JPEID. At some sites, staff members expressed concern that financial empowerment services have not adequately prepared residents for life after Jobs Plus.

Financial empowerment activities typically entail specialized counseling services and workshops to foster financial self-sufficiency among residents. Typical services include budget and credit counseling workshops, helping participants open savings or individual development accounts (IDA), and connecting residents with homeownership opportunities (see Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1 | Financial Empowerment Activities
Cohort 1 Sites: Quarter 3, 2017**

Activities	Sites							
	Boston	Charlotte	Chicago	Cuyahoga	Memphis	Roanoke	St. Louis	Syracuse
Financial literacy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Credit counseling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Credit repair	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Budgeting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tax assistance	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
Benefits counseling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

Savings promotion ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

Note: Activities could be available on-site, or off-site by referral.

Source: Analysis from field research conducted as part of the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot implementation study and reports by sites.

As programs evolved, most sites have developed partnerships with providers who specialize in financial empowerment services, and they have increasingly focused on budget and credit counseling. Many case managers and community coaches also report providing informal services to residents, typically in the form of counseling and informal conversations about financial empowerment.

All programs have developed partnerships with workforce development agencies, employers, or local nonprofits to provide financial literacy workshops and financial counseling services (see Table 4.2). The nature of these relationships, however, and the degree of their formality, differ significantly across programs. For example, St. Louis has partnered with Stifel Bank and Trust to provide a standardized five-series financial empowerment program. Charlotte, in contrast, partners with Common Wealth Charlotte to provide financial counseling services, but also relies heavily on case-managers and partner organizations to provide financial literacy classes as needed. Although the

**Table 4.2 | Financial Empowerment Partnerships
Cohort 1 Sites: Quarter 3, 2017**

Site	Partner Organization
Boston	Partnered with the Kennedy Center, a local health center, to provide financial empowerment workshops. Staff report that they partnered with the agency because it already had strong ties with the community.
Charlotte	Partnered with Common Wealth Charlotte to provide financial literacy and counseling service on a case-by-case basis.
Chicago	Partnered with the Local Initiatives Support Corporation to establish a “Financial Opportunity Center,” where residents can meet with financial coaches and participate in workshops.
Cuyahoga	Partnered with Community Financial Centers at Cleveland Neighborhood Progress to provide financial literacy services and administrative oversight of the Jobs Plus Program.
Memphis	Partnered with the RISE Foundation, a local nonprofit, to provide economic literacy classes to both adults and youths. Because Memphis only has scattered site housing, workshops are provided at neighborhood centers.

Roanoke	Partnered with Money Management International to provide financial counseling to residents.
St. Louis	Partnered with Stifel Bank and other local financial institutions to provide a standardized five-series course on financial literacy.
Syracuse	Partnered with the State Employees Federal Credit Union (SEFCU) and their Institute for Financial Well-Being in partnership to provide financial literacy workshops to residents.

Source: Field research data collected as part of the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot implementation study.

specifics of these relationships differ, most partnerships are codified by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and are geared toward increasing residents' financial literacy and economic progress.

In addition to formal partnerships, Jobs Plus staff play significant roles in providing both formal and informal financial empowerment services. For example, Cuyahoga has a full-time Jobs Plus Youth Coordinator who provides financial empowerment services to 13- to 18-year-olds, and Boston's financial coach helps residents with tax returns, FAFSA applications, and general financial advice such as checking accounts, building and repairing credit, budgeting, and saving. Case managers and community coaches at almost all sites also report providing informal services in the form of counseling and encouragement. As one case manager explained, "I personally assist the individual to look at the bigger picture ... [The] small picture is obtaining employment ... but the bigger picture is long term."

Regarding financial empowerment services, staff noted two primary challenges. First, sustaining resident engagement in financial empowerment services remains a challenge. Staff noted that participants are often more interested in employment services to meet their immediate needs rather than financial empowerment services that can provide longer-term benefits. Likewise, lack of transportation and childcare create practical barriers to resident involvement in financial empowerment services, especially when services are not located onsite.

Second, many staff members noted that getting residents to see the "big picture" of financial empowerment courses is a challenge, and some are concerned that courses have not had a lasting impact on residents' spending and budgeting behavior. As one project director explained, "We still struggle with getting people to see not only the value of work ... but also the value of budgeting ... They're still just cashing their check at the check-cashing place." Many staff members noted similar concerns and added that many residents are still hesitant to open savings accounts because "[their] past experience has been negative as it relates to banks and fees and such."

Comparatively, the staff at Boston and Syracuse report having greater success with financial empowerment services. Boston has a full-time staff member dedicated to providing financial empowerment services, which has allowed the site to develop innovative tax-counseling services previously described, while Syracuse provides referrals to a homebuyer's assistance class that has allowed some participants to purchase homes. Staff from both sites note that they have remained dedicated to their initial vision for financial empowerment services, which appears to have facilitated their successes. Staff also emphasize the importance of promoting financial empowerment services to participants and holding workshops on evenings and weekends.

Plans for JPEID Expiration

While aware that funding for Jobs Plus ends in September 2019, most sites are still determining specific dates and processes for ending the JPEID. Two closely-related issues have complicated this process. First, many staff members report that the uncertainty of JPEID expenditures makes it difficult to move forward with planning for JPEID expiration. This uncertainty creates a second related issue: the lack of a clear end date makes it difficult to provide residents with clear messages about the timing of JPEID expiration. As discussed later in this report, many also voiced concerns about the effects of phase-out on residents, and some sites are considering supplementary funding to extend the benefit and more intensive case management to prepare residents for increased rents.

In general, sites are in the early stages of planning for JPEID expiration. Most sites have begun this process by evaluating how long their JPEID budgets will be able to provide rent benefits and by encouraging staff to notify residents that the JPEID will end sometime in 2019. Staff at the Boston and Cuyahoga sites noted that their programs have set firm JPEID expiration dates, while staff at other sites are still in the process of determining specific dates. Property managers and case managers at some sites are notifying residents that JPEID expiration will occur when they come in for workshops, rent recertification, and orientations. Syracuse informs new residents of the approximate length and associated benefit of JPEID at orientation.

Setting a clear expiration date is a challenge for some sites. Because JPEID expenditures are affected by new enrollments and changes in household composition, it is difficult to predict how long sites will be able to provide JPEID benefits to residents. Staff also report that it is difficult to evaluate how other demonstration programs, such as RAD and Moving to Work (MTW), may affect JPEID expenditures. Many staff members also note that the conflicting HUD guidance on the sources of JPEID reimbursements, which was discussed previously, has added to the difficulty to estimate when they must stop offering JPEID to program participants.

Some sites are considering whether other funding streams can supplement the JPEID budget. Chicago, for example, has drawn from its MTW funding to meet JPEID budget shortfalls. Memphis staff anticipate they will exhaust the JPEID budget prior to the program ending, and they plan to enroll eligible residents in EID at that time, although standard EID will also soon end. St. Louis expects some shortfall, but they also anticipate that their implementation partner will likely not

expend all the funds in its contract. St Louis's plan is to cover as much of the shortfall as possible out of the grant, and while they do not anticipate transitioning early, they will do so if all the funds are exhausted. If a site ran out of funds to cover their JPEID and continued providing the benefit to residents, they would not be reimbursed for the rental revenue they would have otherwise collected. That revenue normally funds things such as operations and maintenance.

One common concern is that residents are not prepared to pay for increased rent amounts or for services that are currently covered by Jobs Plus, such as transportation and childcare expenses. As one case manager explained, "We're really informing them ... 'hey, this is changing. Eventually, childcare may go away. Not only childcare, but especially the bus passes. That may go away.'" Although most sites have begun to notify residents about expiration and increased rents, client-serving staff are still concerned the residents are not fully prepared.

As of early 2018, the staff at the Roanoke site are organizing a "fast forward" event to help residents budget for the end of the JPEID program. The event will take place at the development's community room and is modeled after events the housing authority has organized for FSS participants. Attendees will receive Monopoly money in the amount of their monthly paychecks, and they will visit tables to pay different bills (electric bill, groceries, and so on), including their post-JPEID rent. The event will also connect residents to financial partners, and staff will use the event to encourage attendees to take advantage of the financial empowerment classes.

Recommendations

Staff interviews and program implementation experiences suggest several recommendations and considerations for the successful and smooth implementation of the JPEID. The staff universally cited the need for effective communication as crucial to the overall success of their program. They recommended that program staff be explicit in discussing with residents how the JPEID works, and to avoid easy-to-understand but inaccurate phrases like "rent freeze." One senior staff member recommended that sites "make sure that messaging is straight ... the last thing you want to do is ... promise a benefit and then have to change your mind."

Another recommendation that emerged across sites was the importance of coordination between the Jobs Plus and property management staffs. The JPEID places additional burdens on property management in the form of tracking enrollment and calculating rents. Thus, for smooth implementation, property management must understand the importance of the program and how the JPEID works. At two sites, staff specifically cited their property manager as crucial to strong implementation, whereas another site changed property managers partially in response to poor JPEID implementation. One program director noted that "We couldn't do [the JPEID program] without a property manager who had tremendous buy-in," whereas another noted that "I encourage the new [Jobs Plus grant] recipients to really get your property management on your team."

Planning for program rollout was another recommendation offered. Nearly all sites struggled with rolling out the JPEID. Several staff members noted that early difficulties, particularly regarding data collection and HUD guidance, delayed the availability of the JPEID to residents. To that end, many staff members cited the importance of having robust data collection and reporting procedures in place prior to roll-out, which can alleviate problems that sites may face later in implementation, such as having to re-configure their data collection practices. One staff member noted that with the limited period of the grant, it is crucial to offer the JPEID as early as possible.

The staff interviews also suggest the following recommendations for modifying other operational aspects of the JPEID.

1. **Reducing administrative burden.** Several staff members would like to see JPEID enrollment and calculation simplified. Specific recommendations include shifting from individual- to household-level enrollment in the JPEID, which would simplify both enrollment and calculation of the benefit.
2. **Separating JPEID funding from the overall Jobs-Plus grant budget.** Several staff noted how including the JPEID in the grant budgets reduced their program's flexibility to hire additional staff or obtain technical assistance, and, in one case, exceed their grant budget. Separating the JPEID from the grant budget—for example, by reimbursing it from the Public Housing Operations Fund—would alleviate those challenges. Sites that achieved greater JPEID take-up felt that they were being punished for their success, because they were in danger of exhausting their JPEID budgets prior to the grant expiration. This issue was especially acute at larger sites, even with an average JPEID disregard per unit month similar to other programs, Chicago's total JPEID expenditures as of September 2017 (\$2,045,789) was over two-thirds of their entire grant budget.
3. **Increasing resident accountability.** Staff at several sites would like the JPEID to include more stipulations for residents who receive it. For example, one staff member wished that the JPEID were more like FSS escrow, where the resident would receive a lump sum after successfully graduating from the program. Others would like to see mandatory enrollment in employment services and financial empowerment classes as a condition of receiving the JPEID. Staff believed that greater accountability would not only increase the likelihood that residents would benefit from the JPEID but would also better prepare them for its eventual expiration.

Chapter 5

Community Support for Work

The Community Support for Work (CSW) component of Jobs Plus aims to strengthen relationships that will support work, encourage residents to engage in meaningful work activities, create shared expectations and aspirations for employment, and help residents support each other. This chapter explores how CSW matured during the first 2 years of program implementation, the differences across sites in operationalizing their CSW strategies, and lessons for HUD and future program implementers.

Key Findings

- **Sites relied on five main strategies to advance CSW goals.** These strategies included the use of community coaches, enrollment, recruitment and information-sharing activities, conducting community events, promoting social support and network building, and building bridges to the broader neighborhood and metropolitan area.
- **The community coach model had varied success,** in part depending on the coaches' individual needs and the sites' various approaches to training them.
- **Only a few sites moved toward a shared responsibility of all staff, residents, and partners** in implementing a CSW strategy. Multiple staff and partners across different roles, including case managers, job developers, and property managers are needed to supplement CSW efforts.
- **The vision and strategies for CSW evolved over time,** and eventually, all sites began to implement CSW by year 2 with variance in their approaches.⁹³
- **In the two sites where CSW was more effectively implemented, it showed promise for strengthening relationships and promoting resident engagement in work activities,** and the clearest potential for sustaining CSW activities after the Jobs Plus grant ends. They are both Moving to Work (MTW) sites with work requirements and invested significantly more resources than other sites in CSW activities.

⁹³ The evaluation of the original demonstration also found that sites typically implemented the employment services and the Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID) components of Jobs Plus before implementing CSW, and most CSW-related efforts were not firmly established or sustained at sites. See Bloom, Riccio, and Verma (2005).

- **Issues of physical and social isolation from resources, as well as safety concerns, prevented some sites from maximizing the benefits of CSW.**
- **Sites benefited from continual HUD clarification about the CSW component.** Unclear and mixed messages about the goals of CSW slowed the implementation of this component across sites. Early and consistent clarity about CSW expectations, best practices, and performance evaluation is vital to the success of early implementation.

Conceptualizing Community Support for Work

CSW was intended to expand existing networks and build new ones for residents. Originally inspired by a growing recognition of the importance of social networks in job-seeking, this component sought to strengthen social ties among residents to support their efforts at job preparation and career advancement.

Four elements appear to be central to how sites define CSW: saturation, resident leadership, relationship building, and community expectations. These elements stand out as integral in prior demonstrations of Jobs Plus and were encouraged in HUD’s policy guidance for its Jobs Plus Pilot Program.⁹⁴

Saturation: This element involved infusing the entire public housing development with messages about the importance of work and the availability of employment services on site to create an environment in which the importance of work is pervasive.

Resident leadership: The 2014 HUD Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) highlighted the idea that residents could ultimately take ownership of the program. HUD aspires to have residents become involved and remain committed to promoting work within the public housing community, even after program funding formally ends.

Social capital: Expanding residents’ networks and relationships increases their social capital and broadens their connections to employment opportunities. In the original demonstration and the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) replication, sites encouraged neighbor-to-neighbor information exchanges, network building, mutual support, and efforts to make connections to community-based organizations. In HUD’s Jobs Plus Pilot program, most sites articulated their vision for relationship building among residents, yet fewer sites shared the goal to have residents connect to resources within the surrounding neighborhood and the larger metro area.

Community expectations and aspirations for work: One goal of CSW is to promote community-wide expectations for work to encourage residents to think differently about themselves, their

⁹⁴ These foundational elements should be considered necessary in conceptualizing CSW in this pilot (Tessler et al., 2017).

aspirations, and their life trajectories. Ultimately, CSW efforts could result in a community where residents support each other to become economically stable enough to move out of poverty.

Conceptual Issues and the Need for Clearer Guidance

Sites' ideas about the purpose of CSW were shaped by various messages from HUD policy and staff. HUD officials initially left the definition of CSW broad to provide sites the flexibility to develop CSW efforts in response to the needs and desires of the local public housing community. As early as the first year of Jobs Plus funding, sites expressed the need for more clarity about how to implement CSW, including direction about strategies for encouraging resident-driven efforts.⁹⁵

In response, HUD issued additional guidance defining CSW activities for grantees.⁹⁶ The HUD guidance instructs sites to develop strategies that “should include multiple intentional and complementary steps to build CSW falling into two main categories.”⁹⁷ The first approach involves “activities that build a caring and cohesive public housing community,” and the second approach involves “informal and nontraditional activities that support residents’ progress toward economic security.”

The HUD guidance states clearly that grantees need to do more than simply enroll residents in Jobs Plus to shift the mindset of the community regarding work:

While the successful enrollment of a large share of residents in formal Jobs Plus activities will obviously be helpful in laying the groundwork for a broader transformation, it is not enough. Intentional steps to foster community and encourage residents to help other residents are needed.⁹⁸

In explaining how to accomplish building a cohesive community, the HUD guidance states:

Activities to build trust, create a sense of community, build a sense of shared purpose, train resident leaders, build resident self-confidence, and reduce the social isolation of individual residents [were all indicated as important] for achieving this goal. Social activities that focus primarily on getting residents out of their units are helpful but not sufficient to achieve [the CSW] goal.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Tessler et al. (2017).

⁹⁶ HUD (2016). See Appendix B.

⁹⁷ HUD (2016).

⁹⁸ HUD (2016).

⁹⁹ HUD (2016)

In addition, the HUD guidance clearly outlines the importance of a shared commitment to CSW among all staff. According to the document, “Everyone has a role in building CSW,” including housing authority staff, community coaches, and residents.¹⁰⁰ HUD officials stressed that CSW should not be viewed as the responsibility of only certain staff members, but that all program staff should be responsible for promoting CSW and the value of mutual accountability among residents to support each other to obtain and retain jobs.

Grantees responded positively to this direction from HUD, and some made efforts to integrate the HUD guidance into their strategies and operations. Other grantees, however, suggested that the HUD guidance was overly idealistic and extremely difficult to actualize in practice over the 4-year grant period. As one housing authority leader stated:

“Did I ever really think that [public housing residents] would go to a working culture? No. What I thought we would be able to do is help people with the intense services, maybe get a few more people working...The community more stable? Probably not. Just have to be realistic.”

In addition to providing guidance, HUD staff continued to encourage grantees to cultivate their CSW strategies through informal coaching during structured monthly calls between HUD grant managers and program staff, referrals to technical assistance providers, and informational sessions at the annual Jobs Plus conferences. As detailed later, most grantees responded in ways that led to changes in their formal work plans, staffing patterns, and resident engagement efforts.

HUD and grantees were also working together to come to a clear agreement about how to measure and capture the impact of CSW activities. From the outset, HUD directed grantees to track and quantify CSW efforts, including the number of events, number of residents who attended events, and the number of residents who connected with a community coach. These quantitative measures were somewhat limited in that, for the most part, they could not accurately capture the progress of a site that, on the ground, had implemented CSW in ways consistent with HUD CSW guidance. For example, a site could be very successful in building supportive relationships among residents and in getting other agency staff, such as property managers, to support residents’ employment efforts, without conducting many events.

Capturing the outcomes of CSW efforts is important to understanding how this key component of Jobs Plus adds value to the initiative overall. Further refinement of the CSW performance measurement system that includes both quantitative and qualitative measures is still needed. For example, in addition to tracking existing metrics, HUD could develop a simple survey that grantees would use to assess the intensity and quality of relationships among neighbors and how those relationships aid in expanding work engagement. Grantees could also be trained to gather stories

¹⁰⁰ HUD (2016). See Appendix B.

about the impact of Jobs Plus on residents’ lives and the community over time to both capture outcomes and adapt CSW efforts.

Operationalizing Community Support for Work

Despite the language that clearly describes the *goals* of CSW in HUD’s NOFA, expectations for exactly *how* to implement CSW have been less clear. This ongoing elusiveness contributed to a challenging dynamic in which most sites are still grappling with how to fully implement and sustain CSW activities. During the period observed, all sites began to implement a set of activities, events, and programs. Different sites placed different levels of priority on putting a CSW strategy in place.

Five different programmatic strategies emerged that staff described most frequently as the core elements of CSW, as highlighted in the first evaluation report.¹⁰¹ These strategies include the use of community coaches; enrollment, recruitment, and information-sharing activities; community events; social support and network-building; and bridging to the broader neighborhood and metropolitan area. (See Table 5.1)

Table 5.1 | Community Support for Work Strategies

Programmatic Strategy	Examples at Jobs Plus Sites
Community coaches who were primarily tasked with connecting residents to the Jobs Plus program, and ideally fostering relationships and building trust among residents and for the Jobs Plus staff and infusing resident networks with messages about work.	Bringing/escorting residents to the Jobs Plus office Facilitating Network nights, hosting networking opportunities for residents (Chicago, St. Louis)
Enrollment, recruitment, and information sharing such as door-knocking by community coaches and staff, making phone calls to residents, and spreading information via word-of-mouth.	Actively used Barter Boards Visual displays of resident success stories Case managers following up with residents by going out into community/door-knocking (Memphis)
Community Events that served the purposes of educating residents on a specific topic, enhancing social connections, and encouraging enrollment into Jobs Plus.	“Hire Me Now” on-site hiring events (Chicago) Network Night, Networking in the Neighborhood gatherings (Charlotte, Chicago)
Social support through creating opportunities for residents to connect with each other and develop relationships.	Mix and Mingles—informal event for residents to connect with their neighbors (Cuyahoga) Jobs Plus Members-Only gatherings (Charlotte) Network Night, Networking in the Neighborhood gatherings (Charlotte, Chicago)
Bridging to broader neighborhood and metropolitan areas through connecting with organizations, businesses, and resources beyond the housing development with the hope that broader networks will lead to new opportunities for career development.	Youth employment internships and career-building support (Cuyahoga)

¹⁰¹ Tessler et al. (2017).

Source: Field research conducted in quarter 3 of 2016 and quarter 3 of 2017.

This evaluation reveals that most sites implemented a range of these activities, with some sites implementing all strategies, while other sites concentrated efforts on the first three strategies (community coaches; enrollment, recruitment, and information-sharing activities; and community events). In a subsequent section, this chapter details how sites' implementations of these different activities vary.

In addition, this evaluation reveals that only a few sites started to take a universal approach to implementing CSW, which, as noted earlier, requires the commitment and engagement of all staff, residents, and partners.¹⁰² As the HUD guidance puts it, "Everyone has a role in building CSW." Most grantees understand the value of this universal approach but have struggled to implement it. The only two sites to implement a universal approach were Chicago and Charlotte, where these sites procured training in community-building methods.

The Community Coach Mechanism

In nearly all iterations of Jobs Plus, sites have recruited, trained, and supervised a small group of residents who encourage their neighbors to use Jobs Plus services and improve their employment situations. These residents, commonly referred to as "community coaches" or ambassadors, are considered "extension agents of the Jobs-Plus program through their day-to-day interactions with their neighbors in the development, communicating with them about work and training opportunities."¹⁰³

In HUD's Jobs Plus Pilot Program, most sites supported coaches in their efforts to connect residents to the Jobs Plus program, to each other, and to job opportunities. As detailed in the first report for this evaluation, site staff described four main roles held by coaches: program recruiters, relationship builders, peer leaders, and beneficiaries of the overall Jobs Plus program.¹⁰⁴

HUD's most recent definition of coaches is intended to serve as a guide for clarifying the CSW strategy. In this definition, community coaches are lifted up as a key aspect of CSW in their role of facilitating connections between residents. The HUD CSW guidance specifies:

¹⁰² Tessler et al. (2017).

¹⁰³ Kato (2004).

¹⁰⁴ Tessler et al. (2017).

As resident leaders engaged directly with the Jobs Plus program, community coaches have an important role to play in building CSW. The coaches can serve as important bridges between PHA [public housing agency] staff and residents and can be helpful both in identifying the obstacles that residents are encountering as well as encouraging residents to become engaged in helping each other find and keep jobs.¹⁰⁵

Despite this new guidance, most grantees continued to have community coach positions that were task-oriented and less about fostering relationships among residents and partners.

For the most part, the role of coaches has not changed dramatically since the study sites launched the initiative. The community coach model was similar at most sites, with one to three coaches who worked either part-time or full time. The position was time-limited and, depending on the site, ranged from 6 months to 1 year. The coaches reported to a program manager whose role was to support the professional development of the coach while also supervising the coach in implementing aspects of the work plan.

Across the sites, coaches' tasks appeared to be rather similar and included door-knocking and recruitment, special event coordination, individualized emotional encouragement, administrative support to employment services staff, and facilitation of resident-led initiatives. Some Jobs Plus staff suggested that coaches were available as facilitators and connectors to residents beyond the professional staff and physical office. Coaches made connections with residents while walking around the development and during hours beyond the typical work week.

One of the greatest challenges to the community coach model is that most of the coaches who were hired had experienced unstable employment before they began working for the Jobs Plus program, so they did not necessarily serve as role models for other residents. In addition, many coaches faced challenges in making the transition to stable employment after the short-term coach position ended. As staff explained, the coaches needed extensive training and support, most often because this position was the first job a coach may have had in many years. For some sites, the community coach model amounted to a transitional jobs program that provided both on-the-job training and work experience for residents who otherwise faced challenges obtaining employment. There were only a few instances of this, however, including in Charlotte, where the housing authority hired one of the coaches in a permanent position.

In summary, the strength of the community coach model appears to vary across the sites in the implementation period observed for this study. In some sites, the community coaches serve as connection points to the Jobs Plus program or as role models for utilizing the programs' services.

¹⁰⁵ HUD (2016). See Appendix A.

In Charlotte and Chicago, the community coaches worked alongside Jobs Plus staff and partners to lead activities toward building trust and a community that supports work.

Leveraging Place

As a place-based program, Jobs Plus is designed to build relationships at two different levels: (1) among residents who live in the public housing development, and (2) between residents of the development and the broader community. Thus, the context within and surrounding the public housing community becomes an important asset or challenge for putting CSW into practice.

The benefit of place-based initiatives also includes creating opportunities for staff to become familiar with and understand the context in which participants live, to know their families, and to have informal interactions within the homes of residents. Sites also described the potential for residents to build relationships with each other, both through formal programming and through informal neighbor-to-neighbor connections, likely more than would otherwise be possible.

Maximizing the benefits of a place-based initiative presented two major challenges: (1) physical and social isolation from resources, and (2) safety concerns. Many sites were challenged in connecting to external resources, in part because they were physically isolated from the urban centers. This challenge presented itself most dramatically in Chicago, a site described as “isolated” in interviews, as well as in Boston, which is contained by highways and the Mystic River. One consequence of this isolation, for example, was that it limited building relationships with service providers that were somewhat more distant from the developments.

Safety within the public housing communities also remained a core challenge that diminished the potential advantages of being a place-based program. Both residents and staff had safety concerns, negatively impacting resident engagement with the program. In particular, actual incidents of and perceptions about the lack of safety had an impact on communities in St. Louis, Chicago, Syracuse, and Cuyahoga. Staff and residents (during the focus groups) expressed concerns about their safety within the site and the surrounding neighborhood, especially outside of standard working hours. These concerns diminished staff and residents' capacity to connect with each other in the evenings and on weekends when some residents preferred to meet. Staff and contracted partners also reported being afraid to conduct outreach because of safety concerns.

The place-based aspect of Jobs Plus became even a greater challenge since CSW programmatic activities were limited in participation, in part, due to concerns about safety. Despite the challenges with crime and violence, CSW efforts can enhance communication about trauma, as well as potential strategies for residents and staff to intervene. As described later in this chapter, several sites, including Chicago and Cuyahoga, demonstrated that community network building provides an outlet for residents and staff to enhance their relationships in ways that strengthen their sense of safety and to develop collective responses to threats in the neighborhood.

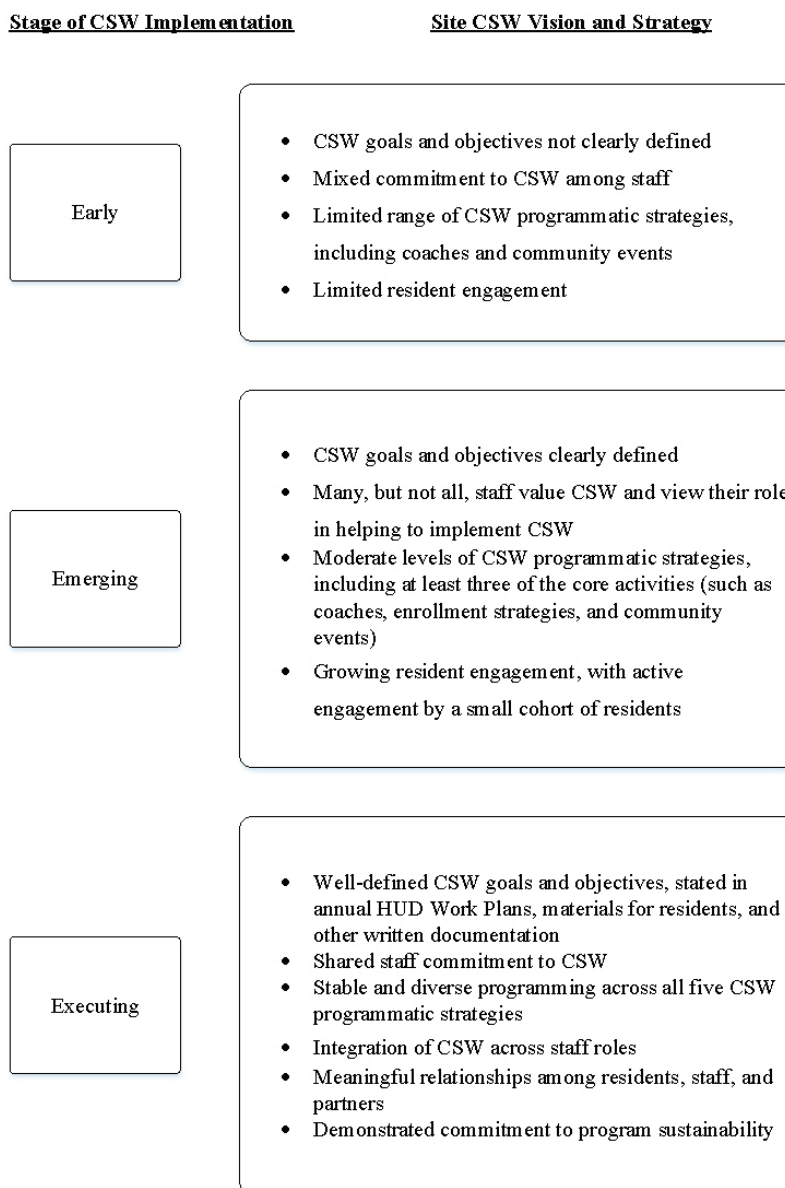
Site Variation in CSW Implementation

Grantees vary widely in how they defined a CSW strategy and the extent to which they implemented their stated CSW goals. This section examines the sites' visions of and strategies for implementing CSW.

The following CSW "implementation typology" captures the variation across sites and over time, clustering sites into three stages: (1) early stage, (2) emerging stage, and (3) executing stage (see Figure 5.1).¹⁰⁶ Sites in the early stage implemented a CSW strategy similar to what they developed when they launched their program. These sites have not, by and large, responded to HUD guidance around what is expected for the CSW component. Sites in the emerging stage have responded to HUD's guidance but have not fully implemented the vision described in HUD's guidance. Sites in the executing stage have for the most part implemented a CSW strategy similar to

¹⁰⁶ Also see Box 5.1 for additional examples of efforts to conceptualize and implement Community Support for Work.

Figure 5.1 | Community Support for Work (CSW) Implementation Typology at the 2-Year Mark



the model in HUD’s guidance. The findings from the cost analysis, described in the next chapter, also show that the sites in the executing stage invested more resources toward supporting their community supports for work activities. These sites, as described in the following paragraphs, are also MTW sites, which have greater flexibility over the use of their non-grant resources.

Early Stage

Sites in the early stage include Boston, St. Louis, and Syracuse. During the first 2 years of the Jobs Plus grant, these sites appeared to have mostly focused their CSW activities on enrollment, recruitment, and information sharing. Over time, they have continued to use the same approach to CSW with which they had started, indicating that their conceptualization and implementation of CSW evolved very

little, if at all. Although staying with the same approach may not necessarily be a problem, it has hindered these sites in advancing from a focus on recruitment and information-sharing activities to fostering a sense of community among residents and other stakeholders.

Lack of Consensus about the Vision and Definition of CSW

Interviews with core staff members and partners from early-stage programs demonstrated a lack of consensus about the definition and vision of CSW. Within each site in this group, the vision for CSW varied considerably, spanning from a lack of knowledge to a misunderstanding about the CSW goals. Interviews demonstrated confusion among staff members. A staff member commented, “I’ve heard it in the grant that we have community support for work. I don’t know. Maybe the community coming together as a whole to—I don’t know, to establish employment. I don’t know. I’m not sure about that one.”

Some staff members who were interviewed described CSW goals that were limited to recruiting residents through outreach and community events. One staff member in Boston explained, “And so the idea is to give that warmer feel to attract people to our services and to let them know that this is an all-inclusive type of environment and program that we’re trying to put in place. And so I apologize if it’s not making too much sense what I’m saying because I don’t really know too much about it, but that’s just my understanding.” A staff member in Syracuse shared a similar approach: “We have been bringing them out more with events that we’ve been putting out there, community forums, just giveaways, things like that, promoting of our open house... And we want to do some things for the community to come out more.”

This lack of a shared vision for CSW inhibited each site’s ability to develop a robust strategy that goes deeper than just outreach and enrollment, a key aspect of successfully implementing the CSW component.

Outreach as Primary Strategy: Limited Role of Coaches

Sites in the early stage focus their CSW on enrollment and events. These sites emphasized conducting outreach, marketing ideas indicating that work is important, and information sharing about the Jobs Plus program. These strategies were implemented primarily by holding community events and community coach outreach. As one staff member put it, for CSW, they are “trying to do a lot of outreach and have a lot of activities that address those issues; whether you’re working or not, you can come.”

Sites held several community events and activities, and many were described as successful in attracting residents. Events included the regularly occurring Community Café and Jobs Plus Bingo in St. Louis, the one-time Unity Day in Boston, and the Town Hall in Syracuse.

The community coach role had not significantly changed in any of these sites since the start-up phase of the program, as the coaches continue to focus primarily on outreach and event support. At the time of interviews, the St. Louis community coach position was designed to be a short-term,

6-month “stepping stone” to employment. Coaches’ daily activities primarily consisted of door-knocking and sharing information about Jobs Plus services with residents. These coaches also helped with special events when they occurred. In Boston, the community coaches focused primarily on outreach, with some support for on-site daycare and Spanish translation. In Syracuse, the Jobs Plus program only had one community coach, who focused mostly on enrollment and outreach, but had also become more involved in program activities on site, such as with an advocacy group that conducted door-to-door outreach for women’s preventative health.

Despite HUD’s focus on relationship building, these three sites maintained a limited role of coaches. Individual coaches at these sites, however, were able to make strides in reaching their own professional goals. For example, a coach in Boston gained long-term employment with the housing authority, whereas another coach obtained a GED certificate.

While some have had success attracting residents to the program, the HUD CSW guidance clearly states that sites must go further to create an environment where work-promoting activities and aspirations for work will sustain after the grant has ended. As detailed earlier, this guidance encourages sites to implement “[i]ntentional steps to foster community and encourage residents to help other residents” and “[a]ctivities to build trust, create a sense of community, build a sense of shared purpose, train resident-leaders, build resident self-confidence, and reduce the social isolation of individual residents.”¹⁰⁷

Implications

The continued focus on enrollment, recruitment, and events, rather than on activities and processes that attempt to build trust, create a sense of community, or cultivate a sense of shared expectations for work demonstrated that the CSW strategies used in these sites have not evolved during the grant period. Ultimately, these sites remain in the early stage of conceptualizing and implementing CSW because they have not been able to adapt their strategy to align with HUD’s guidance, that is, focus on building a cohesive community, on work-supportive CSW activities, and engaging all members of the community in the CSW strategy.

Emerging Stage

Sites in the emerging stage include Cuyahoga, Memphis, and Roanoke. These three sites differ from the sites in the early stage in that they evolved more in *either* their vision of CSW (in the case of Cuyahoga and Roanoke) *or* their implementation of a CSW strategy (Memphis). None of these sites, however, had yet institutionalized CSW to the extent that all stakeholders, including Jobs Plus staff, housing authority staff, partners, and residents, fully understand and support the implementation of CSW. Although some of the Jobs Plus staff at each of the sites appear to have shifted

¹⁰⁷ CSW Guidance in Appendix B.

their thinking about CSW to be more aligned with HUD’s guidance, these sites had yet to make major adjustments in their CSW strategies.

Vision Focused on Promoting Aspirations for Work

The Cuyahoga and Roanoke sites developed a more multifaceted philosophy about promoting aspirations for work and community building, although they were still building up to implementing and operating programmatic activities. Overall, these two sites’ visions for CSW became more closely aligned with HUD’s definitions and expectations over time.

Jobs Plus stakeholders at these sites differed somewhat in their vision for CSW, but evidence showed that they were shifting in a direction that was more closely aligned with HUD’s guidance. Interviews demonstrated that staff and partners were approaching the Jobs Plus program with ideas about transforming the community through relationship building, mutual support, network building, information-sharing, and creating space for residents to gather to address work-related issues. Interviewees also expressed the idea that CSW should be implicit in all activities and interactions between all stakeholders, an idea that runs consistently throughout the evaluation.

Interviews revealed that some staff reinforced the idea that CSW should “be infused throughout day-to-day operations and would manifest as an ongoing process or mode of thinking and acting.”¹⁰⁸ A partner in Cuyahoga summed up this idea: “This is a community thing; you know what I mean? And we want to see the community affected. We did not start that way. There was no talk about community. We just tried to build a workforce program. Got a bunch of workforce programmers there, so we just built a workforce program, in theory, instead of what Jobs Plus was really supposed to be... So, someone has to really create the vision of what it really is supposed to be, and after that, we have to kind of filter through, ‘Well, how does it apply to me here?’”

In Memphis, there is little evidence of a shared vision of CSW across Jobs Plus staff and stakeholders. As explained later, however, the Memphis site developed an extremely intentional plan for operationalizing CSW in response to its unique “scattered-site” status.

Strategy Focused on Fostering Connections through Community Events

Staff at all three sites began regularly holding new events and community gatherings that had an intentional focus on bringing residents together to address work-related issues and foster connections between residents. One example in Cuyahoga was the Mix-and-Mingle events, which focused on the topic of entrepreneurship. In Roanoke, a Jobs Plus staff member explained that they believe that by holding community events, residents will have the opportunity to build relationships with one another and staff, and having those relationships is necessary “before [they] can get to a point where there’s trust.” A housing authority staff member in Roanoke explained that their

¹⁰⁸ Tessler et al. (2017).

activities have had a stronger focus on “helping people,” rather than just trying to get them out of their units: “I think early on [Jobs Plus staff] were doing a lot more of the events that just, you know, kind of had the fun activities and they used to get people to be drawn to come out, so that they could learn about Jobs Plus. And I think now the events are more focused on helping people.” While the Jobs Plus staff in Roanoke began to consider ways to foster trust among residents, their strategy remained focused on community events.

In Memphis, Jobs Plus had a clear implementation strategy outlined because of their Choice Neighborhoods redevelopment process.¹⁰⁹ Jobs Plus staff did not describe relationship building as much as they described making sure residents were connected to Jobs Plus services and were not neglected because of the physical redevelopment and scattered-site housing. During the Jobs Plus grant period, residents at this site underwent a major relocation process as part of the Choice Neighborhoods implementation grant. Following the start of the Jobs Plus grant period, all residents had been moved from the site to other locations around the city. Memphis created a “node” strategy to administer Jobs Plus to its scattered population. The staff holds regular events geared toward bringing residents together and building a sense of trust and camaraderie. Each node has a community coach and a case manager assigned to it, and the nodes were intentionally established in areas with community centers. The purpose of the node strategy is to make sure that residents were not isolated from each other and to build toward a sense of community within each node. A Jobs Plus staff member explained the importance of the nodes, as residents are scattered throughout the city: “Once residents find out that they live in the same zip code and they meet at my zone meetings, I think they feel a level of comfort, like, ‘I’m just not out here by myself. Other people are doing it.’”

While the staff members at the Memphis site were still developing their understanding of what a CSW vision could mean at the time of interviews, they were already implementing this node strategy with designated case managers, community coaches, and nearby community centers. This strategy appeared to be working in some ways, such as minimizing feelings of isolation among residents during the relocation process, but it had not necessarily fostered a shared vision across all staff and stakeholders for creating shared aspirations and expectations about work.

Implications

Although these sites may be on their way to creating a community with aspirations and expectations for work, as mentioned earlier, CSW was not yet institutionalized *to the point* where activities

¹⁰⁹ The Choice Neighborhoods Initiative focuses on redeveloping distressed assisted-housing developments and transforming the neighborhoods around them into mixed-income communities.

might be maintained after the program ends. Maintenance of CSW activities is particularly unlikely in Memphis, where the relocation of residents who choose to come back into the new development will create yet another dramatic shift for them individually and for the community at large.

Executing Stage

Charlotte and Chicago appeared to be entering an executing stage of implementation at the end of the second year. The CSW component in these sites was more fully operationalized compared with sites in the early and emerging stages, as their visions and actions more closely reflected the HUD CSW model promoted in both the NOFA and subsequent HUD CSW guidance. Further, and as discussed in the next chapter, these sites devoted substantially more resources to this component than the other sites. Both sites have MTW status and have implemented a work requirement.

Vision Centered around Fostering Trust and Meaningful Connections

The vision for implementing CSW in Charlotte and Chicago focused on building relationships among staff, residents, and partners in ways that were intended to lead to long-term trust and a shared commitment to work. This focus on relationship building went beyond an expectation of resident engagement that leads to enrollment in programs; rather, it was hoped that through meaningful connections, residents would invest in the community and in work-related activities. As this case manager described, “I think the biggest part of what we do...is the relationships...I think one of the greatest things we did, we actively got out there, and we let people know who we were on an individual basis.”

Staff in these sites described their CSW vision through a range of ideas, including changing residents’ mindsets about work, identifying the value in neighbor-to-neighbor networks, and encouraging opportunities to build relationships among residents, staff, and partners. In Chicago, the vision for CSW focused on building “trust, hope, and motivation,” and the Jobs Plus service providers all went through new training and supervision focused on how to instill these values into their work with clients. According to a staff member, “We’re trying to build communities... it’s a community of hope... We found that people lack trust, hope, and motivation, so I think those are important skills to build upon...Part of that is why they can’t get employment.” In addition, the program director described a major transition in the culture of her staff from “doing for” the residents to doing “with the residents.” She shared how important it has been for staff to move toward working in partnership with residents and valuing their own agency, in contrast to a culture where staff are rewarded for “fixing” challenges for residents.

Shared Staff Commitment and Resident-led Activities

As the vision for relationship building moved into implementation, the expectation was that everyone involved with residents would encourage work-related activities and invest in CSW approaches. Coaches were viewed as just one of the implementers of the CSW activities, along with others, including housing authority staff, property managers, staff from partner organizations, and

resident leaders. This “universal” approach reflects the HUD guidance. In both Charlotte and Chicago, property managers actively listened to residents describe work-related challenges, made referrals to case management services, promoted employment training opportunities, and encouraged residents to develop financial savings through the JPEID. For example, a case manager commented on how helpful the property manager had been in changing the way she interacted with residents to promote a “sense of belonging.”

Also, at these two sites, resident-led initiatives were considered the key mechanism to encourage work-oriented aspirations and behavior. Many staff noted the value of CSW in fostering resident leadership. Before receiving the grant, Charlotte did not have a resident council, although one developed as an outgrowth of the Jobs Plus initiative. Further, Charlotte held a Members Only monthly meeting, which was led by residents (some of whom are also community coaches) and attended by about 25 residents. The meeting agenda focused on topics residents selected and included outside speakers to discuss employment-related topics, like interview skills or résumé writing. In Chicago, resident leaders in the Local Advisory Council were initially not very supportive of the Jobs Plus efforts, but over time became more engaged in encouraging other residents who were not in formal leadership positions to participate in shaping programming alongside Jobs Plus staff.

Starting in year 2, with the encouragement of HUD, the grantees at both sites contracted the same technical assistance provider, Trusted Space Partners, to support their CSW strategies for relationship building. Staff were trained in a model of community network building intended to cultivate hope, trust, and a deeper experience of belonging among residents and staff. All staff received specialized training in how to create meaningful relationships with residents and launch a resident-staff network. Sites began holding monthly “Networking in the Neighborhood” events, which are held in a vibrant, lively, informal setting for residents, staff, and partners to discuss employment- and life-related challenges and offer solutions for overcoming them.

The benefits of these community network building strategies are that residents can meet others who may be similar to them and who seek supports for work, such as childcare and emotional advice, that can help them navigate work challenges. According to a staff member:

“Out of Network Night, the residents have an opportunity to come together in a very relaxed atmosphere... It helps people to network with each other. So, now I’m getting to know someone I didn’t know before. Now, I’m finding out... ‘Oh, you want some help watching your children while you’re at work? Let’s work together and see how we can figure it out so that you don’t have to quit your job.’ That’s what I mean by community support for work... Just coming and having conversations in a safe environment, non-threatening, to say ‘I’m frustrated. My supervisor doesn’t understand me. They’re not supportive.’ And being able to get it out and talk to some neighbors that might be going through the same thing, and they may be able to give you a suggestion on how to handle it.”

In Chicago, Networking in the Neighborhood topics have included domestic violence support, safety (“See Something, Say Something”), parenting, and financial education (“Money Matters”). In Charlotte, the staff hopes that by connecting at their Network Night event, residents can identify potential arrangements for childcare. At the June 2017 HUD conference, an annual convening of Jobs Plus grantees, representatives from the two sites were invited to share what they had learned and how their approach to CSW had changed in response to this focus on trust and relationship building.

Implications

Over time, residents began to be more independent in planning Networking in the Neighborhood in Chicago and Network Night in Charlotte. In interviews, staff expressed hope that these activities would continue after the Jobs Plus grant period ended, allowing residents to continue to connect with one another and build relationships and, ultimately, shift the overall mindset of the communities. As one program manager commented, “the sustainable part is that [Networking in the Neighborhood] piece...How do we continue to build on that community support so that there are these informal networks in the development that continue?” Chicago and Charlotte’s efforts to build trust among residents, staff, and partners may be the best chance for sustainability over time.

In both sites, residents will continue to receive supportive services from on-site case managers following the Jobs Plus grant, because funding remains for services through the flexibility of the MTW program. With MTW status, both sites implemented a work requirement for all residents, and Jobs Plus staff explained that this requirement had an impact on the engagement of residents in Jobs Plus, particularly those residents who faced challenges and might otherwise have shied away from meaningful attachment to the Jobs Plus program. Greater engagement by residents in the Jobs Plus program may have helped to fuel the energy surrounding the CSW-related activities and increased participation in each sites’ Network events. This increased exposure to networking opportunities, relationship building, and employment-relevant education would ideally help generate a shift in normalizing aspirations and expectations for work.

Box 5.1

Examples of Community Support for Work

The following examples are provided to help guide future efforts to conceptualize and implement Community Support for Work. These examples are drawn from the current evaluation as well as from the original Jobs Plus demonstration, other replications of Jobs Plus, and other relevant place-based efforts. These examples advance the vision of CSW as defined by HUD staff during this replication, with a focus on promoting intentional steps to foster a more cohesive community, conveying aspirational messages about the benefits of work, and encouraging residents to help other residents increase their economic security.

Relationship building among residents

- **Regular community gatherings intentionally designed to strengthen relationships among residents.** Unlike the typical community meeting primarily focused on information-sharing, these gatherings have the primary goal of deepening social connections, trust and support among residents, staff, and other community members. A specific example is NeighborUp! Nights, a monthly, festive “party with a purpose” where attendees share positive personal news, lead small group conversations on topics of priority interest and make mutual exchanges of favors and personal declarations.
- **Formation of a community-wide network to promote work aspiration.** In this community network building approach, the regular community gatherings are just one element of a strategy to invite residents and other community members to join an informal, open network through which residents receive ongoing encouragement and support to advance their individual and collective aspirations.
- **Formation of small peer support groups.** Some discussion groups, empowerment groups, women’s groups, and men’s groups, often led by residents, focused on conversations about topics that support work engagement or skill-building such as managing finances, others included, for example, a sewing group to make work clothes.
- **Healing and trauma-informed support approaches.** Trauma-informed, trauma-transformed, and healing-informed approaches acknowledge the impacts of years of living in highly stressful and unstable environments and create safe social space for residents to support each others’ resilience and healing as they seek ways to improve their economic security.

Shifting collective norms and expectations

- **Deliberate, sustained efforts to shift the “operating culture.”** In this strategy, a small group of resident and staff commit to act as “stewards” of a more aspirational way of interacting throughout the community. The focus on collectively modeling a “can-do” spirit, building connections among residents and staff with a positive energy and outlook, and prioritizing ways that residents and staff can work together to support each other is intentional. Over time, more residents and staff are invited to shift their mindsets about what is possible and take proactive steps to make a difference in their own lives and the lives of others.

Recommendations

There are several key lessons from this round of sites' experiences implementing CSW.

Early and consistent clarity about definitions and expectations is vital. Unclear and mixed messages about the goals of CSW impeded strong and comprehensive implementation of this component across sites. The effect of the HUD midpoint clarification in some of the sites demonstrated the value of clearer guidance. It is essential that there is consensus within the HUD Jobs Plus team about the CSW definition and expectations and that communication between HUD and the sites is consistent.

More CSW-specific technical assistance: The evaluation demonstrated that sites that were able to obtain additional technical assistance to devise and implement a universal CSW strategy made more progress in implementing the HUD-defined CSW approach. With adequate technical assistance, more sites may be able to develop a CSW vision and implementation strategy that helps to build stronger relationships among residents and ultimately promotes greater aspirations and expectations for work that will be sustained beyond the grant period.

Do more to leverage the power of place and neighbors. Where CSW has remained largely a *programmatic* strategy to promote outreach and some community events, it appears to have had limited influence on residents' connections to work activity and to each other. For most sites, CSW remained something that happened within the confines of program activities and events, or by specific program actors such as the community coaches. The larger promise of the CSW element of the program remains in its potential to take root as a *community* strategy, expanding networks and messaging in a way that reinforces and advances the initiative's goals. Issues like community safety and the size of the developments are important barriers to the effectiveness of CSW as a *community* strategy. Focusing on CSW as a community strategy will also help mitigate concerns about safety and distrust among residents as they build relationships and share aspirations with one another.

A broader range of methods is needed to assess CSW progress and outcomes. To more effectively assess CSW progress, measurement needs to go beyond counting events and meeting attendance. Assessments should also rely on qualitative data to capture information about evolving staff and resident roles, broadening networks among residents, informal support processes, and shifting mindsets and messaging. Such information would help illuminate the progress and outcomes of CSW efforts and help highlight areas for improvement.

Chapter 6

The Gross Cost of Jobs Plus

Introduction

This chapter presents findings on the cost of the HUD replication of Jobs Plus at eight public housing agencies (PHAs) during the second year of program operations. In addition to reporting the overall costs of Jobs Plus, it provides estimates of the cost of each program's components and findings about how each of the program's costs was funded. Information about the costs of Jobs Plus is of obvious importance to PHAs providing program services, as it allows them to compare themselves with programs elsewhere and consider whether specific program components might be scaled back or enriched. It is also useful to budgetary officials at the HUD and the Office of Management and Budget, as it provides them with the best available information about the cost of implementing Jobs Plus at additional PHAs. PHAs considering introducing Jobs Plus should find the information similarly useful.

Key Findings

- **The cost of operating Jobs Plus in the second year of operation, among the six sites that were close to a steady-state, ranged from \$2,291 to \$3,800 per resident within each site. The costs charged to the grant in these sites ranged from \$1,310 to \$2,954 per resident.** The costs in Cuyahoga and (especially) Boston, two sites that were in considerable flux during the second year, were far lower than the overall costs in the other sites.
- **Many of the developments leveraged enough non-grant investments to cover over 25 percent of overall costs, suggesting that funding for Jobs Plus prompted additional local investment in serving public housing residents.** For example, Chicago relied much more on funds it had from sources other than the grant. St. Louis, Roanoke, and Syracuse also drew considerably on external resources in their communities in providing services.
- **When participants in the Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID) program increase their earnings, their rent is not increased. The JPEID reimburses PHAs for that foregone rent. The JPEID accounted for between 26 to 35 percent of Jobs Plus's overall costs among most sites.**¹¹⁰ This means that about one-third of the total costs of Jobs Plus accounted for direct financial gains for the residents at the PHAs who were able

¹¹⁰ The JPEID costs per resident ranged from barely less than \$700 to more than \$1,000 per resident in the second year. Because less than one-half of the residents across all sites in Jobs Plus benefited from the JPEID, these numbers appear much lower than they do in Chapter 4. As reported in Chapter 4, residents had, on average, \$292 of rent disregarded (resulting from an average increase in earned income of about \$1,000) in each month they qualified for the JPEID.

to increase their earned income and not have their rent increased. Cuyahoga's JPEID costs accounted for a much lower proportion of their total costs.

- **The provision of employment-related services accounted for one-fourth to one-half of the cost of Jobs Plus**, except in Chicago and Charlotte, where it was smaller. The costs of providing other services (which varied across sites but could include financial advice, health care, childcare, and youth programs) accounted for important shares of overall total costs in Chicago, Memphis, Roanoke, and Cuyahoga.
- **A relatively small portion of the overall costs in most of the sites (around 10 percent or less) resulted from providing Community Support for Work.** Charlotte and, to a lesser extent, Chicago are the major exceptions.
- **The costs of administering Jobs Plus were relatively small; about 15 percent or less of overall expenditures.**

The rest of this chapter discusses the key concepts used to define the costs of Jobs Plus and presents the cost estimates themselves, while some conclusions from the cost analysis are drawn in the final section.

Important Cost Concepts

Gross Costs versus Net Costs

This analysis presents estimates of only gross costs, that is, the outlays required to operate Jobs Plus. An alternative measure of costs is net costs, the change in costs resulting from operating Jobs Plus. In other words, net costs are the costs engendered by the existence of Jobs Plus at a PHA that would not have been incurred in the absence of the program. Because information is not available on non-Jobs Plus PHAs for this process study, net costs cannot be computed. Hence, only gross costs can be estimated.

The distinction between gross and net costs is important because, unlike net costs, gross costs cannot be meaningfully compared with program effects, for example, its net impact on the earnings of public housing residents, as impacts only estimate what occurs because of the program, whereas gross costs include costs that would have been incurred even in the absence of the program.

Gross costs also cannot be directly compared with program outcomes (for example, the number of persons newly employed). Say, for example, that the gross cost of Jobs Plus at a PHA during 2017 was \$2,000 and 100 residents become employed during the year. Some of the \$2,000 of expenditures would likely have been incurred even in the absence of Jobs Plus, and some of the 100 individuals who found jobs would probably have entered employment without help from the program. Consequently, no causality is necessarily implied. Thus, applying gross costs to an outcome can be misleading.

Nonetheless, gross costs are still useful. They can be used, for example, to assess the importance of the JPEID, or to determine how program resources are distributed between employment-related activities, Community Support for Work (CSW), and other services provided by Jobs Plus. Estimates of gross costs are also essential for planning purposes, for example, to predict the costs of implementing Jobs Plus in additional PHAs. Moreover, it may be possible to convert gross costs into a rough estimate of net costs. Box 6.1 suggests a way to approach this calculation.

Box 6.1

Converting Gross Costs to Net Costs: A Suggested Approach

It is important to recognize that the cost estimates presented throughout this chapter are gross costs, not net costs. Some of these costs probably would have been incurred even in the absence of Jobs Plus because some program members would have found similar services on their own. Without a comparison group, there is no way of knowing the extent to which this would have occurred. However, the first evaluation of Jobs Plus, which is described in Chapter 1, did have comparison sites and thus provides some insight on the difference between gross and net costs. For example, findings from this demonstration indicated that while 58 percent of residents at the Jobs Plus developments participated in at least one employment-related activity (e.g., job search, training, or education) within 12 months of being surveyed, 46 percent of the residents at the comparison sites did as well.¹ This finding implies that housing development residents will utilize services available in their communities even in the absence of Jobs Plus, although to a lesser extent. Consequently, the net costs of Jobs Plus are less than the program's gross costs.

At best, it is only possible to very roughly convert the gross costs provided in this chapter into net costs. The following tentative approach is suggested. First, based on evidence from the first evaluation of Jobs Plus, it may be reasonable to assume that net external non-grant costs are around a fourth² as large as gross external non-grant costs, since program members in the first evaluation would have availed themselves of considerable external non-grant services even in the program's absence. Second, because on-site services involve mainly pre-placement services (e.g., resume and interview preparation) and placement itself (see Chapter 3), which can often be found elsewhere in the local community, a somewhat arbitrary assumption can be made that net costs for employment-related services that are paid by the sites are half the gross costs. Finally, since the remaining major cost components (rent subsidies, other services, and Community Support for Work) were not available prior to the program, it seems reasonable to assume that in the absence of Jobs Plus, they would not have been available at the eight sites examined in the cost analysis. Thus, the net cost for these items is assumed to equal their gross cost.

Appendix Table C.1 shows the estimates of net benefits using these assumptions and based on cost estimates from Table 6.2. Because the assumptions about external non-grant costs and about employment-related services paid for by PHAs seem, if anything, to be rather liberal in the sense that they tend to maximize the difference between gross costs and net costs. Thus, the estimates of net costs may perhaps approach lower bounds. Still, the net costs shown in the table range from around 60 to 90 percent the size of gross costs, not all that much smaller. However, the assumptions that underlie these estimates are based on little real evidence. Thus, they should be viewed as at best rough approximations of true net costs and highly hypothetical.

¹ Bloom, Riccio, and Verma (2005), Table 3.4.

² This proportion is calculated by dividing the difference in participation rates in employment-related activities between Jobs Plus and comparison sites (58 percent minus 46 percent, or 12 percent) by the participation rates at the Jobs Plus sites (58 percent).

Grant Costs versus Non-Grant Costs

The costs of Jobs Plus are naturally divided between “grant costs” (that is, costs paid for under the Jobs Plus grant, including payments to partner organizations under contract) and “non-grant costs” (that is, costs not covered under the grant). HUD’s Jobs Plus Initiative’s Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) required 25 percent matching funds, so all the PHAs leveraged some resources that were not covered by the Jobs Plus grant. Non-grant costs can be further divided into those costs that are paid for by a PHA from a funding source other than the Jobs Plus grant, called “internal non-grant costs” in this report, and the costs of services that are available from other government units or non-government organizations within the local community and hence not paid for by the PHA, called “external non-grant costs” in the report.¹¹¹ Charlotte and Chicago, for example, in addition to being Jobs Plus sites, were also Moving to Work (MTW) sites, and this allowed them to leverage more non-grant costs and draw on other internal resources.

Estimates of gross grant costs are important because they indicate the budget necessary to operate Jobs Plus at each PHA. Estimates of non-grant costs suggest the extent to which PHAs have filled gaps that are not covered under their grants. The PHAs incur the internal non-grant expenses. External non-grant expenses are the monetary value of services that are not paid for by the PHA; they are, in effect, “capturing” the resources of outside organizations. Estimates of external non-grant costs are somewhat difficult to interpret, however, because they may substantially overstate the *additional* costs imposed on the outside organizations providing the services. Even without Jobs Plus, some program members may still have used the services provided by outside organizations. Thus, although Jobs Plus can be viewed as helping marshal the services available in a community, it may not be solely responsible for participants making use of them. Furthermore, if Jobs Plus participants did not use the services, other low-income persons likely would have.¹¹²

Social Costs versus Income Transfers

The Components of Social Costs

The social costs of Jobs Plus are categorized into five components, as follows: employment-related services, CSW, other services, general administrative activities, and JPEID administration. The key components of Jobs Plus’s social costs are expenditures to support employment-related and CSW activities. Much smaller expenditures are required to administer JPEID and general admin-

¹¹¹ The Chicago PHA provides an important example of internal non-grant costs: the PHA has a large contract with a local nonprofit organization, Metropolitan Family Services, to perform a variety of services, which it pays for out of non-grant funds. One of numerous examples of external non-grant costs occurs in Roanoke, where the Jobs Plus program sends about 20 Jobs Plus participants a month to Goodwill Industries where they gain work experience. The costs incurred from providing the work experience is borne by Goodwill.

¹¹² For example, job training provided by an outside organization may have a fixed number of openings, and if they are not filled by Jobs Plus participants, other individuals in the community may occupy them.

istrative activities (for example, information technology (IT) work, clerical help, and office cleaning). Any costs not captured by these four categories—for example, health care, childcare, youth programs, and financial counseling—are assigned to a catch-all category called “costs of other services.” Many of the expenditures in this category, which in some sites were relatively large, were aimed at facilitating work. Others, however, are only indirectly related to employment, if at all. For example, as mentioned in Chapter 2, Cuyahoga developed a Jobs Plus component targeted at youth and had on-site financial coaches, Boston hired a financial coach, and Memphis employs a health and education specialist. Social costs under each of the five Jobs Plus components are reported separately.

Distinguishing JPEID from Social Costs

The Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID) differs fundamentally from the social costs described earlier, because they result in funds being transferred from the government to the residents of public housing in the form of foregone rent increases. In other words, a JPEID amount of \$100 to a participant costs the government (and ultimately taxpayers) \$100 but is a gain of \$100 in the form of an “income transfer” for the participant, so the net cost to society as a whole is \$0. The \$100 is still available to be spent; it has just been transferred from one group in society (taxpayers) to another (Jobs Plus participants). Social costs, on the other hand, result in expending resources that can no longer be used for other purposes. For example, the time Jobs Plus staff spend placing participants in jobs or in administering the program is no longer available for other purposes. Hence, JPEID amounts and social costs are reported separately from one another.

Start-Up Costs versus Steady-State Costs

When a program such as Jobs Plus begins operation at a new site, it typically sustains initial costs that do not reoccur, for example, staff members may need to be trained and inefficiencies may need to be eliminated. On the other hand, the costs of a new program can grow over time if more people partake of the services offered; for instance, if the number of Jobs Plus participants increases. If non-reoccurring costs can be excluded from the cost estimates, and the program is no longer growing, the resulting values indicate what it would cost in the steady-state, that is, to continue to operate the program in the same way as it was previously run. To attempt to come as close as possible to estimating the steady-state cost of the Jobs Plus program, the cost estimates reported in this chapter cover the 1-year period from October 1, 2016, through September 30, 2017, the program’s second year in the eight sites. This is as close to a steady-state period for which the data needed for the analysis were available.¹¹³ As suggested by the earlier chapters, however, Jobs Plus, in some of the PHAs included in this evaluation, especially in Boston and Cuyahoga, were in considerable flux during the period covered by the cost analysis, and as a result, were not in a

¹¹³ The costs of evaluating Jobs Plus are excluded from the cost estimates because they are not part of the cost of operating an ongoing program.

steady-state. Thus, although cost estimates are reported for Boston and Cuyahoga, less emphasis is put on discussing these two sites.

This analysis does not estimate costs per participant or resident over the life of the 4-year HUD grant, which would have included start-up, ramp down, and sustainability activities. The analysis was not possible because 2 of the 4 years Jobs Plus was scheduled to operate had not yet been completed at the time the data needed for the cost analysis were collected.

Costs Per Participant versus Costs Per Resident¹¹⁴

The gross cost estimates are reported separately for each PHA. This allows a comparison among the PHAs included in this study. For reporting purposes, the aggregate gross cost estimates during the program's second year are divided by the number of Jobs Plus participants in each PHA during the year. Because the PHAs included in this study vary in size, this permits their Jobs Plus costs to be appropriately compared. Costs per Jobs Plus participant can also be used for planning purposes at PHAs not included in the study, which are also likely to vary in size from the PHAs that are included. The division also facilitates comparing the various Jobs Plus components within a given PHA because they are divided by the same number of individuals, although in using such a measure, it is important to recognize that not all Jobs Plus participants utilize every program component.

Costs per Jobs Plus participant is a natural measure of costs because the program is mainly targeted on its participants. The measure is somewhat difficult to interpret, however, because some PHAs are more successful than others in recruiting residents. Moreover, after becoming participants, some persons subsequently disengage from the program but nonetheless continue to be counted as participants. For these reasons, aggregate costs are also divided by the number of residents in each PHA. Because far fewer than all the residents in most PHAs become participants, cost per resident tends to be considerably smaller than the cost per participant.

Cost per resident is useful for several purposes. First, like cost per participant, it adjusts for the size of the developments. Unlike the cost per participant measure, however, it is not affected by a PHA's recruitment success. Thus, it is arguably more useful for cross-site comparisons. Second, it is probably more useful than the cost per participant for planning purposes at potentially new PHAs that were not included in the study because it is not necessary to predict the number of persons at the new PHA who would become Jobs Plus participants. (It would still be necessary, however, to take account of the possibility that utilization of various program services may vary

¹¹⁴ In this chapter, "participant" refers to a resident who is enrolled in either Jobs Plus or JPEID, and "resident" refers to an individual who is eligible for Jobs Plus. PHAs provided quarterly snapshots of numbers of residents and participants between October 2016 and September 2017 for use in this cost analysis. See Box 6.2 for calculation details.

from that at the study sites.) Third, as with costs per participant, comparisons can be made between categories of program expenditures.

Because CSW activities have the potential to touch all residents (for example, a non-Jobs Plus participant can read a Jobs Plus flyer, or a community coach can give a non-participant information about the program), costs incurred per resident not enrolled in Jobs Plus are the same as the cost of CSW per participant. Thus, the per-participant cost for CSW is divided by the number of residents, instead of the number of participants.

Findings

Jobs Plus costs were calculated from data collected covering the second year of Jobs Plus operations from October 2016 through September 2017. Data and methods are described in detail in Box 6.2. This section describes the findings from the Jobs Plus cost analysis. The overall social costs of Jobs Plus are first presented. Then, separate estimates for costs funded under the grant, internal non-grant costs, and external non-grant costs are presented. Finally, the amount of the income transfers made under the JPEID are reported. Costs per resident and costs per participant are both presented, but greater emphasis is given to the estimates of costs per resident because, as discussed earlier, they are somewhat less complex and more easily interpreted than costs per participant.

Overall Social Costs

Table 6.1 reports the gross social cost of Jobs Plus during the program's second year from all sources of funding. Separate estimates appear for the eight PHAs included in the cost study.¹¹⁵

Costs per resident and costs per participant appear in separate panels, where both the absolute dollar values and the values as a percentage of the totals are reported. The rows in each panel contain the major social cost components described earlier in the chapter: employment-related services, CSW, and the costs of other services. In addition, general administrative costs and the costs of administering the JPEID are presented in separate rows. The cost estimates for Boston and Cuyahoga appear in italics on the far right of the table to remind readers that Jobs Plus at these PHAs are in considerable flux and, consequently, do not represent a steady-state situation. Participation ratios¹¹⁶—the fraction of residents who are participants of Jobs Plus—appear at the bottom of the table. The participant ratios are useful in interpreting differences between costs per resident and costs per participant.

¹¹⁵ As noted elsewhere in this report, the site in Houston was not included in the analysis conducted for this report.

¹¹⁶ The participation ratio for each PHA was calculated using numbers that the PHAs provided to MDRC.

Box 6.2
Data and Methods

Cost data for this analysis were collected from three main sources:

1. Quarterly grant expenditure reports submitted to HUD reflecting program expenditures from October 2016 through September 2017, which itemized types of expenditures into training and conferences, case management, supportive services, data systems and software, travel, technical assistance, salary and fringe benefits, and administrative costs.
2. Quarterly JPEID reports submitted to HUD from October 2016 through September 2017, which listed the Jobs Plus households who received JPEID and the JPEID amount that they received.
3. Responses to a long memorandum MDRC sent to each PHA (see Appendix C) and to follow-up questions sent by email, in which PHA staff provided supplemental information on how expenditures should be broken down by social cost components.

The grant-paid costs for each social component were calculated by multiplying the training and conferences, case management, supportive services, data systems and software, travel, and technical assistance line item expenditures by the estimated percentage breakdowns the PHAs provided on the memo. Staff costs were calculated separately, by using PHA-supplied annual salary and fringe benefits information on individual staff members, multiplying them by the time they spent devoted to each social cost component, and adjusting them for the total cost reported on the staff line item on the expenditure reports. JPEID costs were taken from each site's quarterly JPEID reports. The values reported in this chapter are the aggregate amount of JPEID by all eligible residents over the four calendar quarters covered by the cost analysis.

PHA staff also provided MDRC with the number of Jobs Plus participants, the number of households eligible for Jobs Plus, and the number of eligible residents in each quarter. In computing the cost estimates, these figures were averaged over the four quarters covered by the cost analysis. Although the number of participants varied over the four quarters, the number of households and residents tended to be quite stable.

PHA staff provided estimates of internal and external non-grant costs to MDRC on the memorandum. The PHAs were asked if they incurred costs that were not covered under their Jobs Plus grant but were paid by the PHA out of other funds. These amounts were summed and then allocated to the categories based on a follow-up question. MDRC also requested each PHA to list all the organizations to which they referred participants between October 2016 and September 2017, the average number of participants served during a typical month by each organization, and the value of these services during a typical month. These values were summed across the organizations and then allocated to the categories based on a follow-up question that asked the PHAs for the percentage breakdown of the total.

HUD = U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; JPEID = Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard;
MDRC = Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation; PHA = public housing agency

**Table 6.1 | Gross Social Costs of HUD Jobs Plus, Per Resident and Per Participant
Cohort 1 Sites, Year 2: October 2016–September 2017**

Cost component	Charlotte		Chicago		Memphis		Roanoke		St. Louis		Syracuse		<i>Boston</i>		<i>Cuyahoga</i>	
	(\$)	(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)	(%)
Per resident																
Employment-related services	430	21.9	507	18.3	947	41.3	679	35.6	1,894	71.5	1,065	71.2	<i>192</i>	<i>49.3</i>	<i>372</i>	<i>36.7</i>
CSW	1,023	52.1	744	26.9	141	6.2	264	13.8	273	10.3	223	14.9	<i>65</i>	<i>16.8</i>	<i>128</i>	<i>12.7</i>
JPEID administration	117	6.0	39	1.4	173	7.6	49	2.5	40	1.5	51	3.4	<i>80</i>	<i>20.7</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>9.8</i>
General administrative costs	152	7.8	542	19.6	206	9.0	210	11.0	161	6.1	116	7.7	<i>15</i>	<i>3.8</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>6.2</i>
Other services	239	12.2	932	33.7	823	35.9	706	37.0	282	10.7	41	2.8	<i>37</i>	<i>9.4</i>	<i>351</i>	<i>34.6</i>
Total	1,961	100	2,765	100	2,290	100	1,908	100	2,650	100	1,496	100	<i>389</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,014</i>	<i>100</i>
Number of residents	316		1,457		262		283		354		425		1,007		1,126	
Per participant																
Employment-related services	601	25.7	1,465	22.1	900	41.4	1,190	37.7	2,713	73.2	2,058	77.0	<i>897</i>	<i>56.3</i>	<i>1,325</i>	<i>41.0</i>
CSW	1,023	43.7	744	11.2	141	6.5	264	8.4	273	7.4	223	8.3	<i>65</i>	<i>4.1</i>	<i>128</i>	<i>4.0</i>
JPEID administration	163	7.0	115	1.7	160	7.3	85	2.7	59	1.6	96	3.6	<i>386</i>	<i>24.2</i>	<i>346</i>	<i>10.7</i>
General administrative costs	214	9.2	1,577	23.8	190	8.7	370	11.7	236	6.4	218	8.1	<i>72</i>	<i>4.5</i>	<i>203</i>	<i>6.3</i>
Other services	339	14.5	2,724	41.1	782	36.0	1,245	39.5	424	11.4	79	3.0	<i>174</i>	<i>10.9</i>	<i>1,225</i>	<i>38.0</i>
Total	2,341	100	6,625	100	2,173	100	3,154	100	3,704	100	2,673	100	<i>1,594</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>3,228</i>	<i>100</i>
Number of participants	226		507		280		161		238		224		213		326	
Participation Ratio	0.72		0.35		1.08		0.57		0.67		0.53		<i>0.21</i>		<i>0.29</i>	

CSW = Community Support for Work. JPEID = Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard.

Notes: The cost estimates for Boston and Cuyahoga appear in italics on the far right of the table because the Jobs Plus programs at these public housing agencies (PHAs) were in flux during the time period covered by this analysis. Number of residents and number of participants reflect the average number of individuals each quarter during October 2016–September 2017, as reported by each PHA. "Other services" refer to services that are not employment-related services, including financial advice, health care, childcare, and youth programs. Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in sums and differences. The participation ratio is the fraction of eligible residents who are Jobs Plus participants; that is, they have either enrolled in Jobs Plus or in the JPEID.

Source: MDRC calculations using quarterly expenditure and JPEID reports to HUD and supplemental reports from PHAs.

Charlotte, Memphis, and Roanoke at around \$2,000 are in between, but closer to the low end of the range. Reflecting the flux in Boston and Cuyahoga during the second year, total costs per resident at these two sites, and especially Boston, are considerably lower than at the other six sites.

As expected, most of the total costs per participant are considerably larger than the costs per resident, reflecting that participants are a subset of residents. Boston, Cuyahoga, and Chicago, the three developments with more than 1,000 residents, have relatively low participation ratios, causing substantial jumps in moving from costs per resident to costs per participant. Nonetheless, except for Cuyahoga and Memphis, the pattern among the PHAs remains similar, with the same sites remaining near the upper and lower ends of the range. Memphis has the highest participation ratio,

indicating that nearly all residents were enrolled in Jobs Plus.¹¹⁷ The small participation ratios for Boston and Cuyahoga are probably attributable to both their large size and the fact that they had not yet reached a steady-state situation. Despite the low participation ratio in Chicago, it still enrolled more participants in Jobs Plus than at any other site (about 500 participants in each quarter, compared with an overall quarterly average of 270 participants across all sites).

The section now turns to the components of social costs, focusing on costs per resident.¹¹⁸ St. Louis and Syracuse used more than 70 percent of their resources on employment-related services, and employment-related services in Boston made up about one-half of its overall costs.¹¹⁹ Three additional PHAs listed in Table 6.1 (Cuyahoga, Memphis, and Roanoke) expended around one-third of the total resources they had available for Jobs Plus on employment-related services. As described in Chapter 3, Syracuse put considerable effort into both job development with employers and working with individual residents to get them into jobs, even if low-paying. These were relatively expensive undertakings. Charlotte and Chicago spent a smaller share of their overall costs on employment-related services than did the other PHAs, in part because they could access other resources to invest substantially in non-employment-related services (which are included in Table 6.1 in the “other services” category).

Chicago spent a relatively high share of their costs providing non-employment services such as opportunities for youth, lease compliance, clinical and wellness services, and senior support services to families. As discussed later, Chicago was able to leverage resources and non-grant funding sources to provide a variety of non-employment-related services to Jobs Plus participants. About 35 percent of the cost in Cuyahoga, Memphis, and Roanoke are also attributable to providing other services. The use of other services accounts for a relatively small proportion of total social costs in the remaining PHAs.

The remaining major cost component in Table 6.1 is CSW. Except for Chicago and Charlotte, this component accounts for well under 20 percent of total social costs in the PHAs. In Charlotte, CSW accounted for more than one-half of all Jobs Plus costs and for more than one-fourth in Chicago. As described in Chapter 5, Chicago and Charlotte are the two sites in which CSW has reached the highest stage of development. They also contracted with outside consultants for CSW activities, likely a primary reason for their higher relative CSW costs. Interestingly, Charlotte and Chicago

¹¹⁷ The participation ratio is higher than 1 for Memphis because residents older than 61 who enrolled in the first program year, and residents younger than 18, whose income can be disregarded once they turn 18, can enroll in Jobs Plus, so they are included in the count of Jobs Plus participants and excluded from the count of residents.

¹¹⁸ The findings are similar for costs per participant.

¹¹⁹As mentioned in Chapter 2, the relatively high emphasis on employment-related services in Boston is due to the city’s tight housing market.

are two sites that view CSW as not solely the responsibility of coaches, but of all staff. This could also increase relative expenditures on CSW.¹²⁰

Table 6.1 indicates that administering Jobs Plus and the JPEID are relatively small parts of the total cost of the program. Thus, most resources that are used by Jobs Plus go toward providing services and operating the CSW component of the program. Notably, in Boston and Cuyahoga, where the PHAs have not yet reached a steady-state, JPEID administration costs per participant are much higher than at the other PHAs. This may be indicative of higher marginal administrative costs and lower participation ratios (leading to fewer service referrals) during the program's ramp-up stage.

Sources of Financing Social Costs

Table 6.2 presents costs per resident allocated among three panels that show the relative importance of the three funding sources available to PHAs to provide Jobs Plus services: the Jobs Plus grant, non-grant funding by the PHAs, and PHA utilization of services provided by other organizations.

In most sites, the percentage of the grant used to fund CSW is larger than the percentage of overall costs devoted to CSW (shown in Table 6.1). This is because, in most PHAs, non-grant sources provided relatively little CSW. Thus, in most of the sites, the percentage of grant funds expended on employment-related services or other services or both is smaller than the percentages for the overall costs for these program components shown in Table 6.1.

Not surprisingly, in most of the sites, the lion's share of the general costs of administering Jobs Plus is paid out of the grant. Chicago and Roanoke are the exceptions; they were able to leverage their internal resources to cover a large portion of their Jobs Plus administrative costs. Most of the sites contract with outside firms to either completely administer the JPEID or to help administer it.

Table 6.2 also shows that, apart from Chicago and Roanoke, most external non-grant costs are attributable to PHAs referring participants to employment-related services provided by partner organizations. In Chicago and Roanoke, participants were also referred to external organizations that provided other services. Leveraging partnerships for service referrals freed up some of the grant budget to be used for CSW at these sites.

¹²⁰ In fact, PHA staff at Chicago indicated that 25 percent of their staff costs were devoted to CSW activities.

**Table 6.2 | Gross Social Costs of HUD Jobs Plus, Per Resident by Funding Source
Cohort 1 Sites, Year 2: October 2016–September 2017**

Cost Component	Charlotte		Chicago		Memphis		Roanoke		St. Louis		Syracuse		<i>Boston</i>		<i>Cuyahoga</i>	
	(\$)	(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)	(%)
<u>Grant Costs</u>																
Employment-related services	169	11.3	98	35.6	925	43.0	625	50.7	1,066	69.6	588	70.1	<i>84</i>	<i>45.3</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>34.5</i>
CSW	940	63.2	123	44.9	141	6.6	210	17.0	240	15.6	168	20.1	<i>47</i>	<i>25.4</i>	<i>126</i>	<i>14.4</i>
JPEID administration	68	4.6	0	0.0	69	3.2	16	1.3	40	2.6	41	4.8	<i>14</i>	<i>7.7</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>5.9</i>
General administrative costs	140	9.4	2	0.8	206	9.6	113	9.1	161	10.5	28	3.3	<i>8</i>	<i>4.4</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>5.4</i>
Other services	170	11.4	51	18.7	811	37.7	270	21.9	25	1.6	14	1.6	<i>32</i>	<i>17.1</i>	<i>346</i>	<i>39.7</i>
Total	1,487	100	275	100	2,151	100	1,233	100	1,531	100	838	100	<i>185</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>870</i>	<i>100</i>
<u>Internal Non-Grant Costs</u>																
Employment-related services	209	55.0	409	19.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0		8	7.9	<i>46</i>	<i>35.0</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3.8</i>
CSW	53	13.8	621	29.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0		0	0.0	<i>13</i>	<i>10.0</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3.8</i>
JPEID administration	49	12.8	39	1.9	104	100	32	25.0	0		11	10.0	<i>66</i>	<i>50.0</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>66.9</i>
General administrative costs	12	3.1	540	25.7	0	0.0	97	75.0	0		88	82.1	<i>7</i>	<i>5.0</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>21.5</i>
Other services	58	15.3	493	23.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0		0	0.0	<i>0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4.0</i>
Total	380	100	2,102	100	104	100	130	100	0		107	100	<i>132</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>100</i>
<u>External Non-Grant Costs</u>																
Employment-related services	53	56.0	0	0.0	22	63.8	55	10.0	828	74.0	469	85.0	<i>61</i>	<i>86.0</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>97.1</i>
CSW	30	32.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	55	10.0	34	3.0	55	10.0	<i>5</i>	<i>7.0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0.0</i>
JPEID administration	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	-	<i>0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0.0</i>
Other services	11	12.0	388	100.0	12	36.2	436	80.0	257	23.0	28	5.0	<i>5</i>	<i>7.0</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2.9</i>
Total	94	100	388	100	34	100	546	100	1,119	100	551	100	<i>71</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>100</i>
Participation Ratio	0.72		0.35		1.08		0.57		0.67		0.53		<i>0.21</i>		<i>0.29</i>	

CSW = Community Support for Work. JPEID = Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard.

Notes: The cost estimates for Boston and Cuyahoga appear in italics on the far right of the table because the Jobs Plus programs at these public housing agencies (PHAs) were in flux during the time period covered by this analysis. Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in sums and differences. "Grant costs" are costs paid for under the Jobs Plus grant, including payments to partner organizations under contract. "Internal non-grant costs" are costs that were not funded by the grant but borne by the PHA. "External non-grant costs" are the monetary value of services that are not paid for by the PHA but are provided by partner organizations. "Other services" refer to services that are not employment-related services, including financial advice, health care, childcare, and youth programs. The participation ratio is the fraction of eligible residents who are Jobs Plus participants; that is, they have either enrolled in Jobs Plus or in the JPEID.

Source: MDRC calculations using quarterly expenditure and JPEID reports to HUD and supplemental reports from PHAs.

Table 6.2 can be used in combination with Table 6.3. In Table 6.3, the top row for each program component reports the total gross social cost of that component. The remaining rows for each component indicate the percentage allocation of those costs among the three funding sources. As can be seen in the bottom panel of Table 6.3, the Jobs Plus grant is the most important source of

funding in all the sites but Chicago, which pays for most of its Jobs Plus expenses through internal non-grant sources of funding. In fact, in dollar terms, Chicago's internal non-grant costs are far larger than at any of the other sites (Table 6.2). About one-fourth of these expenditures support other services. Table 6.3 further indicates that internal non-grant costs account for a substantial share of all costs in Charlotte, Chicago, and Boston. Sources of funding that are external to the PHAs are at least of some importance in most of the sites. Memphis and Cuyahoga relied almost entirely on the Jobs Plus grant, however.¹²¹

Turning to the program components, Table 6.3 indicates that most sites fund more than one-half of the employment-related services they provide out of their Jobs Plus grant. Boston, Charlotte, and Chicago are the exceptions; Chicago funds these services mostly out of other internal funds, while Charlotte and Boston rely mainly on a mix of internal PHA funds and resources available elsewhere in the community.

Four sites—Chicago, Memphis, Cuyahoga, and Roanoke—incurred relatively large costs on other services (Table 6.3). Of these, Memphis and Cuyahoga fund more than one-half of such services from their grant funds, whereas Chicago again mostly uses internal funds from other sources. Roanoke makes considerable use of external organizations to provide other services. Reported data suggest that Syracuse and Boston spend much less than the other PHAs on other services.

CSW is mainly funded out of the Jobs Plus grant in all the sites but Chicago. This may have implications for whether sites have the capacity to sustain their external partnerships after the Jobs Plus grant ends. Finally, as previously mentioned, the general administration of Jobs Plus is funded mostly from the grant in all sites except for Chicago and Syracuse.

Cost of the JPEID

So far, the cost analysis has focused on social costs and thereby ignored the costs associated with the JPEID. JPEID costs for the second year of the program are presented in Table 6.4 per resident, per participant, and per eligible household. Costs in this chapter are lower than in Chapter 4 because they reflect average costs across all residents, participants, and households, including those that did not enroll in or benefit from the JPEID during the second year of the program.

¹²¹ Roanoke, Syracuse, and (especially) St. Louis made considerably greater use of these external resources than either of the sites in an earlier Jobs Plus replication implemented in New York City and San Antonio (see Greenberg et al., 2015). As described in Chapter 2, Memphis also had a Choice Neighborhood Initiative (CNI) grant whose resources may have been leveraged to operate Jobs Plus. Reports provided by the PHA, however, showed very limited internal non-grant Jobs Plus expenditures; only JPEID administrative costs were reported as internal PHA costs that were not charged to the Jobs Plus grant.

Table 6.3 | Financing Sources of Gross Social Costs of HUD Jobs Plus Per Resident Cohort 1 Sites, Year 2: October 2016–September 2017

	Charlotte	Chicago	Memphis	Roanoke	St. Louis	Syracuse	<i>Boston</i>	<i>Cuyahoga</i>
<u>Employment-related services</u>								
All sources (\$)	430	507	947	679	1,894	1,065	<i>192</i>	<i>372</i>
Grant (%)	39.2	19.3	97.7	92.0	56.3	55.2	<i>43.8</i>	<i>80.5</i>
Internal non-grant (%)	48.6	80.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	<i>24.1</i>	<i>0.7</i>
External non-grant (%)	12.2	0.0	2.3	8.0	43.7	44.0	<i>32.0</i>	<i>18.7</i>
<u>CSW</u>								
All sources (\$)	1,023	744	141	264	273	223	<i>65</i>	<i>128</i>
Grant (%)	91.9	16.6	100.0	79.4	87.7	75.3	<i>72.1</i>	<i>97.8</i>
Internal non-grant (%)	5.1	83.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	<i>20.2</i>	<i>2.2</i>
External non-grant (%)	2.9	0.0	0.0	20.6	12.3	24.7	<i>7.6</i>	<i>0.0</i>
<u>JPEID administration</u>								
All sources (\$)	117	39	173	49	40	51	<i>80</i>	<i>100</i>
Grant (%)	58.5	0.0	39.6	33.1	100.0	79.2	<i>17.8</i>	<i>51.1</i>
Internal non-grant (%)	41.5	100.0	60.4	66.9	0.0	20.8	<i>82.2</i>	<i>48.9</i>
External non-grant (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>
<u>General administrative costs</u>								
All sources (\$)	152	542	206	210	161	116	<i>15</i>	<i>63</i>
Grant (%)	92.3	0.4	100.0	53.6	100.0	24.3	<i>55.2</i>	<i>75.2</i>
Internal non-grant (%)	7.7	99.6	0.0	46.4	0.0	75.7	<i>44.8</i>	<i>24.8</i>
External non-grant (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>
<u>Other services</u>								
All sources (\$)	239	932	823	706	282	41	<i>37</i>	<i>351</i>
Grant (%)	70.9	5.5	98.5	38.2	8.9	33.2	<i>86.4</i>	<i>98.6</i>
Internal non-grant (%)	24.4	52.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.8</i>
External non-grant (%)	4.7	41.6	1.5	61.8	91.1	66.8	<i>13.6</i>	<i>0.6</i>
<u>All costs</u>								
All sources (\$)	1,961	2,765	2,290	1,908	2,650	1,496	<i>389</i>	<i>1,014</i>
Grant (%)	75.8	9.9	94.0	64.6	57.8	56.0	<i>47.6</i>	<i>85.7</i>
Internal non-grant (%)	19.4	76.0	4.6	6.8	0.0	7.1	<i>34.0</i>	<i>7.2</i>
External non-grant (%)	4.8	14.0	1.5	28.6	42.2	36.9	<i>18.4</i>	<i>7.1</i>
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>

CSW = Community Support for Work. JPEID = Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard.

Notes: The cost estimates for Boston and Cuyahoga appear in italics on the far right of the table because the Jobs Plus programs at these public housing agencies (PHAs) were in flux during the time period covered by this analysis. Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in sums and differences. "Grant costs" are costs paid for under the Jobs Plus grant, including payments to partner organizations under contract. "Internal non-grant costs" are costs that were not funded by the grant, but borne by the PHA. "External non-grant costs" are the monetary value of services that are not paid for by the PHA, but are provided by partner organizations. "Other services" refer to services that are not employment-related services, including financial advice, health care, childcare, and youth programs.

Source: MDRC calculations using quarterly expenditure and JPEID reports to HUD and supplemental reports from PHAs.

Table 6.4 | Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID) Costs of HUD Jobs Plus Cohort 1 Sites, Year 2: October 2016–September 2017

	Charlotte	Chicago	Memphis	Roanoke	St. Louis	Syracuse	<i>Boston</i>	<i>Cuyahoga</i>
<u>Dollar Value</u>								
Per resident	681	1,035	803	876	820	795	<i>183</i>	<i>158</i>
Per participant	950	2,961	750	1,538	1,213	1,504	<i>856</i>	<i>544</i>
Per eligible household	1,186	1,090	829	1,104	910	1,546	<i>262</i>	<i>157</i>
<u>Percentage of total cost</u>								
Per resident	25.8	27.2	26.0	31.5	23.6	34.7	<i>32.0</i>	<i>13.5</i>
Per participant	28.9	30.9	25.6	32.8	24.7	36.0	<i>34.9</i>	<i>14.4</i>
<u>Percentage of total internal</u>								
Per resident	26.7	30.3	26.3	39.1	34.9	45.7	<i>36.6</i>	<i>14.3</i>
Per participant	30.0	35.0	25.9	40.8	37.3	47.4	<i>40.2</i>	<i>15.5</i>
Participation ratio	0.72	0.35	1.08	0.57	0.67	0.53	<i>0.21</i>	<i>0.29</i>

Notes: Total cost is the total social cost plus the cost of JPEID. Total internal cost is grant cost plus internal non-grant cost. The cost estimates for Boston and Cuyahoga appear in italics on the far right of the table because the Jobs Plus programs at these public housing agencies (PHAs) were in flux during the time period covered by this analysis. Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in sums and differences.

Source: MDRC calculations using quarterly expenditure and JPEID reports to HUD and supplemental reports from PHAs.

Public housing residents normally pay 30 percent of their earned income toward rent. Thus, if they increase their earned income, their rent goes up. By participating in JPEID, a household does not have to pay more rent because of increases to their earned income. The foregone rent is reimbursed to the PHA through the Jobs Plus grant. The cost of the JPEID is, therefore, in direct relation to how much participating households' earnings have increased.

Table 6.4 indicates that, except for Boston and Cuyahoga—the two sites that are not in a steady-state situation—the costs per resident resulting from the JPEID are rather similar across the PHAs, ranging from slightly less than \$700 to slightly more than \$1,000. They are also similar in terms of costs per eligible household, although Syracuse is somewhat larger. Costs per resident and per eligible household are much lower for Boston and Cuyahoga than for the other sites. The costs

vary considerably across the sites when divided by the number of participants.¹²² This is attributable to variation in the participation ratio; the smaller the ratio, the greater the increase in moving from JPEID per resident to JPEID per participant.

As noted earlier, the cost of the JPEID differs from the social cost of Jobs Plus because the former is a transfer from the government to the residents of public housing, while the latter involves the use of resources. Both have the same effect on the government's budget, however. Thus, Table 6.4 also reports the cost of the JPEID as a percentage of the total cost of Jobs Plus (that is, JPEID expenditures plus total social cost) and as a percentage of total internal costs (that is, JPEID expenditures plus total social cost less external non-grant costs).

Except for Cuyahoga, the JPEID accounts for an appreciable part of the total cost of Jobs Plus—from 20 percent to over 30 percent. The percentages are larger when computed as a percentage of total internal costs, although generally by fewer than 10 percentage points.¹²³

Summary

Table 6.5 presents some key cost estimates. All the estimates are for costs per resident during Jobs Plus's second year of operation. The table contains three panels. The top panel shows the total gross dollar cost of Jobs Plus at the eight PHAs for which cost data were collected. The panel also shows the division of these overall total costs between the JPEID and social costs (that is, the cost of providing of services to participants, the cost of CSW, and the cost of administering Jobs Plus¹²⁴). The middle panel displays the percentage of Jobs Plus's overall cost accounted for by each of the program's components.¹²⁵ The bottom panel shows each of the three sources of funding for Jobs Plus as a percentage of the program's overall total cost. Unlike the calculations in Tables 6.2 and 6.3, which were concerned with the social cost of Jobs Plus, the cost of the JPEID is included as part of expenditures under the program's grant.

Ignoring Boston and Cuyahoga, the two sites that are far from being in a steady-state situation, the overall total cost per resident of Jobs-Plus ranged from \$2,291 to \$3,800 during the program's second year of operation. Costs in Cuyahoga and (especially) Boston were far lower. The second panel of Table 6.5 indicates that the JPEID costs accounted for no more than around one-third of

¹²² Costs per eligible household are a little larger than costs per participant in Charlotte, Memphis, and Syracuse, implying that more participants are in these sites than households eligible for Jobs Plus. This suggests that a considerable number of eligible households in these sites contain multiple Jobs Plus participants.

¹²³ These percentages are much larger than they were in the earlier Jobs Plus replication in New York City and San Antonio, where rent incentives accounted for only around one-tenth of internal costs (Greenberg et al., 2015).

¹²⁴ The cost of administering Jobs Plus includes the cost of providing JPEID, as well as other administrative costs incurred in operating Jobs Plus.

¹²⁵ Unlike the earlier tables in this chapter, the denominator in this calculation includes the cost of the JPEID, as well as the social costs of Jobs Plus. The denominator in the earlier tables included only the latter.

**Table 6.5 | Summary of the Gross Costs of HUD Jobs Plus per Resident
Cohort 1 Sites, Year 2: October 2016–September 2017**

Cost measure / component	Charlotte	Chicago	Memphis	Roanoke	St. Louis	Syracuse	<i>Boston</i>	<i>Cuyahoga</i>
<u>Cost Totals (\$)</u>								
Overall total costs	2,642	3,800	3,093	2,784	3,470	2,291	<i>572</i>	<i>1,172</i>
Costs of the JPEID	681	1,035	803	876	820	795	<i>183</i>	<i>158</i>
Total social costs	1,961	2,765	2,290	1,908	2,650	1,496	<i>389</i>	<i>1,014</i>
<u>Components of Jobs Plus as a Percentage of Overall Total Costs (%)</u>								
JPEID	25.8	27.2	26.0	31.5	23.6	34.7	<i>32.0</i>	<i>13.5</i>
Employment-related services	16.3	13.3	30.6	24.4	54.6	46.5	<i>33.5</i>	<i>31.8</i>
CSW	38.7	19.6	4.6	9.5	7.9	9.7	<i>11.4</i>	<i>11.0</i>
Other services	9.1	24.5	26.6	25.4	8.1	1.8	<i>6.4</i>	<i>29.9</i>
All administration	10.2	15.3	12.3	9.3	5.8	7.3	<i>16.6</i>	<i>13.9</i>
<u>Percentage of Total Costs Provided by Various Financing Sources (%)</u>								
Jobs Plus grant	82.0	34.5	95.5	75.7	67.8	71.3	<i>64.4</i>	<i>87.7</i>
Internal non-grant	14.4	55.3	3.4	4.7	0.0	4.7	<i>23.1</i>	<i>6.2</i>
External non-grant	3.6	10.2	1.1	19.6	32.2	24.1	<i>12.5</i>	<i>6.1</i>

CSW = Community Support for Work; JPEID = Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard.

Notes: The cost estimates for Boston and Cuyahoga appear in italics on the far right of the table because the Jobs Plus programs at these public housing agencies (PHAs) were in flux during the time period covered by this analysis. Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in sums and differences. "Grant costs" are costs paid for under the Jobs Plus grant, including payments to partner organizations under contract. "Internal non-grant costs" are costs that were not funded by the grant but borne by the PHA. "External non-grant costs" are the monetary value of services that are not paid for by the PHA but are provided by partner organizations. "Other services" refer to services that are not employment-related services, including financial advice, health care, childcare, and youth programs.

Source: MDRC calculations using quarterly expenditure and JPEID reports to HUD and supplemental reports from PHAs.

overall total costs, and in some sites considerably less. Other than Charlotte and Chicago, the provision of employment-related services accounted for one-fourth to one-half of overall total costs. The costs of providing other services (for example, financial advice, health care, childcare, and youth programs) accounted for an important share of overall total costs in Chicago, Cuyahoga, Memphis, and Roanoke, but not in the other sites. In most of the sites, a relatively small portion of their overall costs (around 10 percent or less) resulted from providing Community Support for Work. Charlotte and, to a lesser extent, Chicago are the major exceptions. The costs of administering Jobs Plus were relatively small, 15 percent or less of overall expenditures.

The information about program components in the second panel of Table 6.5 can be used to assess the gross costs of future versions of Jobs Plus. To illustrate, if a program is modeled after the one in Charlotte, except that it does not provide JPEID, the average gross cost per resident would be about 70 percent the costs of Charlotte's.¹²⁶ Similarly, a 50-percent increase in the cost of providing other services would increase overall total costs by around \$120 per resident.¹²⁷

The third panel of Table 6.5 indicates that, except in Chicago, the lion's share of program costs was paid for out of the Jobs Plus grant. Chicago, unlike the other sites, relied much more on funds it had from sources other than the grant. Roanoke, St. Louis, and Syracuse drew considerably on resources available elsewhere in the respective communities.

Putting the Costs in Context

Chapter 1 describes both the original Jobs Plus program, which was tested in six public housing developments from 1998 to 2003, and the first replication effort, which operated in the Bronx and San Antonio through the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) and was launched in 2011. Although not identical, these earlier iterations of Jobs Plus were similar in structure to HUD's Jobs Plus. Thus, their costs can be roughly compared.

Although a formal cost analysis of the original program was not conducted, a "very rough" estimate of around \$2,500 annually¹²⁸ was obtained of the gross costs per eligible working-age individual (Blank and Wharton-Fields, 2008). While "eligible working-age individual" and "eligible resident" are not identical terms, the concepts are very similar. The \$2,500 estimate pertains to onsite expenditures, including the rent incentives. Excluding Boston and Cuyahoga, total internal costs from the current cost study range from \$2,291 to \$3,470 during the program's second year of operation. Thus, the estimate from the original study falls on the lower end of this range. About 35 percent of the budget in the original Jobs Plus was expended on rent-based work incentives (Blank and Wharton-Fields, 2008),¹²⁹ as compared with a range of 26 to 46 percent in the current cost study when Boston and Cuyahoga are excluded (Table 6.4). The original study estimate is again around the middle of this range.

A formal cost analysis was conducted on the Jobs Plus programs that operated in the Bronx and San Antonio (Greenberg et al., 2015). In this study, however, costs were estimated per resident

¹²⁶ This allows for the 25.8 percent of overall cost accounted for by direct expenditures on the JPEID in Charlotte plus around 4.5 percent accounted for in administering the JPEID. (Table 6.1 indicates that a little less than half the total cost of administering Jobs Plus in Charlotte results from operating the JPEID.)

¹²⁷ The cost of other services in Charlotte was \$239 ($\$2,642 \times .095091$). Fifty percent of that amount is about \$120.

¹²⁸ All dollar figures reported in this section for the previous iterations of Jobs Plus have been converted to 2017 dollars using the Consumer Price Index.

¹²⁹ In the original Jobs Plus study, sites used different approaches to provide rent-based work incentives to participants, including rent freezes, flat rents, and income-based rents calculated using a lower percentage of adjusted income, among others.

household, rather than per resident, as the number of residents was unavailable. Although almost all the resident households at the two sites had at least one household member, more than one such adult probably lived in some of the households. On its own, this would cause costs to appear smaller at the HUD sites than at the SIF sites. As it turns out, however, the opposite occurs. Annual internal third-year costs were estimated to be \$709 in the Bronx and \$530 in San Antonio, around one-third of the internal costs in Syracuse: the lowest cost HUD site (excluding Boston and Cuyahoga).

One reason for the difference in internal costs between the two sets of sites is due to differences in the cost of the rent incentive. Because of the way the rent incentive was administered at the SIF sites, it was hardly used (see Chapter 4). Consequently, rent incentive costs accounted for only around one-tenth of internal costs (Greenberg et al., 2015). In the SIF sites, the rent incentive costs were well under \$100 annually, whereas in the HUD sites, JPEID costs ranged from \$700 to \$1,000.¹³⁰ Hence, had the rent incentives been structured similarly in the two versions of Jobs Plus, costs at the two SIF sites would have been around \$700 or \$800 higher. Another key difference between the SIF and the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Program is that, except for about \$100 of financial counseling offered annually at the Bronx site, the two SIF sites did not use internal funds to provide services other than those that were employment-related (some such services were obtained through external organization in the communities). In contrast, one of the HUD sites (Memphis) internally funded over \$800 of other services annually and two others (Chicago and Roanoke) internally funded more than \$300 of other services (estimates derived from Table 6.3). Another important difference is that in the Bronx and San Antonio under \$300 and under \$200 of employment-related costs were respectively paid for from internal funds, while the HUD sites (excluding Boston and Cuyahoga) internally funded from nearly \$400 to over \$1,000 of employment-related services. The reason for this last difference is not apparent. These three factors account for most of the differences in internal costs between SIF Jobs Plus and HUD's Jobs Plus Pilot Program.¹³¹

Unlike internal costs, the SIF sites and HUD sites did not systematically differ in terms of their use of external resources in the community. In year 3, external costs accounted for 20 percent of overall costs in San Antonio and for 4 percent of overall costs in the Bronx. Roanoke, St. Louis, and Syracuse were similar in this respect to San Antonio, and the percentages were even lower for Charlotte and Memphis than for the Bronx.

¹³⁰ In the SIF Jobs Plus study, the rent incentive was the Earned Income Disregard (EID), which provided a time-limited exemption of additional rent that would have been charged due to increased earnings (Greenberg et al., 2015). Participants could only receive this for 2 years, and other restrictions existed if a participant lost employment while benefitting from the EID. As describe in Chapter 4, participants could benefit from the JPEID for the full grant period, and the incentive was far more generous.

¹³¹ Internal funds paid for about \$100 of CSW in the Bronx and \$200 of CSW in San Antonio. Of the HUD sites, the values were considerably higher in only Charlotte and Chicago; they were comparable in the remaining sites.

The SIF Jobs Plus sites incurred much lower levels of internal costs per resident than in the HUD sites because take-up at the SIF sites of the rent incentive was very low, markedly small employment-related services were provided from internal funds, and very little in the way of other types of services were made available. The two different models and corresponding costs can be useful for PHAs for making decisions about the different Jobs Plus components within their own resource constraints. Presumably, future versions of Jobs Plus programs could follow either the SIF or the HUD model. Because a primary goal of Jobs Plus is to increase employment and earnings among public housing residents, however, it would make little sense to keep employment-related services at the SIF level, but one can imagine *attempting* to reach this goal without using internal funds to pay for other types of services or rent incentives. Whether such a reduced-scale program would increase employment and earnings, however, is unknown. The original Jobs Plus program did have substantial positive impacts on these outcomes at the three sites that fully implemented the program, but the original program provided both rent incentives and other types of services, including, among many, help with childcare, financial management, and health.¹³² Although some (but probably not all) of these services could perhaps be obtained elsewhere in the community so that internal funds would not be needed, it is unlikely that a means could be found to pay for the rent incentives without using internal funds.

¹³² See Bloom, Riccio, and Verma, 2005.

Chapter 7

Beyond the 4-Year Jobs Plus Grant: Site Plans and Dilemmas

HUD provided 4-year, non-renewable grants to the sites chosen to operate Jobs Plus. HUD's thinking at the time of the launch, and more recently, was to provide grantees with a one-time grant (or a "one-shot deal") that would hopefully jump-start partnerships to enable the sites to draw on local resources and sustain elements of the program after federal funding ends. In this vision, HUD viewed its Jobs Plus investment as seed funding. HUD recognized that it would be impossible for the public housing agencies (PHAs) to preserve the Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID) without federal funding and, thus, understood that sites will be able to preserve less than the whole model. As a former HUD staffer closely associated with the Jobs Plus program put it, "We're giving the sites money, they're going to create this program, (make it) successful at this site, and then use what they learned to do other things with their other developments, but not with \$3 million of funding." Thus, within the federal context of time-limited grant funding, several questions are considered: How are program operators thinking of longer-term program sustainability? Are they looking to preserve any, some, or all the program features? Does their current thinking reflect HUD's aspiration that their seed investment will grow into something more lasting in these communities? Given what is known about the costs of operating Jobs Plus, how should policymakers think about the enterprise of seeding complex employment-focused initiatives and about program sustainability?

To formalize sites' own planning about the post-Jobs Plus grant phase, in 2017, HUD requested the Cohort 1 sites to develop "sustainability memos."¹³³ To guide this planning exercise, sites were asked to respond to a set of questions about how they might continue to support services, offer rent incentives, and nurture Community Support for Work (CSW). Related to services, for example, they were asked about the types of services that might remain available to support residents' progress toward economic security and how they would build on their relationship with service providers, employers, and funders to expand the array of services available after the Jobs Plus grant ended. On the matter of the rent incentives, HUD asked sites to think about how they might continue to offer some type of financial incentive to make work pay. Understanding whether sites would continue to nurture CSW was also raised as part of this planning exercise.

¹³³ In terms of the process, (a) HUD facilitated conversations among the sites; (b) requested sites to prepare draft sustainability plans; (c) provided customized feedback on the Plans; and (d) requested sites to prepare final sustainability plans. The initial sustainability plans were available to the evaluation team for this report.

In early 2018, based on sites' responses from the planning exercise, HUD began discussions with sites about their early thinking about program sustainability. Although it is unclear how these plans will eventually play out, the evaluation team's review of the sustainability memos, along with the interviews conducted with program staff, suggest that sites do think they will be able to continue to deliver some form of Jobs Plus in the future. In brief, their memos suggest: identifying new resources to continue case management and other services could prove to be difficult; instead, most sites are hoping to leverage existing resources from other programs. To continue to provide some type of rent-based work incentive, most sites expect that they will use other HUD instruments such as the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program's escrow saving account feature or the traditional Earned Income Disregard (EID), if available. The sites' plans to preserve CSW efforts are less defined. These early plans, along with HUD's initial vision and aspirations for Jobs Plus continuity, are discussed later.

The Nature of the Sustainability Dilemma

The question of what happens after federal funding for the program ends presents a real dilemma for most the grantees. In the original Jobs Plus demonstration, part of the rationale for building strong partnerships with workforce agencies and other service providers was to increase the odds of sustained local funding after the grant funding ended. Although this did not necessarily materialize for the original Jobs Plus sites (at least not until recently for two of the six sites), both the sites in the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) replication continue to operate Jobs Plus. As noted in Chapter 1, New York City operates this program on a large scale, using city resources. The SIF San Antonio site, on the other hand, qualified as a HUD Jobs Plus grantee and continues to operate the program with federal support.¹³⁴ Similarly, Baltimore and Dayton, both part of the original demonstration, also received HUD grants to operate Jobs Plus. This seems to suggest that these sites found Jobs Plus well worth carrying but needed federal resources to do so.

Although many, if not all, of the PHAs in the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Program replication effort have previous experience with time-limited grant funding, the interviews with staff in the evaluation sites revealed that the culmination of this grant was generating a particularly high level of uncertainty and some anxiety among staff. As one community coach expressed,

“How can we keep Jobs Plus alive? ... [w]hen Jobs Plus does leave people are still going to need resources... [W]hat program are you all going to have for these residents then? ... I'm just hoping they keep it going.”

A site program director also expressed the imperative to find a way to keep activities going.

¹³⁴ The public housing development that received HUD funding to operate Jobs Plus is different from the one that operated Jobs Plus as part of the SIF.

“Well, also, looking at what's the end outcome, I mean, the end is the push that you really need the case management for to make sure that these changes are sustainable, and so to keep the income disregard as long as possible but not be providing any type of coaching to the resident, what's gonna happen once it's gone, they're just all gonna quit their jobs and then you didn't accomplish anything regardless. And so, I really wish there was more support towards trying to make it a lasting change for the neighborhood.”

Anxiety about the imminent end of the grant is laced with a sense of regret about the extended start-up period most sites required to gain program momentum, the promises of employment success made to residents, the sense of unfinished business, and the limited guidance thus far from HUD about phasing and details of the close-out. In the original demonstration sites that fully executed and sustained the three components of the model, Jobs Plus participants experienced average earnings gains of 16 percent that was sustained for at least 7 years. Across the current sites, some have general concerns that any employment gains made by participants may not yet be as durable: Will residents generally continue any individual employment progress they have made? If so, how? Might a large proportion of them simply revert to their status quo before the grant started? As one staff member stated, “Once the doors close and JPEID is gone, what are people going to do? And some people we know are just going to go back to what they were doing.” How participants will respond to the end of the JPEID work incentive is *the* major Jobs Plus sustainability dilemma, and most interview respondents shared specific concerns about the end of the JPEID incentive when discussing Jobs Plus sustainability. The end of the grant poses a host of operational challenges, including which Jobs Plus activities and partnerships might be continued, what infrastructure might remain in place, and the roles and responsibilities of various actors.

Levels of Preparation and Planning for Sustainability

From the outset, the time-limited nature of the Jobs Plus grants was communicated to sites. Approaching the end of year 2, the sites varied in their responses to the sustainability dilemma, both in terms of their attitudes and perceptions about the challenges and in terms of the extent of planning and preparation. The attitudes of staff at the sites range from constructive and hopeful to cynical and resentful. One program director expressed a sense of frustration: “It's a 4-year grant with no possibility of a re-funding, so you make this established program, and then kind of like ‘Okay, go do this on your own now.’” Another program director stated, “Because the program can't be sustained . . . there's things that HUD could've done differently to alleviate that particular issue. I mean—okay, I'm a little cynical after all these years.” That particular program director suggested that grantees should have been eligible for additional rounds of Jobs Plus funding.

The interviews and the sites' sustainability memos also reveal variation in levels of planning and preparation across the sites. Although most sites have a fair amount of detail in their emerging plans for the wind-down of funding and their operational transition afterward, other sites have made few decisions about precisely how to address the post-grant period. As of the writing of this

report, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Memphis, and Syracuse had given relatively more consideration to what comes next, whereas Cuyahoga, St. Louis, and Roanoke's plans were less certain. The sites that have resources and an ongoing redevelopment process supported by the federal Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI), Boston and Memphis, plan to extend funding for services through the CNI period and have subsumed transition planning under the ongoing CNI implementation process. In both those sites, ongoing services to the residents who return to the future mixed-income development will be the responsibility of the private sector operators of the site. The sites with Moving to Work (MTW) status, Charlotte and Chicago, are leveraging that flexibility to shift some funding to post-grant services.

Early Thinking around Strategies to Sustain the Core Components of Jobs Plus

The initial sustainability plans sites drafted hint at a range of potential approaches across sites to the challenge of sustaining employment services. The strategies for maintaining some level of rent-based incentive are most consistent across sites. The commitment to continuing CSW varies most broadly.

Employment Services

In Charlotte, where the PHA has implemented a 20-hour a week work requirement, the PHA will continue to provide services to support increased resident employment. The intention there is to raise funds through the nonprofit arm of the housing authority. As a Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) site, the private operators pay a fee that will generate some funding for case management and other services, but there will no longer be an employment specialist on-site focusing on employer relationships. Chicago plans to continue its programming through its FamilyWorks model. In Memphis, resources from the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative grant will enable some case management support to continue through the period of that grant.

Memphis and Syracuse each plan to use existing and future Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency grants to maintain case management and employment services. The Boston site has identified specific new city and state funding sources to cover career/financial advisors and adult education. In Roanoke and Syracuse, some are considering establishing the resident services function as a 501(c)(3) to raise philanthropic funding, but in Roanoke, no detail yet describes which services might be sustained. Cuyahoga and St. Louis remain early in their planning for post-grant services.

In terms of infrastructure to house program activities, only Charlotte and Syracuse have explicitly made a commitment to maintain the dedicated space for employment services such as meetings and classes with participants and a computer lab. As for the community coaches, which have provided a key outreach function across sites, Charlotte and Syracuse have committed to maintaining that position, whereas Chicago has plans to absorb the community coach role into the FamilyWorks program within Metropolitan Family Services. The other sites will likely also phase out the position.

Rent-based Work Incentives

The challenge presented by the end of the JPEID work incentive, particularly the plans for the timing of the expiration of the earnings disregard, was discussed earlier in this report. The initial sustainability memos provide more detail about the sites' early plans for continuing any form of work incentive. The most popular approach, in Boston, Chicago, Cuyahoga, Roanoke, and Syracuse, is the consideration of the possibility of transitioning employed program participants over to the FSS program. Chicago had already used its MTW flexibility to modify the FSS program's escrow model, which enabled participants to enroll in JPEID and FSS at the same time. Cuyahoga is interested in exploring a "forced savings" model. Boston and Roanoke are planning to use their EID program to ease down the JPEID component over a 2 to 3-year period. Given the possibility of a wind-down of the EID program at HUD, it may only present a time-limited solution. Boston has identified local funding that will allow them to provide a stipend for residents who retain their employment for 30, 60, 90, and 180 days. The sustainability memos in Charlotte, Memphis, and St. Louis do not describe their plans for a continued work incentive.

Community Support for Work

At this point, there is no mention of this component in the sustainability memos for at least five sites (Boston, Cuyahoga, Memphis, Roanoke, or St. Louis). The two sites that started monthly "Network Night" community gatherings, Charlotte and Chicago, are planning to continue those activities. In Charlotte, the intention is to continue the resident-led Members-Only program. Syracuse intends to launch a neighborhood watch program in collaboration with the local police, through which resident engagement and trust could be built. No explicit connection is articulated between the neighborhood watch program and resident employment, however.

In general, little optimism exists across sites regarding the role of community residents in helping to sustain Jobs Plus activity. In Charlotte and Chicago, the sites that made the most progress developing a formal network of support among residents, there is a hope that network building is a practice that might be sustained by residents after the grant ends. In most other sites, not enough resident leadership has been established during the program for residents to now be expected to help sustain it. For example, although the tenant advisory board (TAB) in St. Louis had an integral role in the early roll-out of Jobs Plus, the relationship between the TAB and the program team weakened over time to a point where the TAB is not an option for future program leadership. A program director from another site expressed a similar conclusion: "[Housing authority staff] were hoping that the community would pick it up and run with it, but you can't do that. You have to have people in place that are in charge and know how to do this. It can't be picked up by the community."

Further Considerations

Whether in the future sites have success keeping all elements of the program intact or phase out selected elements is too early to tell. They seem committed to continuing their efforts, either modeled after Jobs Plus or otherwise, to help residents build economic self-sufficiency. HUD's sustainability discussions with sites may also want to focus on ways in which sites could leverage the

Jobs Plus partnerships to secure resources to continue serving residents in these communities. Ideas such as forming interagency agreements to continue serving public housing residents, assigning staff from these agencies to be out-stationed at the housing developments, and using flexible and in-kind resources to keep residents engaged, have been considered in past iterations of Jobs Plus. The choices that sites make, and whether what emerges at these locations is informed by or builds on the legacy of Jobs Plus, would also be important to document.

The issue of sustainability also raises additional questions about other ways in which Jobs Plus could continue as an ongoing national policy and program, so that programs can remain in place to meet the ongoing needs of current and new residents. Although it is too early to draw any conclusions about the effectiveness of the HUD Jobs Plus replication effort on raising resident earnings and employment—this evidence will become available starting in 2019 through a separate evaluation (see Chapter 8)—it is not too early to be thinking about ways in which programs like Jobs Plus *could* operate as ongoing policy. From HUD’s perspective, the feasibility of continuing to fund the JPEID feels somewhat less plausible. As noted by a former HUD staffer closely associated with the program, “Our thinking is that the partnerships that we create in those Jobs Plus sites, especially the Department of Labor-PHA connections, and the new culture of work, will have a lasting effect. They’ll have legs. The financial incentive part probably can’t continue.”

The advantage of operating a program like Jobs Plus through time-limited grants is also worth reconsidering. The experiences of the sites in this evaluation suggest that 4 years is a tight timeframe to build a program, assemble working partnerships, and allow the program to build some momentum. As documented in this report, the sites had to begin developing wind-down plans in the early part of year 3, about the time when some of them had just about established more stable service delivery. Given the complexity of the program design and the implementation lift, a short-term program may be somewhat limiting. Also, in the face of residential turnover experienced in these communities, short-term programs diminish program exposure, especially for those residents who enter the Jobs Plus development closer to the end of the grant.

When considering fixed federal funding for Jobs Plus (recognizing that investing more in some places would mean fewer places are assisted), it might be worth considering funding sites long enough to give them more of a chance to stabilize their programs and secure local sustainability funding. The PHAs could qualify for renewal funding for another round or two based on their progress in the initial round. This might be a more effective use of HUD’s initial seed investment. Recognizing the tradeoffs of renewal funding, of course, HUD may want to consider a shorter renewal period or structure the renewal grant somewhat differently, so that it serves more as a form of transitional assistance, where programs receive funding for one to two staff to work on the site’s sustainability plans.

Other considerations could include future rounds of Jobs Plus funding requiring more local matches. In this way, local stakeholders would be more deeply invested in the program and possibly committed to maintaining the program after federal funding ends. Also related to leveraging

partnerships to sustain local programs, HUD may want to consider collaboration with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training system, which may provide a funding mechanism to support the employment needs of public housing residents. The role of the welfare agency as a partner was deemphasized during the replication pilot because of the declining Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) role, but, given the high proportion of residents receiving SNAP and the SNAP system's increasing focus on work, this might be an important collaboration to consider.

Finally, related to rent-based work incentives, a way to get past the main sustainability hurdle is to consider it could be funded through other mechanisms. The results from the original demonstration provided circumstantial evidence that this component may have played a key role in generating the program's impacts. Thus, looking forward, is it plausible for federal rent policy to include features that incentivize work (such as the triennial recertification feature being tested in HUD's Rent Reform demonstration for MTW sites).¹³⁵ Once embedded in the rent rules, these rent-based work incentives could operate in the same way as the JPEID, or HUD could consider other mechanisms that also incentivize work, such as escrow accounts. With a strong financial incentive folded into rent policy, additional local and federal forces may be able to come together to support the other core components of Jobs Plus once federal grants end. In this way, and in keeping with HUD's aspiration, something of value could be left behind in communities that build and operate Jobs Plus.

¹³⁵ See Riccio, Deitch, and Verma (2017).

Chapter 8

Recommendations for Strengthening Implementation

Research on Jobs Plus is extensive. The model has been in existence for close to two decades, but the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Program represents the first effort of this program to be funded and directly managed by a federal agency. This Jobs Plus process study is charged with documenting the implementation experiences of the first set of sites selected by HUD to implement this program. Over the course of the process study, which covers the period from 2015 to 2018, during roughly the first 2 years of program operations, the evaluation team has examined the sites' experiences implementing an evidence-based model: how they learned the program framework, operationalized its components, and devised strategies to respond to early implementation and participation challenges. This chapter builds on their implementation experiences (both successes and challenges) described in preceding chapters and distills important observations and recommendations. The chapter also reflects on the federal government's design choices (an effort to own and adapt the program), technical assistance approach, and its monitoring and oversight to build the strongest expression of the program in varied settings and contexts. Learning from the initial cohort of sites in the HUD replication effort supports the goal of continuing to strengthen the implementation of the model in these and future sites. This chapter (and the whole report) is intended in that spirit.

Although the three components of the Jobs Plus model are not in themselves conceptually complicated compared to other service interventions, past research has suggested that sites will face complex decisions about how to adapt them in practice to local developments, policies, and economic contexts, and will also face choices about how the model components are interconnected. Both the original demonstration and its replication during the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) underwent a start-up period of 9 months to approximately 2 years before the program was fully implemented, with improvements often noted over the grant period. As an ambitious multi-site initiative operating with time-limited funding, the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Program replication sites shared some of the same implementation experiences of their predecessors but also had some more unique ones.

As learned in this evaluation, HUD's own approach was to roll out a Jobs Plus "framework," being more prescriptive in some areas and allowing sites to shape the others on their own. HUD specified the structure and rules around the Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID), for instance, which affected how the housing subsidy was calculated for Jobs Plus participants. Regarding building partnerships, HUD's Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) required sites to include the local Workforce Development Board (WDB) and other workforce agencies. Reflecting back, a HUD manager stated:

"We didn't drill down to the details—we didn't say how many case managers or coaches. We didn't say that. What we didn't establish early on were the numbers. In terms of saturation, we

didn't say that saturation means 80 percent of the development, (and) in that sense (we were) not prescriptive enough."

HUD's latest Jobs Plus funding announcement, which affects subsequent rounds of sites funded, sets out more specific targets. HUD administrators also considered the design features of the original Jobs Plus model and identified ones to adapt for the federal scale up. "We had to make some changes—who your partner is? Didn't think TANF [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families] was the right fit... . . . And we decided to keep CSW [Community Support for Work] as is."

Keeping HUD's choices in mind, the rest of this chapter highlights practical considerations for ongoing and future replications of Jobs Plus. As sites gained experience with the model and their programs matured, HUD's own oversight and management of the program evolved, and this management oversight also extends to additional sites that have received Jobs Plus grants. Some of the issues flagged here have had some recurrence over different iterations of Jobs Plus (or are typical of implementing complex initiatives), so they continue to be important issues to focus on.

Employment Services

With the Jobs Plus Pilot Program, HUD envisioned a program that would help residents access training and start on a career pathway. Chapter 3 suggests that this may have been an ambitious goal for most of the residents and that career-oriented jobs require more investment in skills training, which is more demanding of participants and requires minimum academic levels that many residents did not have. The first 2 years of employment services implementation suggest the following recommendations for sites to consider as they launch or continue to strengthen their programs.¹³⁶

- **Start by meeting residents' individual employment needs and skill levels, often by making immediate job placements, and work toward advancement and careers over time.** Although the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Program effort intends to help residents start on a career pathway, which it envisioned would involve work experience and access to training through partnerships with the programs' local WDBs and other workforce partners, early experiences suggest that outcome has not yet materialized for most participants. A career pathways approach might work for those who are ready, but most residents may be looking for entry-level positions. The sites' experience implementing employment services reflects the challenge of being both flexible and responsive to participants' needs and interests and also to trying to guide participants toward a career pathway that is realistic and achievable in a particular local area. This experience also surfaced in the original demonstration and is seen in other work and self-sufficiency initiatives, suggesting the tricky nature of the

¹³⁶ Several publications following the completion of the original demonstration also offer important insights and recommendations for program operators. For example, see Blank and Wharton-Fields, 2008.

problem. One way for Jobs Plus to be responsive and help residents take small steps toward employment stability and advancement, keeping in mind their varied constraints, is to meet their immediate need to get into jobs right away, but then continue to work with them to increase their skills and move them into better-paying jobs.

- **Develop targeted engagement strategies for the unemployed or underemployed** residents who are not enrolled in Jobs Plus and for residents who have disengaged from the program. Staff at several sites expressed frustration over the challenges of engagement with some pockets of development households. They found these families non-responsive to program specialists, case managers, or CSW events hosted by coaches or staff. Staff at some sites were more actively working with newcomers to these developments. They were less proactive with inactive participants and were more likely to wait to be approached for services. Case managers could capitalize on the place-based nature of Jobs Plus by devoting time each week to leaving the Jobs Plus office and going out into the development, visiting popular gathering places, and even knocking on some doors, rather than waiting for less engaged residents to come to the office.
- **Provide more structured case management.** An element of flexibility in the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Program is that PHAs can develop and institute their own case management practices. The study sites developed their own employment intake and assessment protocols and determined what type of follow up would be required from program staff and participants. Most sites did not require regular contact with participants, which meant participants dropped in on an as-needed basis, and the staff was less likely to be informed of participants' employment issues, progress, or needs. Although Jobs Plus is meant to be more than a "by appointment" program, setting formal contact expectations would allow staff follow-up points after their initial meetings with clients. These follow-up meetings would enable staff to understand if additional support is necessary for those who have started working and whether those not yet working would benefit from job search assistance or supports. Also, staying in touch would allow staff to monitor how participants benefit from the referrals they receive. If staff find the quality of services from outside agencies, especially Jobs Plus partners, is limited, that could be addressed and remedied to better support participants. Program staff could also create a more robust and intentional CSW strategy to keep participants connected with staff offering employment services.
- **Elevate the focus on employment retention and advancement.** Most sites did not provide employment retention or advancement services. Staff mentioned that job retention is a challenge for many participants, especially for those who had been unemployed for an extended period of time before starting to work with the help of Jobs Plus, but evidence that retention and advancement services were offered was limited. This is a missed opportunity: Jobs Plus offers a unique ability to provide post-employment services, because residents remain "in the program" as long as they continue living in the development. As a

place-based intervention, discussed further in the next paragraph, Jobs Plus offers a unique opportunity to stay in touch with residents once employed to understand challenges on the job and opportunities for advancement and to offer quick reemployment assistance when jobs end.

- **Capitalize on place.** The place-based nature of Jobs Plus allows program staff to be better acquainted with participants' lives and the personal and other challenges they face with finding and keeping jobs. So far, implementation data suggest that it has operated much more like a traditional employment program, with the exception that the program was on-site. Engaging residents outside of the office, and outside regular hours, was less common. As discussed earlier, staff and partners can take better advantage of the on-site nature of the program. Staff and partners can also more easily reach the population by holding events and doing their own door-knocking. Jobs Plus staff should continue arranging for partners to deliver classes and programming or have their own offices on site.
- **Strengthen ties with employers.** By the end of year 2 of the program, just about all sites had hired or retained the services of job developers. The job developers reported small successes from their outreach efforts to the business community, but they also raised the challenges of finding job opportunities for residents with significant employment barriers and for breaking the preferential hiring practices of large employers. Job developers may want to focus on smaller employers, employers who have hired Jobs Plus participants, Jobs Plus service partners, and public agencies that may be looking to hire entry-level staff. They should consider these options while also trying to identify employment opportunities at larger employers. Given the time-limited nature of the Jobs Plus grants, it would also be beneficial for programs to hire job developers earlier to begin building employer relations. Finally, not all sites had a dedicated job developer staff position. The programs could be strengthened with a person dedicated to building employer relations and supporting residents through their employment needs.
- **Strengthen engagement with the Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) and other workforce agencies.** WDBs or other Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA) agencies were mandated in the HUD NOFA to be partners to local Jobs Plus programs. So far, relationships with the WDBs and WIOA agencies were not as strong as envisioned in some sites (or became weaker over time) and practically nonexistent in other sites. Stronger coordination with the WDB and workforce agencies could help ensure that Jobs Plus participants are able to take advantage of the services available through them. This would require Jobs Plus staff to be more informed about the operations of and eligibility requirements for programs offered through these agencies and to have more direct lines of communication with their counterparts in respective organizations. It could also require working with residents to boost the skills they need to pass assessments that would

enable them to participate in WDB-funded training programs. Meanwhile, sites could consider bringing WDB job search and placement services onsite, through outstationed WDB workers. Sites should keep in mind that WDB circumstances can change over time, with changes in state leadership and WDB management, and they should not give up on pursuing relationships with their local WDBs even if that does not seem fruitful at the moment. Meanwhile, sites should look for partners that can provide a similar set of services, including, perhaps, the employment and training units of other public benefits programs like SNAP and TANF. HUD could also look for ways to work with the Department of Labor to tighten the coordination between the local WDBs and Jobs Plus programs.

- **Build the capacity of case managers and staff providing employment services.** The sites may want to convene employment specialists and job developers and provide technical assistance on best practices, drawing from the experiences of programs that have effective tools and protocols and have demonstrated success. For example, job developers and case managers might benefit from training on using labor market information to guide career development and job search activities. Capacity-building efforts for case managers, particularly around coaching and case management strategies and engaging harder-to-serve participants, would be beneficial at different stages throughout the duration of the grant.

Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID)

The HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Program replication offers a generous and seemingly straightforward work incentive. During participation in the program, any increases in earned income do not increase the participants' rent, as would be the case for other public housing residents. As such, all earned income gains remain with the household.

JPEID implementation was complicated, however, by imprecise marketing of the incentive to residents, challenges regarding data collection and reporting, and confusion surrounding how the JPEID interacted with other programs such as HUD's Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program and Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD). As a result, the staff at several sites marketed the JPEID as a "rent freeze," leading to resident confusion and anger when increases in non-earned income resulted in higher rents. Further, the lack of a standard JPEID tracking form led sites to develop their own, and several sites had to invest significant time in developing data collection forms and, in some cases, re-designing ineffective data collection methods. Finally, inconsistent federal guidance about how the JPEID would be funded caused additional administrative complications.

The evaluation team's observations and staff recommendations suggest that the participating PHAs and HUD should focus on the following actions.

- **Have accurate, clear, and consistent messaging.** Program staff should avoid using phrases that, while easy to understand, fail to accurately communicate how rent incentives operate. Such marketing phrases—like "rent freeze"—can hinder staff's ability to build

trust when participants feel that a promised benefit has been retracted. This can later inhibit the staff's ability to engage participants in other program activities.

- **Make data systems and tracking tools available to sites by program launch.** The absence of clear data collection guidance from HUD delayed the availability of the JPEID to residents. The importance of having necessary data collection systems and reporting procedures in place prior to the roll-out of the program was a key challenge noted by many sites. To alleviate problems that grantees may face in implementing the JPEID and enabling them to offer JPEID as early as possible, HUD should make available the necessary data collection and tracking systems at the start of the program.
- **Ensure tight coordination with property management staff.** As property managers are an important point of contact for PHA residents, they play an important role in recruiting Jobs Plus participants. Along with their rent administration functions, which include tracking and monitoring JPEID receipt, they could reinforce program messages around work and the rent incentive. Sites where Jobs Plus and property management are either co-located in the same office or within the same building developed closer coordination between their respective staff, leading to smoother enrollment processes. Regardless of whether property management and Jobs Plus staffs are co-located, staff recommended involving property management early in program implementation.
- **Prepare families for the end of the JPEID benefit.** Families are eligible to receive the JPEID for the duration of the Jobs Plus grant. As this initiative operates as a 4-year pilot program, however, many participants will experience sharp rent increases when the program ends unless the PHAs find another way to fund rent subsidies. Some sites have used financial empowerment classes to help prepare participants for the impending rent increases, but more targeted follow-up may be needed to prepare families for “rent shock.” In future replication efforts, HUD might address this problem by folding in the rent incentive into ongoing rent policy or considering ways for it to be phased-out, which would allow families to gradually adjust to paying higher rents.
- **Reinforce program engagement through the JPEID.** As a saturation initiative, Jobs Plus does not mandate a specific service flow and assumes that residents can engage with—and benefit from—the program in different ways. That said, staff at several sites believed that mandatory enrollment in employment services and financial empowerment classes should be a condition of receiving the JPEID, as it would better prepare residents for its eventual phase-out. Adopting such a provision, however, may reduce the number of residents who sign up for the program, negatively affecting program enrollment.
- **Reconsider the source of JPEID reimbursements.** Unlike prior Jobs Plus iterations, rent incentives in the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Program were funded through each grantee's budget. This meant that applicants had to estimate the funding they would need for the JPEID, and

some have exceeded that amount by a significant margin. As a result, they will either need to reduce services offered or suspend the JPEID prior to the program ending. In future Jobs Plus replications, HUD should consider finding ways to separate the JPEID funding from the grant budget—for example, by reimbursing it from the Public Housing Operations Fund, like the standard Earned Income Disregard (EID). This would protect service delivery resources and alleviate disincentives for seeking program saturation. This solution would likely require statutory change.

- **Allow household-level JPEID enrollment.** Several staff members noted how individual-level enrollment in the JPEID made administration more onerous. This was especially true for households with youth turning 18 and with two (or more) work-able adults with different enrollment statuses. Allowing households, rather than individuals, to enroll in the JPEID would remove the burden of staff having to track when youth are turning 18 and individually enrolling them and other work-able household members in the program.
- **Consider variations or alternatives to the JPEID and promote complementary programs.** HUD could consider experimenting with different kinds of incentives within Jobs Plus, including different structures of the JPEID, different levels of generosity, or even incentive payments outside of the rent policy (such as those tested as part of the New York City’s Work Rewards Demonstration). Sites should also consider aggressively promoting complementary work incentives such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) as a “make-work-pay” strategy, and not only at tax time but rather all year long. The EITC could be marketed not only to residents who are currently working but also to residents who might consider working or increasing their work hours if they were aware of the benefit the EITC would deliver to them.

Community Support for Work (CSW)

The Jobs Plus theory of change involves not only employment-related services and rent incentives but also an attempt to alter development-wide expectations and aspirations around work. As discussed in this report, assessments of prior Jobs Plus demonstrations have also documented that this has been a challenging component for sites to conceptualize and implement. The sites in the original demonstration initially experimented with a broad array of activities meant to promote CSW. Key recommendations from this round of sites’ experiences implementing CSW include the following.

- **Sites need concrete direction from HUD about how to operationalize CSW.** Abstract conceptions of CSW and mixed messages about what counts as CSW impeded the implementation of this component across sites. Looking forward, HUD could provide sites with clearer guidance about CSW activities, examples of strategies sites have had success with, and examples of how CSW strategies may vary with the stage of program implementation (launch versus post-launch, for example). HUD officials could develop a grantee peer-to-

peer network so that grantees who face common challenges with CSW or who are in similar implementation stages could benefit from shared learning in real-time.

- **CSW activities could include community building and supporting resident network-building.** For the most part, and across most sites, CSW remained an effective strategy to promote program recruitment and share information about Jobs Plus services. Its power for influencing residents’ connections to work activity and to each other has remained relatively untapped. The findings suggest that HUD administrators and grantees develop the capacity to “foster community and encourage residents to help other residents.”¹³⁷
 - Sites should develop CSW activity plans, mapping out a range of programmatic strategies that activate residents’ commitment to fostering a caring, cohesive community. Sites should also incorporate CSW throughout their work plans. Sites that were most “successful” with implementing a CSW strategy did this—they outlined how CSW fit within their Jobs Plus program and had strong, clear strategies (such as designated activities) to promote aspirations and expectations for work.
 - Sites could consider a “building-by-building” strategy as another way to capitalize on place. This would essentially be a community organizing strategy, whereby community coaches would endeavor to understand what the circumstances are within each building by going door-to-door and engaging residents in conversation. In this way, the coach can learn who is working and who is not working and what some of the issues are that might affect particular buildings or areas of development, such as safety issues and locational advantages and disadvantages. By understanding the common issues faced by residents of a building, and both the resources and challenges that those residents have, coaches could try to identify opportunities that might exist to build CSW within and across buildings such as how to build trust and relationships among residents to promote connectedness and feelings of safety.
- **Community coaches need specialized training, support, and supervision.** Coaches’ expectations, roles, and career advancements may be the most discernible example of how grantees perceive the potential of residents to make contributions within a work environment. Given coaches’ unique role as both residents and as staff members tasked with promoting a work-positive environment, grantees need to consider how best to cultivate the human development capacity of the coaches. First, coaches need to be carefully selected and trained. Sites could consider establishing a “community coaches academy”—a peer-learning opportunity for community coaches across sites, which could be web-based and

¹³⁷ HUD (2016).

involve some program staff. Most grantees hope that coaches will transition to full-time, professional positions after the time-limited position concludes. It was less clear, however, how sites would put in place support systems and supervision that would lead to this outcome. The findings suggest that grantees need direction and support to implement a more effective strategy for community coaches.

- **Jobs Plus staff, partners, and residents share responsibility for CSW.** Multiple staff across different roles, including case managers, job developers, and property managers, need to share the responsibility of being part of sites' CSW planning and implementation strategy. Even sites that designated specific staff members, such as coaches, to implement CSW should involve other stakeholders in the community to supplement CSW efforts.
- **Resident-led efforts require intentionality on the part of the staff.** In the two sites where staff built expertise and skills in community network building strategies, residents made tremendous strides in offering support to each other. For example, residents shared their own concrete suggestions for how to save money, how to cope with violence that contributes to job interruptions, and how to ask for help from supervisors. Residents benefit when staff know how to support ongoing, meaningful opportunities for residents to share in the planning and facilitating of community change efforts, as well as develop trust that leads to sustained mutual support.
- **Higher budget allocation to CSW may lead to more effective implementation.** The two sites that showed a more effectively implemented CSW strategy, Charlotte and Chicago, had higher relative CSW costs. Not surprisingly, sites that devote a relatively small portion of the overall costs (around 10 percent or less) to CSW strategy were less effective in CSW implementation. Sites with smaller CSW budgets need to be clear about what they plan to accomplish and how they plan to arrive at those outcomes, given the lower investment of grant resources into implementing CSW.
- **Sites should build on organic community support for work that may emerge among residents.** Some sites reported that residents who started jobs sometimes came back to announce to other residents involved in Jobs Plus activities (such as job readiness classes) that their employer was hiring. This kind of reporting back about new job experiences and other job opportunities by newly employed residents could be encouraged and expanded to start some naturally unfolding conversations about work.

Integration of Components and Activities

The three components—employment services, JPEID, and CSW—are integral to implementing Jobs Plus. Findings from the original demonstration and the SIF replication suggest that the model is complementary and interdependent. For example, if the JPEID is not viable, CSW cannot act as a way of publicizing the availability of new rent rules to make work pay. If Jobs Plus cannot connect residents to higher-wage jobs or training opportunities related to career pathways, then

working residents may not be interested in hearing about Jobs Plus through CSW activities—or participating in the program’s employment services. Accordingly, challenges in one area of Jobs Plus implementation could have “ripple” effects through other areas of work.

Although this report offers examples of the ways in which sites took advantage of the potentially complementary strategies of employment services, JPEID, and CSW, these connections can be more vigorous. Program staff marketed employment services through CSW activities (and through community coaches) and property managers. These connections were more vigorous during the early start-up phase when the focus was more squarely on recruitment and spreading the word about the program. The connections were also more intentional and clearly mapped out in some sites. These experiences suggest that sites could be more intentional about the connections and achieve greater synergy within Jobs Plus implementation.

Technical Assistance

All sites desired more technical assistance (TA). HUD encouraged sites to devote a portion of their budgets to this purpose, but most of them did not. Some of their TA needs were particular to the JPEID implementation, which only HUD could address, but sites also looked for more guidance about strategies to strengthen their implementation of employment services or CSW. HUD managers readily acknowledged their limits on TA: “Sites’ needs were many and varied, and we don’t know too many TA providers who can provide that type of assistance.” The other realization on HUD’s part was that the sites required a lot more indepth, one-on-one technical assistance than it expected and which HUD was not positioned to offer.

For ongoing and future replication sites, HUD might want to consider investing more resources in direct TA to match the scale of the expansion effort. The complexity of the program model, as well as the need for individualized support from the sites, would make this an important consideration to support strong program implementation. In addition, HUD may want to implement the following actions.

- **Offer more intense upfront technical assistance.** A 4-year, time-limited grant does not allow sites much time to learn and quickly ramp up a complex program. The general start-up and roll-out period took at least a year, lasting longer for some sites. More structured TA around the building blocks of the program would enable sites to more quickly launch their programs with a clearer understanding of the model and anticipate the types of implementation challenges that might arise as they proceed with implementation. This would also mean making fewer assumptions about what sites know or do not know before they launch their programs. As a HUD manager noted, “I think what has hurt us the most... is the assumptions. The assumptions of what sites knew and particularly around EID and JPEID. I think there were a lot of assumptions of the sites having an understanding of how to do that... So now having to turn the corner and come back and pick up more people, because we left a lot of people behind when we were moving forward. So, yeah, that makes it hard.”

- **Identify best practices and provide concrete examples of success.** As learned from the Cohort 1 sites, the TA needs for sites can be varied. It would be in the best interest of the program if HUD could identify best practices and a range of national TA providers, covering the multi-domain program components, so that sites have a readily available list of experts whom they can consult on domain-specific implementation challenges and strategies. For example, HUD introduced grantees to Trusted Space Partners at the annual Jobs Plus grantee convening. The engagement of this provider in Chicago and Charlotte helped these sites address implementation challenges. Thus, HUD might want to serve as a kind of “clearinghouse” of good practice ideas and maintain a repository of concrete examples and resources. In addition, HUD could encourage sites to identify TA providers early in the program launch stage—and maybe even identify them as resources in their grant applications. The local TA providers could participate in planning and roll-out efforts and be more readily responsive to help sites work through sticky issues.
- **TA should also focus on integrating the components and, overall, “capitalizing on place” across all components.** It may also help sites to have concrete examples of some positive ways in which each of the components can be mutually supporting. For example, CSW as a vehicle to promote the rent incentives and how they can make work pay; how CSW mutual aid strategies (for example, daycare, afterschool assistance, shared transportation, encouragement, and peer support) could support neighbors’ efforts to sustain work or complete training; how the rent incentives can be used as a way for job coaches to encourage tenants to consider work, to increase their hours and earnings capacity (training), or to commitment to increase work effort; how some residents who get jobs through the employment components (or get training) might share information about other job opportunities (or training opportunities) at their companies.
- **Provide more uniform HUD grant management and TA:** The HUD grant managers approached Jobs Plus in various ways. Some were seen as more concrete, action-oriented, and more responsive to site needs. Sites also responded to different management and oversight styles, depending on their capacity and the strength of their partners. It would help if all grant managers have the same understanding of the overall Jobs Plus goals and the philosophy and theory of change for the program. The sites would also benefit if grant managers were held accountable for having regular, constructive communication with grantees, for connecting them to TA providers, for example.

Conclusions and Looking Forward

This report provides extensive implementation analyses of the first set of sites selected to operate Jobs Plus as part of HUD’s scale-up of the program. Closely following sites’ implementation experiences, from 2015 to 2018, this evaluation has addressed a broad range of questions about

the implementation experiences and costs of scaling up an evidence-based model. Using program data, this report has documented the extent to which residents were exposed to Jobs Plus, participated in program services, earned the rent incentive, or reported employment and higher earnings to the PHA. This data, however, cannot speak to questions about the program’s effectiveness on raising employment or earnings.

Toward that end, and as noted in Chapter 1, HUD has commissioned a second study, which MDRC is also leading, to conduct an impact assessment of its replication effort. As part of that assessment, MDRC will examine the impacts of Jobs Plus on households’ earnings and employment outcomes for the first 24 sites that have received HUD funding to implement Jobs Plus—including the nine in the Jobs Plus process study. Looking over a 3- to 4-year follow-up period, the impact study will assess the effectiveness of the HUD Jobs Plus Pilot Program by measuring the program’s impacts on households’ employment and earnings outcomes. The comparison group for the analysis will include one or more public housing developments within each site that are most similar to the Jobs Plus developments.

The Jobs Plus Outcomes Study will primarily focus on the question of program effectiveness from the perspective of residents. The demonstration has dual but complementary goals of “helping people” and “helping places,” but the appropriate data may not be available to support the development-level analysis for some of the sites in the HUD Jobs Plus Outcome evaluation.¹³⁸ The individual-level analysis will show the effects of Jobs Plus on residents’ employment outcomes over time, regardless of whether they continue living in the Jobs Plus or any public housing development. It cannot be assumed, however, that positive effects on individuals will necessarily improve employment and earnings levels of the “place” (the housing development) to the same extent, because of resident turnover. For example, if Jobs Plus increased earnings among residents who then moved away and were replaced in the development by new residents with lower earnings, the development’s average rates of employment and earnings may not change much year to year. This effect could make it appear that Jobs Plus “failed,” when it may have succeeded in helping individuals move “up and out.” The development-level analysis, however, which is important for a full assessment of Jobs Plus, is not feasible given data restrictions.

Additionally, this study will aim to understand the extent to which the effectiveness of Jobs Plus varies across sites, and what factors may contribute to this variation. Results from the original Jobs Plus evaluation—as well as the growing body of rigorous multisite program evaluations—suggest that estimated impacts may vary substantially across the 24 Jobs Plus replication sites. This expectation is heightened by the vast differences across those 24 sites on several important factors that might influence program effectiveness, including resident characteristics, local labor markets,

¹³⁸ HUD data are not easily accessible on individuals or households who leave or enter developments in sites that undergoing Rental Assistance Demonstration conversion.

local housing markets, and other conditions. Initial results from this evaluation will become available in 2019.

Appendix A

**Table A.1 | Public Housing Authorities Selected to Operate Jobs Plus,
by Fiscal Funding Year**

Funding Year / State	Public Housing Authority	Funding (\$)
<u>2014</u>		
Massachusetts	Boston Housing Authority	1,977,607
North Carolina	Housing Authority of the City of Charlotte	2,224,786
Illinois	Chicago Housing Authority	3,000,000
Ohio	Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority	3,000,000
Texas	Houston Housing Authority	3,000,000
Tennessee	Memphis Housing Authority	3,000,000
Virginia	City of Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority	3,000,000
Missouri	St. Louis Housing Authority	3,000,000
New York	Syracuse Housing Authority	1,977,607
Total		24,180,000
<u>2015</u>		
California	Housing Authority of the City of Oakland	2,700,000
	Housing Authority of the City of Sacramento	2,700,000
Colorado	Housing Authority of the City and County of Denver	2,700,000
North Carolina	Housing Authority of the City of Goldsboro	2,700,000
Pennsylvania	Philadelphia Housing Authority	2,700,000
Tennessee	Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency	2,700,000

(continued)

Table A.1 (continued) | Public Housing Authorities Selected to Operate Jobs Plus, by Fiscal Funding Year

Funding Year / State	Public Housing Authority	Funding (\$)
<u>2015</u>		
Texas	Housing Authority of Austin	2,700,000
	San Antonio Housing Authority	2,700,000
Virginia	Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority	2,700,000
Total		24,300,000
<u>2016</u>		
Florida	Housing Authority of the City of Tampa	2,500,000
Arizona	City of Phoenix Housing Department	2,000,000
Maryland	Housing Authority of Baltimore City	2,489,734
Ohio	Greater Dayton Premier Management (Dayton MHA)	2,399,211
New York	New York City Housing Authority	2,000,000
Rhode Island	The City of Providence Housing Authority	2,999,608
Total		14,397,553
<u>2017</u>		
Kentucky	Housing Authority of Covington	2,203,270
Louisiana	Housing Authority of New Orleans	2,300,000
	Monroe Housing Authority	2,299,918
Missouri	Independence Housing Authority	2,300,000
Massachusetts	Lynn Housing Authority	1,154,307
New Jersey	Housing Authority of the City of Camden	1,700,000
Wisconsin	Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee	2,300,000
Total		14,257,495

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Services, JPI Jobs Plus Initiative Program.

Appendix B

Community Support for Work

What is Community Support for Work?

Community Support for Work (CSW) is a core component of the Jobs Plus program, reflecting the goal of building a caring and cohesive public housing community that is strongly committed to supporting residents' progress toward economic security.

Each participating public housing agency (PHA) is expected to develop a strategy to promote CSW and include that strategy in its workplan. The strategy should include multiple intentional and complementary steps to build CSW falling into two main categories.

- **Activities that build a caring and cohesive public housing community.** For Jobs Plus to be successful, PHA staff members need to trust residents, residents need to trust PHA staff, and ultimately residents need to trust each other. Activities to build trust, create a sense of community, build a sense of shared purpose, train resident leaders, build resident self-confidence, and reduce the social isolation of individual residents are all important for achieving this goal. Social activities that focus primarily on getting residents out of their units are helpful but not sufficient to achieve this goal.
- **Informal and nontraditional activities that support residents' progress toward economic security.** Through the Jobs Plus program, residents will have access to case management, job training, employment placement services, and the Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID). This component of CSW focuses on steps that go above and beyond these formal Jobs Plus activities. Examples include residents helping other residents prepare their resumes and learn about new job openings, residents driving residents to job interviews and setting up carpooling arrangements, residents providing residents with motivational support, and residents watching each other's children during a job interview. Broadly communicated messages about the importance of work and how "work pays" also contribute to this component of CSW, as do motivational speakers, exposure to internal and external success stories, and the marketing of stories about residents' success in finding a job and moving up the career ladder.

CSW is something that engages the entire public housing community and not merely the residents that choose to formally engage with the Jobs Plus program through the case management processes and job training programs. This includes not only residents but also PHA staff who are not otherwise involved in the Jobs Plus program, such as property management or maintenance staff who can encourage residents to participate in Jobs Plus.

Successfully executing the formal parts of the Jobs Plus program will not, on its own, enable a PHA to achieve the full transformative potential of CSW. Although the successful enrollment of a large share of residents in formal Jobs Plus activities will obviously be helpful in laying the

groundwork for a broader sense of shared purpose, it is not enough. Intentional steps to foster community and encourage residents to help other residents are needed.

Who is responsible for building CSW?

Everyone has a role in building CSW. The PHA has the ultimate responsibility for implementing Jobs Plus, which includes building CSW. PHA staff should consider how they can build community and encourage informal and nontraditional activities that complement the more formal components of Jobs Plus. An important part of this is engaging and empowering residents to step up and build the necessary resident networks and interpersonal relationships. Although PHA staff can and should act as catalysts in encouraging resident engagement, they also need to know when to step back and provide space for residents to become invested and make their own decisions about how to strengthen their community in support of a shared goal of economic security.

As resident leaders engaged directly with the Jobs Plus program, community coaches have an important role to play in building CSW. The coaches can serve as important bridges between PHA staff and residents and can be helpful both in identifying the obstacles residents are encountering as well as encouraging residents to become engaged in helping each other find and keep jobs. PHAs should not assume, however, that CSW is solely or even mainly the responsibility of the community coaches.

Ultimately, a broad array of residents—well beyond the limited number of community coaches—will need to understand and accept that they have an important role to play in creating a community that is supportive of work. This will not happen overnight and may not happen at all if deficits of trust and social isolation prevent residents from being open to helping other residents. This is why building a caring and cohesive community is an important part of building CSW.

Appendix C

Cost Study Data Request

Part 1: INSTRUCTIONS FOR TABLE ON QUARTERLY EXPENDITURES REPORT

In the table below, please use your quarterly report for 2017 quarter 3 to HUD to estimate the proportion of expenditures of each budget line item on each cost category. For example, if all of your case management expenditures fall under employment-related services, on the case management row (budget line item 1428), you would fill in 100% under the “% spent on employment-related services” column and 0% under the remaining columns.

Summary by Budget Line Item	Budget Line Item	Total Funds Expended to Date (from Sept. 30, 2017 report)	% spent on employment-related services	% spent on Community Support for Work	% spent on administering JPEID incentives	% spent on other Jobs Plus related activities
Training/Conferences	1268					
Case Management	1428					
Supportive Services	1438					
Data Systems/Software	1688					
Travel	1768					
Technical Assistance/Consultants	2067					
Rent/Financial Incentives	9210					
Administrative	9400					

Part 2: INSTRUCTIONS FOR TABLE ON INTERNAL COSTS FOR HOUSING AUTHORITY STAFF

In the table below, please report costs incurred from October 1, 2016, through September 30, 2017.

- A. List each employee who works directly with Jobs Plus members by job title. If more than one employee with the same job title works with Jobs Plus members, list each employee on a separate line.
- B. Provide a brief description of the employee's roles and responsibilities on Jobs Plus
- C. Indicate the gross annual salary of the employee listed on each line. If the employee earns an hourly wage, please estimate the amount he or she is paid in 1 year, based on hours worked. By 'gross annual salary,' we mean prior to deductions. If overtime pay is received more than half the time, then gross salary should include overtime pay.
- D. Indicate the value of the fringe benefits (that is, additional payroll costs not included in salary) received by the employee listed on each line. This should include any employer payments for Social Security and Medicaid. It should also include any employer bonus payments if not included in column (C).
- E. Indicate the approximate percentage of work time that the employee devotes to providing Jobs Plus employment-related services.
- F. Indicate the approximate percentage of work time that the employee devotes to Community Support for Work activities.
- G. Indicate the approximate percentage of work time that the employee devotes to administering Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID) payments.
- H. Indicate the approximate percentage of work time that the employee devotes to other Jobs Plus-related activities.
- I. Indicate the approximate percentage of work time that the employee devotes to non-Jobs Plus activities. [Note: this is intended to take account of the possibility that some of the employees who work directly with Jobs Plus members do so only part of the time they are on the job and perform other, non-Jobs Plus activities the remainder of their time.]

Part 5: Additional Questions

We have some additional questions; any information you can provide on these topics would be very helpful to our analysis:

1. Does the Jobs-Plus program serve individuals not on the lease? If so, can we get an estimate of how many?
2. Are employment-related services provided by the Jobs Plus program to individuals not on the lease?
3. What were your *administrative costs* (salary and fringe benefit costs of staff who do not directly work with program clients, but either supervise or help those who do work directly with program clients like administrative staff and Information Technology [IT] personnel) between October 1, 2016, and September 30, 2017, for Jobs Plus?
4. Did your agency make any purchases specifically for Jobs Plus (and covered by the Jobs Plus grant) between October 1, 2016, and September 30, 2017? If yes, please list each purchase item and cost.

Purchases might include new computer equipment, software systems, office furniture, special materials (for example, for promoting Jobs Plus) or forms, and food for events, among other program needs. Please list each type of purchase separately. For example, if you had a lot of printing costs and furniture purchases associated with Jobs Plus, you can list "print jobs" on one line with a combined cost for all print jobs, and "office furniture" on a separate line with a combined cost for all furniture purchases, since these are two separate types of purchases. You do not need to list every print job separately, or every furniture purchase separately, unless it is easier for you to do so.

Description of purchase	Value (\$)

5. Has your agency incurred costs that are not covered by the Jobs Plus grant to operate Jobs Plus between October 1, 2016, and September 30, 2017? Expenditures could include public housing agency (PHA) staff time or costs of services that were covered by other PHA funds. If yes, please describe the expenditure and estimated value.

Description of expenditure	Value (\$)

**Appendix Table C.1 | Gross Costs and Hypothetical Net Costs per Resident
Cohort 1 Sites, Year 2: October 2016–September 2017**

Cost measure	Charlotte	Chicago	Memphis	Roanoke	St. Louis	Syracuse	<i>Boston</i>	<i>Cuyahoga</i>
Overall total gross costs (\$)	2,642	3,800	3,093	2,784	3,470	2,291	<i>572</i>	<i>1,172</i>
Overall total net costs (hypothetical) (\$)	2,383	3,256	2,605	2,063	2,098	1,579	<i>453</i>	<i>967</i>
Net costs as a percentage of gross costs (%)	90.2	85.7	84.2	74.1	60.5	68.9	<i>79.3</i>	<i>82.5</i>

NOTES: The cost estimates for Boston and Cuyahoga appear in italics on the far right of the table because the Jobs Plus programs at these public housing agencies (PHAs) were in flux during the time period covered by this analysis. Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in sums and differences. "Gross costs" are the outlays required to operate Jobs Plus. "Net costs" are the changes in costs resulting from operating Jobs Plus, or the additional costs that result from the existence of Jobs Plus that would not have been incurred in the absence of the program.

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using quarterly expenditure and Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID) reports to HUD and supplemental reports from PHAs.

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