

PROMISE JOBS Program Overview

- Iowa's PROMISE JOBS program works to meet the goals of the Federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.
- The goal is to limit the use of public assistance and encourage self-sufficiency by emphasizing the importance of employment. PROMISE JOBS is an acronym for "Promoting Independence and Self Sufficiency through Employment, Job Opportunities and Basic Skills."
- PROMISE JOBS is the employment and training component of the Family Investment Program (FIP), Iowa's public assistance program for low-income families. FIP, administered by the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS), provides temporary cash assistance for low-income families with children for a 60-month national lifetime limit of benefits.
- DHS contracts with Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) to administer PROMISE JOBS. Services are then provided on a regional basis through a partnership between staff of Iowa Workforce Development and staff of Workforce Investment Act providers.
- Workforce Investment Act service providers in the 15 workforce development regions are Community Colleges (11), Councils of Government (3), and a Community Action Program (1). These providers are selected through a competitive process by Regional Workforce Investment Boards.

Program Profile

- In SFY 2011, a monthly average of 17,075 families was participating in FIP and received an average FIP grant of \$338.02/month. Roughly 80% of these participate in Promise Jobs.
- Families applying for and receiving FIP assistance are required to develop a plan to work toward self-sufficiency through the PROMISE JOBS program. In SFY2011, an average of 13,649 individuals participated in PROMISE JOBS (through April 2011).
- **Caseloads**
 - IWD staff average caseload in FY11: about 225
 - Partner staff average caseload in FY11: about 265
 - Partner PJ staff has a higher caseload on average.
- **Funding (for field operations and service delivery only)**
 - IWD PJ budget for FY12: \$6,628, 439
 - Partners PJ budget for FY12: \$6,493, 832

- **Staffing**

- IWD PJ FTEs in FY12: about 66 (66.1)
- Partner PJ FTEs in FY12: about 80 (79.8)
- **Even though IWD budget is approximately \$134,600 more than the Partners' budget, the Partners have 14 more staff FTE and handle larger caseloads.**

Strengths of the Partnership in Service Delivery

- 30 year partnership history of shared service delivery regionally between IWD and WIA staff
- Integrates services of local economic development and job training professionals at the Council of Governments, Community Colleges, Community Action Agencies with IWD services
- Leverages training expertise and resources of partner agencies
 - Examples: facilitators and trainers, classrooms, computer labs, meeting spaces
- Provides for greater flexibility and efficiency in service delivery
 - Examples: partners can hire more quickly which ensures capacity during times of state layoffs and hiring freezes, partner staff allow lower cost than state employees
- Leverages trained staff who are seasoned at meeting performance measures

Impacts of Discontinuing Subcontract Agreements with the Partner Agencies

- Service delivery to participants would be impacted with fewer caseworkers available to help clients
- Caseworkers' case load would increase
- Layoffs at Partner agencies would be necessary
- IWD staff who take over PJ duties previously assumed by partner staff would need retraining at a cost to the program, while there would be a loss of intellectual capital of partner staff
- Program would be less efficient because of a loss of partner resources
- Challenges to meet Federal performance measures could arise which could lead to reduced funding

PROMISE JOBS SUCCESS STORIES

1. I first met my client in December of 2007. My client was a single mom who had 4 month old twin girls. This client stated that the father of the children was not involved in their lives and he would be terminating his parental rights. She had just lost her job because her daughters were born with serious medical issues and she was unable to return to work after her FMLA had been exhausted. She had just lost her housing and had to move back in with her parents. At this time this particular client did not feel that she could complete any Promise Jobs activities due to her daughter's issues. I explained the program guidelines to her and let her know that I would need documentation of her children's medical issues to determine activities she could complete. She had dropped out of school in the 11th grade and did not feel she could get her GED nor did she want to. I explained the benefits of getting her education but she was still leery. At this first appointment we mainly focused on determining her level of participation for the program. About a week after our first meeting, this client called me and said that she really thought about what we had talked about as far as her education and wanted to get into GED classes. I got her set up with child care provider who could manage the medical issues her daughters had and transportation and she started GED classes. At first this client was really unsure that she could finish the GED program but after a few weeks really started to enjoy school and started talking about going to college after she finished her GED. She applied herself and completed her GED in less than 3 months. Right after completing her GED, we talked about her college options. She enrolled in the local community college with the goal of getting into a radiology tech program. She completed all necessary pre-requisite classes with excellent grades and was accepted into the program. Promise Jobs helped with transportation and child care assistance throughout her completing the radiology program. She maintained excellent grades and when she was getting close to finishing school, I encouraged her to try and find an internship so that once she completed the program it could possibly help with finding employment. She followed my suggestions and completed an internship. After finishing the radiology tech program she contacted me a few weeks later and let me know that she had been hired at the Iowa Ammunition Plant. I was a little confused with her employment because I knew she wanted to do radiology but then she explained she was going to be x-raying bullets. She stated that she had already started the job and really enjoyed it. She is now working full time and her starting wage is \$17.22 per hour with benefits. She is no longer receiving any assistance from FIP and is doing great.
2. A PROMISE JOBS participant came on FIP 3/11/10 with no job, no GED, no transportation, health issues and a 3-week old baby. The mother of the child did not participate because she needed to clear up her citizenship status, and returned to California to seek assistance from the Mexican consulate. They moved here from California because he has family in the area. He surrendered his CA driver's license and passed the Iowa written test but needed to borrow a reliable vehicle from family to take the driving test. They have a van but it needs some work and is not the vehicle to test in. He completed the 11th grade but then had a major hip injury while playing football. His hip was replaced and he has a steel rod in his leg. This caused him to get behind in school and he never finished. He really wants to get his GED because he would be the first of 7 grandchildren to even attempt. At that time he had a dislocated thumb and he

expected to have surgery. He was working through a temp agency until work slowed down around the first of the year,

He started GED classes 6/3/10 and walked over two miles round trip to class. He was unable to use his hand for 6 weeks, but the GED instructor worked with Promise Jobs to find a scribe so he could complete the writing test. He earned his GED in less than one month – on 7/2/10! He began to work with FaDSS who assisted with the details of the surgery and transportation. The surgery was finally done in the Fall of 2010 and the cast removed in late November followed by 12 weeks of therapy. Still unable to write, he attended Job Club/workplace essentials classes to upgrade his job searching skills. The occupational therapy wasn't successful and he faced yet another surgery while his partner made several trips securing an ID and work permit. He continued to participate in PJ activities – individual job search and held several part time and temporary positions while continuing to regain the use of his hand through therapy.

He began work 12/26/11 for a janitorial company contracted through Hy-Vee. He earns \$8.00 per hour, and his hours are roughly 7:30 pm - 2:30 am. He really likes the work – the hours suit him and he enjoys walking to work. It has been a long, hard 1 ½ years with many barriers to overcome but he now has a job, is healthy and he has his driver's license with plans to purchase a car. Most importantly for him, he has earned his GED, of which he is very proud.

PROMISE JOBS SUCCESS STORY

Family History:

“Jane” is 20; lives with her boyfriend (who is unemployed), his sister, and her family. She has a one year old, and was expecting her second child when entering the program.

Barriers on Entry:

- Participant needed further education to obtain a higher paying job.
- The family’s current housing was temporary and stressful.
- Participant needed to complete parenting classes due to her age.
- The family needed to increase their monthly income.
- The family had no transportation and lived too far from the bus route.

Goals Accomplished at the time of Exit.

- Participant completed the CNA course through IWCC.
- The family is on the HUD waiting list, and saving up for an apartment of their own. They feel they can move out within 3 months.
- Participant completed the Great Beginnings parenting program taught by the FaDSS Specialist.
- Participant found full-time employment in the healthcare field, and took herself off of the FIP grant.
- Participant obtained an Iowa driver’s license.
- Participant is saving up for car.
- Participant’s boyfriend is working part-time, and provides child-care for the one year old, and the new-born the remainder of the time.

