

Secure Jobs Connecticut

A pilot to increase the income of families transitioning out of homelessness by connecting them to the resources they need to get and keep good jobs.

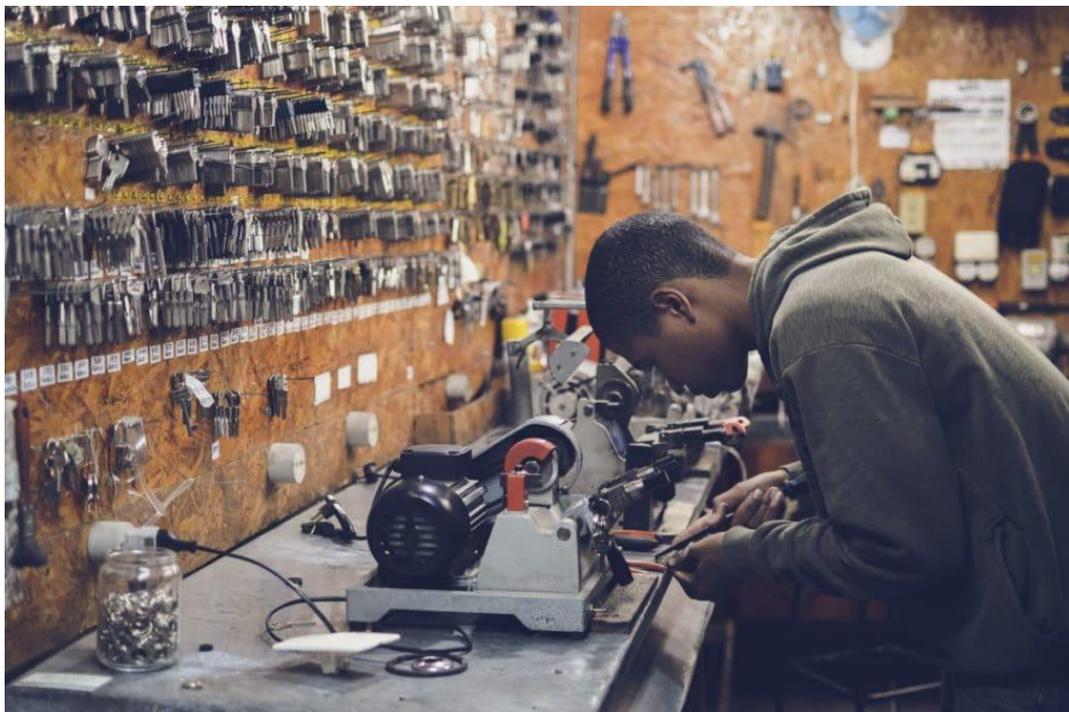
The Challenge

In order to thrive, every family needs a roof over their head and economic security. And as any working family knows, having safe and affordable childcare, transportation, education, and training is essential to getting and keeping a job. But for families struggling with homelessness in Connecticut, it can be impossible to navigate the maze of agencies overseeing each of these supports, often in relative isolation.

What if housing and employment services for these families were integrated, with the unique needs of each family driving the process?

The Solution

Secure Jobs Connecticut, a three-year demonstration pilot launched in 2015, takes a holistic approach and aims to address both barriers at the same time.



The goal of the pilot is to raise the income of families transitioning from homelessness to housing by connecting them to the education, training, and supports they need to secure and maintain stable employment.

All of the families in the program are currently receiving rapid re-housing housing assistance from nonprofit service organizations through the Connecticut Rapid Re-Housing Program, a state-funded program providing short-term rental assistance and case management support services to participants. In addition, the families are also receiving employment services and support from the [American Job Centers](#).

Central to this pilot is the way the partners hope to achieve the goals of the pilot—supporting the homeless service, workforce, and childcare sectors to work together effectively and efficiently as one team.

The Melville Trust's Role

The Trust spearheaded this effort after learning about the success of the Secure Jobs Massachusetts effort created and led by the [Paul and Phyllis Fireman Foundation](#).

We knew that families experiencing homelessness often move from town to town in search of affordable housing and for this project to be effective, it needed to be a statewide effort. To make this possible, the Trust offered challenge grants of up to \$50,000 to five local regions, which were then matched by local funders. With over \$500,000 in hand, the Trust and 26 Connecticut foundations joined forces to award Secure Jobs grants to community based organizations. This commitment was matched in part by an additional \$100,000 from the State of Connecticut's Department of Housing. In addition to initiating the pilot, the Trust also coordinates and funds the technical support and evaluation for the pilot.

More about Secure Jobs Connecticut

“This program helped us as a family live together again and maintain our “home” without the burden of outside bills or costs crippling us.” - Mom participating in Secure Jobs

In Fall 2014, we provided planning grants to housing/workforce partnerships in each of the five regions to enable them to gather data, identify needs, develop strategies, and create two-year implementation plans for increasing employment of families in the rapid re-housing program.

In Summer 2015 and Fall 2016, we awarded one-year grants to implement these plans in the five regions. Each region developed their own strategies and structures to assist families with child care, transportation, and job training but the goals remained the same across the state:

- 70% of families participating in Connecticut Rapid Re-housing Program in each region enroll in Secure Jobs
- 80% of enrolled families obtain full-time employment

- 80% of those placed in jobs retain employment for at least one year
- 90% of enrolled families maintain stable housing for two years

Structure

The project engages a broad range of partners consisting of:

Technical Assistance Provider: The Connecticut Women’s Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF) delivers technical assistance to the regions, organizes peer learning sessions, and supports project management, and reporting to funders.

Core Committee: The Core Committee directs and monitors Secure Jobs implementation and oversees the program evaluation. The members are the Partnership for Strong Communities, CWEALF, Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, Cross Sector Consulting, and the Trust.

Funders Collaborative: The funders plan and leverage private foundation investments to implement the pilot and monitor its progress. The collaborative is comprised of the 27 participating funders listed below.

Advisory Committee: The Advisory Committee addresses challenges with implementation and policy, provides recommendations, and promotes advocacy in the field. Members include state agencies, the United Way of Connecticut, and Core Committee members.

Regional grantees and funding partners

Southwest Region (Fairfield County)

Grantee: Career Resources

Total Funding Award: \$210,000

Collaborating Foundations: Fairfield County’s Community Foundation, United Way of Coastal Fairfield County, Greenwich United Way, United Way of Western Connecticut, New Canaan Community Foundation, Community Fund of Darien

South Central Region (Greater New Haven)

Grantee: New Reach

Total Funding Award: \$210,000

Collaborating Foundations: United Way of Greater New Haven and Community Foundation for Greater New Haven

South East Region (Southeastern Connecticut)

Grantee: Thames Valley Council for Community Action

Total Funding Award: \$147,500

Collaborating Foundations: Liberty Bank Foundation, Community Foundation of Eastern CT, Dime Bank Foundation, Edward and Mary Lord Foundation, Dominion, Chelsea Grotton Bank

North Central Region (Greater Hartford)

Grantee: Capital Workforce Partners

Total Funding Award: \$167,500

Collaborating Foundations: Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, American Savings Foundation

North West Region (Waterbury/Torrington/Danbury region)

Grantees: New Opportunities, Inc.

Total Funding Award: \$225,500

Collaborating Foundations: Bank of America, Connecticut Community Foundation, United Way of Greater Waterbury, Fairfield County's Community Foundation, American Savings Foundation, Ion Bank, Webster Bank, Leever Foundation, Community Foundation of Northwest CT, Thomaston Savings Bank, Torrington Savings Bank, Litchfield Bancorp, Northwest Community Bank, Dime Bank