

Minimal to Comprehensive: Strategies to Increase Employment Opportunities and Economic Security of People Living with or at Greater Risk for HIV

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NATIONAL
WORKING
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COALITION

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National HIV/AIDS Strategy: Updated to 2020

Executive Order

Sec. 4. Other Agency Responsibilities.

(b) *Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (Commission). Within 100 days of the date of this order, the Chair of the Commission shall submit to ONAP and OMB recommendations for **increasing employment opportunities for people living with HIV and a plan for addressing employment-related discrimination against people living with HIV**, consistent with the Commission's authorities and other applicable law.*

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/07/30/executive-order-implementing-national-hiv-aids-strategy-united-states>

Active Encouragement of Employment

- Discuss and assess for employment interests, needs, concerns and questions
 - Integrate with assessment for income, housing, food/nutrition and other social and economic determinants of health
 - From intake and through-out subsequent follow up contact
- Provide or refer for information, counseling/coaching and advice on benefits (including financial, medical, housing), training, education and employment
 - Community resources and program (public and private)
 - Handouts and/or online resources

Capacity to Encourage Employment

- Identify and revise program policies and procedures presenting barriers to employment for participants
- Learn where key employment-related resources are in the community
 - Benefits planning and assistance
 - Adult education (including GED prep, ESL, literacy/numeracy)
 - Vocational rehabilitation
 - Employment services (including workforce development)
- Develop cross-sector linkage and liaison relationships with employment-related community partners

To Increase Employment Opportunities for People Living with or at Greater Risk for HIV

- Linkages and coordination need to be established between HIV, workforce development, vocational rehabilitation, housing and other service systems
 - Federal, state and community level
 - HHS, DOL, DoEd, and HUD among lead federal agencies
- This should include the development of effective partnerships among key partners
 - state HIV directors/local health department commissioners, and planning bodies,
 - state/local workforce development directors and planning bodies,
 - state vocational rehabilitation (VR) directors/local district VR office managers, and planning bodies, and
 - state/local housing authorities and planning bodies.

Federal Employment Programs in the U.S.:

Services in Most Communities

- State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies – services for people with disabilities
 - Under the Dept. of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration
 - \$3 billion system
 - Services provided in local district offices
 - Funding source for community-based HIV employment programs (as Community Rehabilitation Providers, or CRPs)
- The American Job Centers – services for all jobseekers
 - Under the Dept. of Labor, Employment and Training Administration
 - \$10 billion FY 2016 budget request
 - Were "One-Stop" Career Centers – goal: all services under one roof
 - Funding source for community-based HIV employment programs (through local Workforce Investment Boards, or WIBs)

Access to Accurate Information: Work Earnings While Receiving Benefits

- Service providers and people living with HIV have inadequate access to accurate information about work earnings-related policies for key programs including
 - SSI/SSDI
 - Medicaid, Medicare and other health coverage, and
 - subsidized housing (HOPWA, Section 8)
- Well-informed decision-making about working and transitions to employment depends on information accessibility
 - maintain or improve access to health care, housing and economic stability
- Service providers and people living with HIV need training
 - individual benefits advisement is needed by people living with HIV
 - education about community-level resources available for vocational training, education and employment services.

Earned Income Disregard

A HUD Regulation that requires housing providers to disregard some or all of the earned income for tenants with disabilities when updating resident rent calculations (HOPWA, SHP, Section 8)

- 100% of earned income (over the amount of any prior income) will be disregarded for the first 12 months.
- 50% of earned income (over the amount of any prior income) will be disregarded for the second 12 months.

* Income must be the result of employment of a person with a disability who was previously unemployed for one or more years prior to employment.

Additional Resources and Information

- Getting to Work: Online Training Curriculum on HIV & Employment for HIV and Housing Service Providers
 - <http://aids.gov/gettingtowork>
- U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy – Topic: HIV/AIDS
 - <http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/hivaids>
- The Structural Interventions Working Group - Federal AIDS Policy Partnership (FAPP)
 - federalaidspolicy.org/working-groups/structural-interventions
- Canadian Working Group on HIV and Rehabilitation (CWGHR)
 - <http://hivandrehab.ca/EN/index.php>
- National Working Positive Coalition (NWPC)
 - <http://workingpositive.net>



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