
WORKING TOWARD JOBS

The Nebraska Job Support Program



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This technical report was prepared to describe the operation of the Nebraska Job Support program. This technical report is part of a larger study which was conducted to describe the operation of a sample of mature, well-regarded and comprehensive work programs for AFDC recipients and the insights of the administrators of those programs.

This report was prepared under the direction of Emilie Baebel, Chief, Public Health and Human Services Branch. This project was lead by Suzanne Murrin of that branch.

WORKING TOWARD JOBS

The Nebraska Job Support Program

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INSPECTOR GENERAL

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INTRODUCTION

This technical report is part of a series of profiles on the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) work programs participating in the *Working Toward JOBS* project.

Each profile begins with a categorized description of the subject AFDC work program, which is based on mail guides submitted by the program. Appendix A includes an overview statement written by the program manager. It describes the program, its goals, philosophy and lessons learned. Appendix B is a sample of documents used to conduct the program. Each program administrator was asked to submit sample documents which they felt would be useful to States and counties developing JOBS programs.

Data collection for this study was done from April to September of 1989. The information in the overview and technical reports is based on pre-JOBS work programs for AFDC recipients. As these programs have converted to JOBS, they may have made some changes to meet JOBS legal and regulatory requirements. Where possible, we have noted the changes the program administrators anticipated at the time of our data collection.

PROGRAM PROFILE

THE STATE OF NEBRASKA

Population: 1,602,000
Major industries: agriculture, manufacturing, tourism
First quarter 1989 unemployment rate: 3.4 percent
Average income for a family of four: \$30,500
Number of people living below the poverty line: 235,387

THE NEBRASKA AFDC PROGRAM

For Fiscal Year (FY) 1988:
Total cost: \$53,292,200
Federal share: \$30,954,269 State share \$22,337,931
AFDC cases: 24,228 (unduplicated)
AFDC recipient average:
 age: parents - 28 years 8 months; children - 6 years
 last grade completed: 11.2
 number of children in grant: 2
 length of spell on AFDC: 35 months
 length of spell on AFDC-Unemployed Parent: 12 months
Case closures: 4,959 cases, 14,416 persons
Case closures due to employment or sanctions: 4,436 persons

THE NEBRASKA AFDC WORK PROGRAM

General Background

Name: Job Support

Operating Since: January 1985

Philosophy: Human beings are born with a capacity to develop and realize their potential as unique persons as they interact with their environment. To depend on AFDC for a livelihood is to preclude controlling one's own destiny. While the poverty threshold for a parent and two children was \$807.50 per month in 1988, the AFDC payment for this family was \$350 per month - \$450 per month below the poverty line. When people are poor, they are usually unable to fully participate in the economic, social and political life of society. Because of these realities, the Nebraska Department of Social Services (DSS) seeks solutions that enable

ents on AFDC to help themselves to a life of self-sufficiency and independence through employment.

The DSS emphasizes three factors central to program success: early intervention, self directed placement, and flexibility in implementation.

Program Administrator:

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Administrative Issues

Structure: Job Support is administered by DSS. Overall program parameters are set by the central office. The overall program specifies five components which must be available to clients: (1) job search, (2) education and training, (3) referral/assignment to other agencies, (4) work experience and (5) personal assistance. Each of DSS's eight regional offices develop their own program plans, including new components, after considering community resources, staffing, local labor market and client characteristics.

Funding: Job Support administrative costs in FY 1988 totaled \$308,594. In FY 1988 Job Support program costs were \$1,388,253. Program and administrative costs are shared equally by the State and the Federal Government. Job Support supportive services costs for FY 1988 were \$1,559,208; with a Federal share of \$583,203 and a State share of \$976,005.

Staff: There are 253 AFDC workers in Nebraska. At a minimum they explain Job Support to clients, determine exemption status, make referrals, and enforce sanctions when necessary. In some districts the eligibility case worker is responsible for each phase of Job Support, while in other districts there are specialized workers who are responsible for some aspects. Usually, DSS title XX staff meet with clients and providers regarding child care.

Success Measurements: Nebraska measures the success of its work program by measuring: (1) number of participants, (2) number of placements, (3) employment retention for 30 days, and (4) number of grant reductions and closures.

Recordkeeping: The above measures of success are tabulated from manual reports by Job Support workers or income maintenance technicians. Expenditures are

ed on a computerized mainframe; payment data comes from the grant payment system and a manual voucher system. All other client data is tracked on a computerized mainframe.

Provision of Services: Generally, DSS, either directly or in coordination with other Government agencies, provides Job Support services. Group job search, however, is contracted. The decision to contract this component was based on (1) study of Nebraska experience with job search, (2) fiscal considerations, and (3) information gathered from other States and the Federal Government.

Outside Resources: The DSS coordinates with local government, State and Federal resources to provide services for Job Support clients, as effected in Table 1.

Table 1
COORDINATION WITH OUTSIDE RESOURCES

<i>AGENCY</i>	<i>PROGRAM</i>	<i>AGREEMENT</i>
<i>Vocational Rehabilitation</i>	Vocational evaluation, counseling, job training, job placement, independent living training	Interagency agreement
<i>Job Service</i>	23 offices across the State for job ready clients, screening, referral and placement, employment counseling, testing, labor market information, National Job Bank, job search workshops	Interagency agreement
<i>JTPA</i>	Coordinating and purchasing of testing and assessment, OJT, classroom training job development. Three Service Delivery Areas in Nebraska, each with slightly different priorities and services. Summer Youth Program	Interagency agreement
EDUCATION		
<i>Displaced Homemakers</i>	Three programs: Lincoln, Grand Island and North Platte	Informal agreement
<i>Adult Basic Education</i>	Basic literacy classes for adults	Informal agreement
<i>Public Schools</i>	Varies according to local school districts. Some districts offer supplementary or alternative educational programs. ESL classes.	Informal agreement
<i>Head Start</i>	Educational program for preschool children and parent education. Potential OJT, CWEP placements.	Informal agreement
<i>Community Colleges, State Colleges, University (Carl Perkins Act)</i>	Advance education, job training	Informal agreement, Referral, Contract
<i>Department of Aging/ Area Agencies on Aging</i>	Serve people age 55 and over Title V programs, including Green Thumb, AARP, Forestry positions	Informal agreement, Referral, Contract
<i>Refugee MAAs</i>	Case management for refugees, job development and placement, ESL classes	Contract, Referral
<i>Game & Parks Commission, Department of Public Institutions, Community Action Agencies, City and County Governments, Salvation Army Veteran's Home</i>	Serve as CWEP worksites	Formal agreement

Participation Issues

Participant Descriptors: An application for AFDC constitutes Job Support registration for all members of a case. The AFDC caseload in June 1988 was 41,381. In FY 1988, 17,507 persons participated in Job Support beyond registration. Exemptions to Job Support are the same as regular WIN, except that Nebraska exempts a parent or needy caretaker/relative of a child under the age of 6 months rather than 6 years.

Target Groups: Each district designates target groups depending on local client population needs. All districts target teen parents. Some target unemployed parents, parents with children in high school, and/or voluntary participants. Caseworkers attempt to spend more time and take more effort with members of target groups.

Mandatory Activities/Sanctions: Nebraska adopted universal registration, so every member of an AFDC application and case is registered once an AFDC application is signed. All non-exempt AFDC applicants and recipients must participate in orientation, assessment and employability planning. In FY 1988 Nebraska sanctioned 5,045 persons for non-compliance with the mandatory activities of Job Support.

Volunteers: The DSS encourages voluntary Job Support cooperation by having workers emphasize the benefits of the program for the individual and her children and by promoting the program through the press and the use of posters and pamphlets. The DSS can not calculate the number of Job Support volunteers.

Employment Placements: In FY 1988, Job Support participants were placed in 2,624 part-time jobs and 4,627 full-time jobs. Of these, 3,917 retained their jobs for more than 1 month. While 11,767 grant reductions were made due to employment, 3,668 persons had their AFDC case closed due to employment, and 768 had their case closed due to sanctions. These numbers include duplications (i.e., Job Support participants who were placed more than once in FY 1988).

Typical job placements are service work such as restaurants or gas stations, drivers, material handling, retail sales, and the wholesale trade. Typical starting hourly wages for these jobs are \$4.16 per hour full-time and \$3.04 per hour part-time.

Program Activities

Models: Nebraska DSS names group job search and education/skills training as the Job Support components most effective in helping recipients enter unsubsidized employment. The DSS names group job search the most cost-effective overall.

We also asked each State to describe two model program sites or procedures which other States might benefit from. Nebraska submitted materials on their self-directed job search workshop and the Lincoln YWCA Teen Parents Center.

Nebraska DSS contracts for self-directed job search workshop as the Job Support group job search component. The workshops are conducted using the Perschau model (also called the WIN model). Under this model participants are trained to contact employers directly and do their own job development. In order to take full advantage of these contacts participants are trained in interview techniques and to think beyond job labels such as "I'm a steelworker," or "I'm a housewife." It is important for staff and trainers to avoid telling participants what they can and can not do, and let the market decide if the person is capable of fulfilling a position. The success of the workshops is dependent on the front line trainers. Trainers need to receive systematic instruction, including hands on work with participants and constant follow-up. (For further information see the "Group Job Support" entry in the program activity listing.)

At any given time, the DSS sponsors approximately 50 pregnant or parenting teens in the Lincoln YWCA Teen Parents Center. The contract is paid for with title XX funds, with Job Support paying attendant child care and transportation costs. The YWCA program provides classes to prepare drop-out parents for their high school equivalency exam, or serves as a bridge for the participant to attend alternative education or regular school classes. Developmental day care is provided for the students at the YWCA. As the participant approaches her basic education goal, further assistance is provided by the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) agencies to explore alternatives for further education, training, or job placement.

Sequencing: Figure 1 shows the usual sequence of activities followed by Job Support participants.

Program Activities Listing: What follows is a description of each of the Job Support program activities. Cost, participation, and placement figures are for FY 1988.

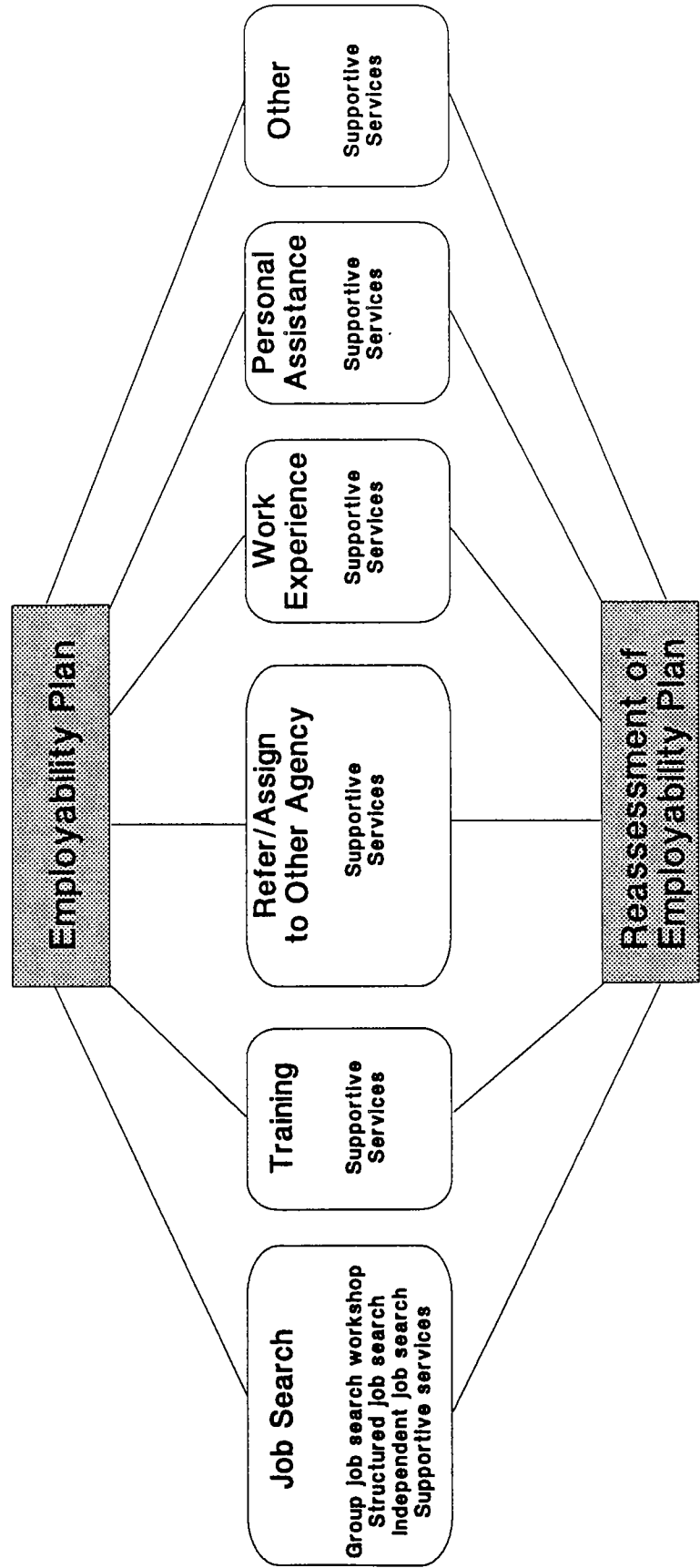
Figure 1

JOB SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Signed application for AFDC constitutes Job Support registration for all unit members

ORIENTATION TO JOB SUPPORT

ASSESSMENT



Orientation

Activity: Participants are briefed on (1) program services, and (2) the obligations of DSS and the rights and obligations of participants in the program. Participants are encouraged, and told that it is a requirement that they use this assistance to support their children by preparing for, accepting and retaining employment.

How Provided: Orientation is conducted by DSS staff in either group or individual settings.

Participants: All Job Support participants receive orientation.

Assessment/Employability Planning

Activity: The assessment/employability planning process includes several important steps: (1) assessing needs (including personal, skill and educational needs), (2) setting goals, (3) identifying barriers to goals, (4) developing approaches to goal attainment, (5) completing an action or employability plan, and (6) authorizing services.

How Provided: The DSS staff begin this process by conducting one-on-one interviews with each new Job Support participant. The DSS staff conduct the initial assessment and work with the participant to prepare and periodically update the employability plan. If the DSS caseworker feels that the participant needs an in-depth assessment, the participant is referred to the appropriate outside resource (i.e., JTPA, vocational rehabilitation, or the local community technical college). The DSS staff work with the participant to update the employability plan as needed.

Participants: All participants are assessed and develop an employability plan after orientation. Some participants go through the assessment process more than once, usually as the result of failure in a Job Support component.

Supportive Services

Activity: Nebraska supplies the following supportive services (1) child care, (2) transportation - usually gas, very limited public transportation, (3) work related expenses such as uniforms, tools, or moving expenses and (4) health-related services not covered by Medicaid such as employment physicals.

Nebraska also has in place transitional services for those who lose grant status due to employment. Child care is provided at no cost to the client for 3 months following the loss of the AFDC grant. Medicaid coverage is continued for 12

provided for up to 60 days following employment regardless of grant status. This is generally limited to work related or transportation expenses incurred before the participant has received their first paycheck.

How Provided: The DSS caseworker determines the need for supportive services as part of the employability plan. The DSS uses a voucher system to authorize supportive services and the existing title XX staff and process for child care.

Participants: All Job Support participants who are deemed to have a need for supportive services.

Cost: \$1,559,208.

Group Job Search

Activity: Group job search workshops are designed to provide clients with skills in self-evaluation, goal setting, job search planning and the development of actual job seeking skills. The basics of each workshop include: (1) building the client's self-esteem, (2) topics on appearance and grooming as they relate to job hunting, (3) preparing job applications and resumes, (4) proper techniques in interviewing, (5) identification of sources for job leads, (6) actual job applications, and (7) skills on how to retain a job.

The workshop is followed by supervised, scheduled job search activities. The purpose here is to provide each client with active support and a disciplined focus in his/her job hunt. The priorities are (1) planning and completing the telephoning of prospective employers, (2) arranging for job interviews, and (3) completing job interviews and applications.

How Provided: The DSS contracts for this service. All of the group job search workshops are provided in a classroom setting using a group dynamics approach. The group dynamics methodology is used to help participants build self-esteem, develop interpersonal skills, and create supportive friendships.

Participants: 4316. Often the group job search workshop is the first activity after the assessment/employability plan and orientation. It can also be very effective when it follows educational or training activities. Only clients who exhibit significant barriers to employment are excluded from this activity.

Costs: \$1,440,788; \$333.82 per participant.

Placements: 1778 were placed in full-time and 310 placed in part-time employment directly from this activity.

Anticipated Changes: Nebraska anticipates even more emphasis on job readiness and retention activities. Both are currently an integral part of the workshops but experience has shown that these concepts are key to the success of job placements.

Individual Job Search

Activity: Participants, using the training received through other Job Support activities, engage in a self-directed search for employment. Although participants are expected to identify job leads, they may also receive referrals to jobs listed with the Nebraska State Job Service.

How Provided: Each month or at agreed upon intervals the participant reports his/her job-seeking activities to the caseworker. The number of contacts to be made each month is specified in the employability plan. When planning the number of contacts, the worker considers the local labor market and the abilities and limitations of the client. The caseworker acts as coach and supports the participant's efforts, but this is a participant-driven activity. Participants who so request are referred to the Nebraska State Job Service.

Participants: This activity is particularly appropriate for participants who (1) have the skills for a job within the local labor market, (2) have completed the group job search workshop, (3) are finishing education or training activities, and/or (4) who need little additional help to become self supporting. It is not unusual for those finishing up an education or training activity to begin the independent job search component. Also, those working on a high school equivalency degree are often also working in independent job search. Often the participant who is not successful in independent job search is considered for additional education or training activities.

On-the-Job Training

Activity: On-the-job training (OJT) is subsidized employment in which participants are trained in job skills by an employer. There is a wage subsidy to defray the extraordinary costs incurred by the private or public employer in providing training and additional supervision to the participant.

How Provided: The DSS does not pay for OJTs at this time. JTPA and vocational rehabilitation are responsible for almost all of the Job Support participants OJT placements. As the referring agency they sign a contract with the employer which specifies the details of the OJT, including the funding and duration.

Participants: Clients who can not compete in the labor market without additional supports. The participant who is not successful in an OJT placement may need extra support and assessment of their particular problem(s).

Anticipated Changes: The DSS may act as the referring agency for some participants and so would pay for OJTs directly.

Community Work Experience Program

Activity: The Nebraska community work experience program (CWEP) is designed to provide quality work experience to AFDC unemployed parents (AFDC-UP) and to enhance their ability to find employment through the improvement of work skills. Every effort is made to match the participant to the job. The hours worked are determined by dividing the grant by the Federal minimum wage. Participants are not required to work more than 16 days per month to allow time for their job search.

How Provided: The DSS recruits other public or private, non-profit agencies to act as sponsoring agencies for CWEP. A contract is signed between the DSS and the sponsoring agency which outlines the responsibilities for both parties. The DSS staff in the local offices refer participants to the sponsoring agency when informed of openings. The sponsoring agency then interviews and selects the participant(s) they feel will best fill their slot. The sponsoring agency fills out monthly reports on the participants and the DSS staff monitor the participant's progress.

Participants: Approximately 50. The designated unemployed parent in an ongoing case must be and can only be considered for participation in work experience if: (1) they have successfully completed a group job search workshop, and (2) at least 3 months have passed since they began the workshop component without success in finding full-time unsubsidized employment.

Placements: Approximately 20-25 percent.

Anticipated Changes: Nebraska has found this to be a valuable experience for unemployed parents and so they plan to expand the CWEP component to all participants. They will also place a 6 month time limit on CWEP placements.

Teen Parent Programs

Activity: Nebraska has placed an emphasis on the teen parent population since the implementation of Job Support. In addition to covering basic job search and work related skills, the teen parent programs address the specific needs of teen parents by concentrating on independent living skills. These include: parenting issues, budgeting, nutrition, family planning, goal setting, interpersonal relationships, accepting responsibility, and related issues. They also deal directly with educational issues and help the teen parent who has not completed high school work toward a high school equivalency degree.

How Provided: The DSS contracts for this service. The teen parent programs are a combination of classroom instruction, informal one-on-one meetings, counseling, and support groups.

Participants: Approximately 250. Any teen-age or young parent is recommended for this activity. Due to the importance of the issues being addressed with the teen parents, this is the primary activity for this group.

Placements: Very few placements come directly out of this activity, because the emphasis is on life skills development before employment is considered.

Field Experience Program

Activity: Volunteer work in public or private worksites designed to provide additional work history and/or experience needed to qualify for unsubsidized employment. The number of hours to be worked at the sponsoring agency are negotiated based on the participant's and employer's needs.

How Provided: The DSS recruits other public or private, non-profit agencies to act as sponsoring agencies for field experience but often the participant finds the placement based on his/her own interests. Field experience is a less formal component than CWEP and DSS does not require the sponsoring agency to fill out time sheets, etc. However, DSS staff do monitor the participants' progress. A follow-up assessment is conducted with the participant.

Participants: There are approximately 40 participants in the field experience program. This activity is particularly appropriate for clients who have (1) limited or no work experience, (2) no recent experience, or (3) no experience pertinent to current work goals. It has also been helpful for clients having trouble making the transition from home to work either from fear or uncertainty.

Basic Education/High School Equivalency

Activity: Remedial education is provided to participants who exhibit low functioning in any of the basic skills. Nebraska emphasizes the need for education and offers high school equivalency programs statewide for those who did not complete their high school education.

How Provided: The Department of Education oversees all remedial education programs and high school equivalency programs in the State. Often these services are actually provided through the community technical colleges. Local school districts also have the option of creating alternative schools for those who have dropped out of school.

Remedial or basic education is most often performed in a classroom setting. Although some local programs provide classroom instruction for those working toward their high school equivalency degree, it is more common for such programs to be independent, working at the individual's pace with the support of regular tutor sessions, usually once a week.

Participants: Every client who lacks basic skills or does not have a high school diploma. Often job search is being done simultaneously. It is not unusual for clients to move from job search to this component, because the job search causes them to realize that further education is necessary for employment.

Anticipated Changes: Increased emphasis.

Post-Secondary Education/Job Skills Training

Activity: Make referrals to education and job skills training facilities. Help clients identify programs appropriate to their goals. Help clients identify outside sources of funding. Provide some stop-gap funding in cases where a participant is waiting for their outside funding or needs assistance purchasing required books. When a client is assigned to an education or training component, he acknowledges that it is his responsibility to complete the course of studies in good standing. Nebraska allows up to 4 years for education or training activities.

How Provided: The employability process and follow-up meetings are used to help participants identify appropriate education and training programs and funding sources. The participants go to existing resources for education or training activities. This includes but is not limited to, universities, State colleges, community technical colleges, business schools, private training programs such as for those for travel agents, and other organized training activities. These services are almost always provided in classroom settings. Outside funding sources could be Pell Grants or Guaranteed student loans.

Participants: Approximately 1500. Clients who only have the skills for a minimum wage job are good candidates as they can truly become self-sufficient with additional education or training. Clients who have little or no work experience. Often group job search is the next activity. The DSS does not expect a job placement to occur when clients are participating in this type of activity. Normally this component is not approved for clients who have marketable skills. If it is approved, it is on the condition that the education or training program prepare a participant for full-time, unsubsidized employment.

Anticipated Changes: Nebraska anticipates increased emphasis on education and training. Even though JOBS funds cannot pay for self-initiated post-secondary education, Nebraska will continue to emphasize the need for improved skills in the current local labor market.

Case Management

Activity: Case management services include: assessing, monitoring and evaluating the participant's employability plan; coordinating services to meet client needs; advocating; interpreting the participant's needs for other resources; and providing needed feedback.

How Provided: Provided through meetings between case managers and participants.

Participants: Appropriate for all.

OVERVIEW STATEMENT

JOB SUPPORT

Program Overview

Nebraska has operated its AFDC work program under WIN Demo since September 30, 1982. At first, the program closely followed the WIN model. The Department contracted with Nebraska Job Service to provide continuous traditional job placement activities, monitoring and referral services in five counties. The program has been evolving from that point.

Philosophy

The Department's philosophical base served as a guiding principle in program development:

Human beings are born with a capacity to develop and realize their potential as unique persons as they interact with their environment. To reach their fullest potential people must be able to take control of their lives so they can realize their unique destiny. To depend on AFDC for a livelihood is to preclude controlling one's own destiny.

If a parent must depend on public assistance to support the family, the family lives in poverty. While the poverty threshold for a parent and two children was \$807.50 per month in 1988, the AFDC payment for this family was \$350 per month. That left the family some \$450 a month below the poverty level.

To be poor entails a profound deprivation. When people are poor, they are usually unable to fully participate in the economic, social, and political life of society. Poor people are unable to influence the fundamental decisions that affect their lives. In a real sense, their lives are in the hands of others, and they live on the margins of their community.

If a parent is dependent on public assistance, the family is powerless in more than financial terms. Poverty in the end is an assault on human dignity. Because of these realities, the Department seeks solutions that enable parents on AFDC to help themselves to a life of self-sufficiency and independence through employment.

Approach To Development

Department planners gathered and studied reports of other States' experiences with work programs. As MDRC evaluations started coming out, they were studied. Contacts and information gathered from conferences with other States were valuable, as were training sessions arranged by the Office of Family Assistance. They arranged for training through Jordan DeLaurenti, Inc., SRA Technologies, Inc., and with David Perschau that was particularly helpful.

We became convinced that three factors needed to become central to the program:

- early intervention;
- self-directed placement; and
- flexibility.

1. *Early Intervention*

In an article entitled "Patterns of Welfare Use," Martin Rein and Lee Rainwater examined patterns of welfare use for adult women from 1967 to 1973 and found evidence that the probabilities of staying on welfare for an additional year increased with each year of welfare receipt. Such evidence indicates that early intervention decreased the probability of increased dependency.

The earlier the intervention, the greater the probability of reduction in the length of time on AFDC. Consequently, the Department stressed the importance of working with clients in the work program from the time of application for assistance. Too, the Department believes parents will be less likely to become dependent on welfare if they start the process as soon as possible, rather than waiting until their children reach school age. Therefore, in October 1984, the Department requested HHS's approval to require parents whose youngest child is between the ages of 6 years and 3 years to participate in the work program. The HHS granted the 1115 waiver in March 1985. In March of 1987, they approved the Department's request to require parents whose youngest child is between the ages of 3 years and 6 months to participate in the program.

The WIN Demo plan was modified effective January 1985, changing the name to Job Support, and making the program available statewide.

2. *Self-directed placement*

Program planners became convinced that a self-directed placement approach was important to help participants gain the skills and confidence to obtain employment.

The information communication age has changed the way America looks for work.

The economy has shifted from a largely industrial economy to an entrepreneurial one in which small and medium sized businesses have already created over 40 million new jobs. Many of these jobs are in the service sector and are dealing with people and ideas. This shift requires people to have communication and customer skills now more than ever before.

Over 80 percent of job openings are never advertised. One Job Service office in Nebraska reported that they have only 8 percent of the available positions. It is reported that the newspapers advertise only a small percentage of available positions. Job Support participants need to be trained to contact employers directly and do their own job development. It is our conviction that, for the most part, the days are gone when government programs can be match makers and job developers. Participants must be taught the art of directly contacting employers, and interview technique and control.

Nebraska moved away from the blanket contract with Job Service, and by August 1985 group job search workshops were offered statewide. At that time, approximately 50 percent were conducted by Department staff and 50 percent by private contractors. By December 1986, all workshops were conducted by private contractors.

Before moving toward the self directed job search workshops, several models were obtained and reviewed. The choice was made to go with the Perschau model (also called the WIN model). In retrospect, the choice of a model, commitment to the philosophy behind it, and insistence that the trainers adhere to the model exactly for at least 1 year, were vital to the success of the workshops.

Currently, the first component considered for a Job Support participant is Job Search. The job market is relied on to determine whether a person is capable of filling a position.

3. *Flexibility*

Nebraska is a rural state, relatively large in area, but with a small population. The 1988 population estimate given by the U.S. Census Bureau is 1,602,000. Omaha has a population of 354,389 and Lincoln 149,518. The third largest city is Grand Island, with a population of 32,358. The needs, resources, and labor market vary considerably within the State. Therefore, it was considered necessary to allow considerable latitude in carrying out the program.

Central program planners designed the overall program parameters. Then each of the Department's eight districts developed their own program plans, considering community resources, staffing, local labor market, and client characteristics.

The overall program specified five components to be available to clients: 1. Job Search, which includes group job search workshops, structured job search, and independent job search; 2. Education and Training; 3. Referral/Assignment to Other Agencies {e.g., JTPA, Vocational Rehabilitation, etc.}; 4. Work Experience (CWEP); and 5. Personal Assistance. In addition to these, the Districts were encouraged to develop other components that would meet the specific needs of their clients. By now, all of the districts have special programs for teen parents.

Challenges

Still challenging the State are administrative problems identified in case management of the large number of Job Support participants and problems associated with support services to meet the unique needs of these clients.

Remembering that the goal of Job Support is to assist clients attain a self-sustaining life by means of full-time unsubsidized employment, many clients, even though employed, face serious difficulties in reaching self-sufficiency. The Department recognizes three concerns ancillary to employment that continue to challenge the success of the program: child care, transportation and medical insurance coverage.

1. *Child Care*

Because AFDC families generally have young children, the ready availability of affordable quality day care is a crucial concern. Day care costs in Nebraska can range from \$50 to \$80 or more per week. The Department uses existing title XX staff, rates, and procedures to provide child care services. Attempts have been made to provide services to as many children as possible with limited funds. Nebraska employs the concept of contracting with approved providers at a mutually agreed upon, negotiated rate. The rate is open and competitively determined with "usual and customary" to the geographic location the overriding

influence. In this system, no provider is guaranteed funds, but rather reimbursement is made at a fixed rate per unit of service provided to eligible authorized service clientele. There is growing pressure to raise rates agreed to, or lose day care providers.

Special problems arise for the parent who works weekends, 3 to 11, or 11 to 7 shifts. Available day care is generally structured around the 9 to 5, Monday through Friday work week. The Nebraska State legislature is conducting a special study of quality child care needs in the State.

2. *Transportation*

Transportation is a major concern, especially in the rural areas. For those living on the margins a reliable car can be an unaffordable necessity. For example, if forced by insufficient funds to choose for one's family between the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter or a new battery, recapped tires, car insurance, etc., the basic needs will normally be chosen. Even in Nebraska's metropolitan areas, public transportation may not get clients where they need to go.

The Job Support program helps participants with transportation expenses such as gas, oil, repairs, insurance payments and bus tokens. In some cases it has helped with the down payment on a car if it is needed to accept a job. Help has also been provided in setting up car pools, especially for the workshops.

3. *Medical insurance coverage*

A crucial concern to families, especially families with young children, is adequate medical insurance coverage. With the high cost of medical care, illness or accident can be a catastrophe. In a State evaluation of the program, of those cases where the client's benefits could be confirmed, 721 of those who obtained employment do not receive benefits. This reflects a national trend which has left a significant percent of the working population in the United States without health insurance coverage.

Based on the data collected from the workshops, the average annual wage is approximately \$7700. If this family is composed of an adult and two children, they will fall below the federal poverty level by over \$1900 a year. In other words, the average wages earned and average time worked does not lift a family of three above poverty. This family is clearly better off than they were as recipients, but they still can be classified as working poor.

The Nebraska legislature and the Governor acknowledged these problems with the passage of last year's LB 518, which extended child care for 3 months and medical benefits for a year to those who leave public assistance due to employment. Nebraska saw the problem and made a first step towards correcting

it. The Federal Government acknowledged the problem and made its first step in addressing it through the passage of the Family Support Act of 1988. There is much to do, but there are those who know now that it must be done.

Summary

Nebraska's Job Support program is designed to help persons receiving public assistance secure permanent, full-time unsubsidized employment and by that means rise above the poverty threshold to lead a self-sustaining life.

Job Support is based on the principle of reciprocity; the program recognizes that both the client and the State have appropriate, reciprocal rights and obligations. The State has the obligation to assist its clients meet their basic human needs, and clients who are able have the obligation to play an active productive role in the life of their community by contributing the goods, services, and other nonmaterial values necessary for the well-being of the community.

How has Job Support succeeded? The Job Support Program was implemented on January 1, 1985. The number of AFDC adult recipients participating in the program has increased dramatically - from 44 percent in FY 1985 to 89 percent in FY 1988. One of the main reasons for this is Nebraska's implementation of a Federal waiver project in May 1985, which required parents whose youngest child is aged three to 5 years to participate in the program. (Current federal regulations only require parents whose youngest child is aged six or older to participate.) This waiver project was revised to include parents whose youngest child is aged 6 months through 2 years to participate effective May 1987. The purpose of the waiver project was to stress early intervention to reduce welfare dependency and increase economic self-sufficiency. The number of Job Support participants who have found employment increased from 2,698 in State FY 1985 to 7,550 in State FY 1988.

Expansion of the program to adults whose youngest child is 6 months through 2 years resulted in some additional problems and some new solutions. The majority of Job Support and title XX workers supported reducing the exemption related to age of the youngest child to 6 months. They pointed out the benefits of early intervention and increasing self-sufficiency. However, in contrast to the greater enthusiasm and flexibility workers observed in these clients, other workers pointed out problems in day care (availability and cost), immaturity and stress, lack of work history and education and problems related to temporary, low paying jobs. These resulted in the workers' tailoring the Job Support obligation of these cases to education and training more frequently than with other cases.

The cost per job placement in FY 1988 was \$428.36.

The benefits to the State can be measured by looking at the savings reported by the Districts. The 1 month savings reported in FY 1988 totaled \$2,025,290. These are minimum savings as they reflect only the 1 month difference in the AFDC grant amount between the month prior to and the month following the client's employment or sanction. The actual savings to the State increase with each month a person retains employment. Nearly 90 percent of the Job Support participants who get full-time, unsubsidized jobs keep those jobs longer than the initial month of employment.

Benefits cannot be restricted to monetary considerations. Many clients claim that Job Support has substantially improved the quality of their lives. They have an improved sense of self-esteem and purpose in their lives. They can now better support their families and play an active role in the life of the community.

Other benefits to the State are reduced Medicaid expenditures, increased purchasing power, increased tax revenue and increased labor supply.

SAMPLE DOCUMENTS



WORK EXPERIENCE REFERRAL FOR WORKSITE PLACEMENT

FORM
WP-6

Client Name _____ Case Number _____
 Address _____ Worker Name _____
 Telephone _____ Worker Telephone _____

PART I

TO THE PARTICIPANT

You have been selected to interview for a Work Experience position with: _____

located at (address) _____

You will be meeting with (name of agency representative) _____

You are scheduled for an appointment on (day) _____ at (time) _____.

If, for any reason, you are unable to keep this appointment, you must notify your worker immediately.

PART II

TO THE WORKSITE:

The above-named participant has been scheduled to interview with you for the position (job title) _____
 _____. This participant is available to work (hours) _____ per month.

At the point that you are making your decision on filling this position, please complete Section III indicating whether or not this participant has been accepted for placement with your agency. If accepted, enter the date that the participant will begin. If not accepted, we would appreciate knowing your reason. Please sign and date the form and return one copy to the department in the attached stamped, self-addressed envelope and retain one copy for your files.

PART III

TO THE WORKSITE:

The above-named participant has been accepted for a placement with our agency. The participant will begin the placement on (date) _____ and work the following hours and days per week _____.

The above-named participant has not been accepted for the following reason(s) _____

Sponsor's signature _____ Date _____

Local Office/District	Reporting Month, Year
-----------------------	-----------------------

CLIENTS MEETING JOB SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS

1. Total Client Count at End of Month
2. Individuals Added this Month
3. Individuals Dropped from Job Support this Month

JOB SEEKERS EMPLOYED

	Applicants	Recipients
1. Number Entering Unsubsidized Full-Time Employment Expected to Last 30 Days		
2. Number Entering Unsubsidized Part-Time Employment Expected to Last 30 Days		
3. Number Still in Unsubsidized Full-Time Employment After 30 Days		
4. Number Entering Full-Time Subsidized Employment		
5. Number Entering Part-Time Subsidized Employment		

ADC/JOB SUPPORT GRANT REDUCTIONS REPORT

ADC/Job Support Grant Reductions	Off ADC		Still On ADC	
	Persons	Reductions	Persons	Reductions
1. Unsubsidized Employment				
2. Subsidized Employment				
3. Sanctioned				

JOB SUPPORT COMPONENTS

Components	Number of Clients
1. Job Search	
2. Training	
3. Referral/Assignment to other agency	
4. Personal Assistance	
5. Other	

Remarks: _____

Person To Contact (Name and Title)	
Signature	Date

JOB SUPPORT

JOB



Develop job-seeking skills.

Career Planning

Discover your skills and interests.

Sound like a good idea?

Set goals

Education/ Training

Attend school – get on-the-job training.

GOOD LUCK!



Help you accept and keep employment

Supportive Services

Take part in a

SUPPORT

group,



Day Care Services

IT'S YOUR MOVE...

Transportation Allowances



GO



YOU CAN DO IT!

Job Support is sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Social Services for ADC Clients. Contact your caseworker for further information.

TIPS FOR JOB-SEEKING SUCCESS

There are many jobs available even when unemployment is high. Jobs open up all the time as people move, get transferred, stop work, or retire. The person who knows how to get a job is the one who gets the job.

Don't limit yourself to one type of job. Remember that you can do many things. If there are no jobs available in the kind of work that you have done before, don't be afraid to look for work in a different field.

Go after the "Hidden Job Market" by getting job leads from the yellow pages of the phone book, from your friends and relatives, and by going directly to places of employment. Still study the want ads, but do not limit yourself to them since 80% of job openings are never advertised.

Treat job-seeking as a full-time job. About half of each day should be spent getting job leads and interviews. Plan to spend the rest of each day on actual interviews and in filling out job applications.

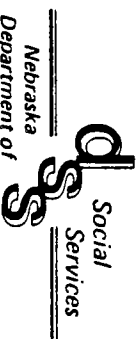
Write down the information you will need to fill out job applications. Include names, addresses, dates, and telephone numbers. Take this information with you whenever you go out job hunting so you will always be ready to fill out a job application, completely and neatly.

Dress neatly. First impressions do count!

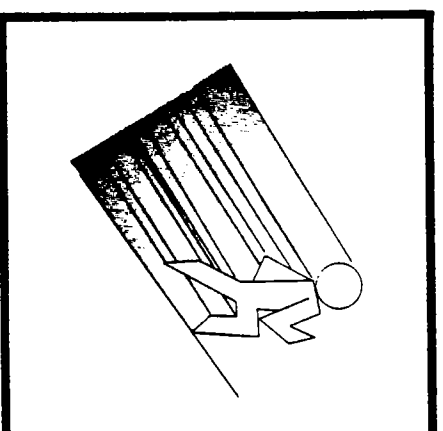
Don't forget to mention the personal qualities that will make you a good worker. Some of these qualities might include getting along well with people, learning quickly, being reliable, etc. Believe in yourself!

Don't get discouraged! Your chances of getting a job increase with each interview you have.

You, caseworker is available to offer any help you may need. **GOOD LUCK!**



WP-PAM-01 5/85 (990881)



Job Support assists ADC clients gain employment through experience, education, and training.

**NEBRASKA
DEPARTMENT
OF
SOCIAL
SERVICES**

J O B S U P P O R T

IAT IS JOB SUPPORT?

Support is Nebraska's new approach for assisting C (Aid to Dependent Children) applicants and clients to find full-time employment.

takes special skills to find a job during tough economic times. Job support has been developed to provide you with the opportunity to learn those skills so you can find a job in the most efficient and effective way. Job support also offers services to overcome problems that might stop you from getting a job. Additionally, the support and help that is yours will receive while participating in job support will give you an advantage in the job market.

if becoming independent through a satisfying -time job sounds good to you. . . work with job port and let it work for you!

NEBITS OF PARTICIPATING IN JOB SUPPORT

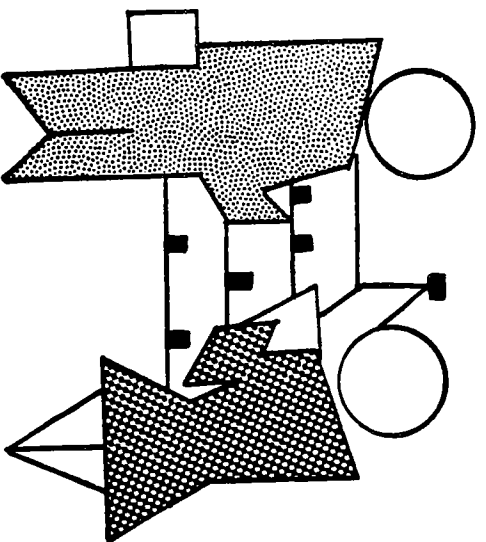
Career Planning helps you discover your skills and interests, and set realistic employment goals.

Group Job Search Workshops can help you:

- Develop your job-seeking and job-keeping skills.
- Identify job lead sources and follow-up.
- Prepare job applications and resumes/ personal profiles.
- Learn techniques of interviewing.
- Recognize proper appearance and grooming habits.
- Build your self-esteem.
- Become part of a support group of other job seekers.
- Practice your newly learned skills.

Education/Training can allow you to:

- Attain a high school diploma or GED.
- Gain experience through volunteer or paid on-the-job training.
- Attend vocational or educational training.



- Referral to other agencies or services for specialized assistance may include:

- JTPA, Vocational Rehabilitation, or Job Service for employment assistance.
- Mental health agencies, alcoholism or drug rehabilitation centers, or programs for personal assistance in overcoming significant problems that prevent finding work.

- Supportive Services are available, during your job search and up to thirty days after the start of employment, to enable you to accept or retain employment. Services may include:

- Child care provided for young children.
- Transportation services including bus tokens or vouchers for gasoline.
- Work expenses for beginning work such as necessary uniforms, special clothing or equipment, etc. required for work.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO . . .

- Equal opportunity and fair treatment in your work.
- Turn down a job that does not meet certain minimum standards.
- A fair hearing on disputed matters.

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

You automatically qualify for job support when you apply for assistance. You will be participating in job support activities unless you are exempt. The most common exemptions are listed below.

Exemptions:

- If you are age fifteen or younger (age eighteen or younger if you are a full-time student) or if you are age 65 or older.
 - If you are temporarily ill or injured or if you have a long term physical or mental impairment.
 - If your presence is needed at home to care for a child age ~~three~~ or younger, or to care for another member of the household with a physical or mental impairment.
 - If you are already working at least thirty hours a week in a job that is expected to last at least thirty days.
- Please talk to your case worker for further details concerning exemptions.

If you participate in job support you may receive a greater grant amount than if you do not participate in job support activities.

Volunteers:

People who have exempt status are welcome to voluntarily participate in job support and take advantage of activities and services offered.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO . . .

- Cooperate with your caseworker in the preparation of a plan of action to help you find or prepare for a job.
- Actively participate in assigned job support activities, as outlined in the plan of action.
- Report any employment immediately.