Foundation-Building Plans

Complete and send to VLC Coach before late March/early April call

Instructions: HPOG grantees with strong first-time health care employment outcomes share a number of common program management practices and processes that build a foundation for effective employer engagement and employment support services. These practices have been embedded into an assessment and action plan document below.

Use the assessment questions that follow to identify your program's strengths and areas for improvement. Then dive deeper with the follow-up questions to articulate your practice, if it is something your program is already doing, or to create action steps, if it is something your program needs to develop. *Ideally each program will complete the full document. If there are time constraints and understanding that this is a lengthy document, please at least answer each yes/no question and then focus on completing the information for those with 'no' answers. This will position your program for next steps.*

At the end, the goal is to have an articulated, comprehensive employment and employer engagement plan designed to strengthen employer relationships and increase participant employment. In writing this out, the document becomes the programs employment/employer engagement process. The program can then share the document to articulate the employment plan with staff and/or continue to revisit it as the program is able to build-out pieces of the plan.

Employer Engagement - Assessment Questions and Plans

For each question below, electronically highlight your answer (yes or no) and then address the additional planning questions noting responsibilities and timeframes for next steps.

1.	Does your project have specific staff assigned to manage employer relationships?	YES NO
	If yes, which staff are assigned to that role and how much time of their week is spent on managing those employer relationships? Are there steps that need to be taken to bolster this practice? For example, does more time need to be devoted to this?	
	If no, can current staff handle managing employer relationships? Do job assignments need to be shifted among current staff to have a singular staff member dedicated to employer relationships? Does new staff need to be hired?	
2.	Does your project maintain a central contact list of all employer contacts?	YES NO
	If yes, what does the format look like? Is it made available to other staff to access if needed? Are there steps that need to be taken to bolster this practice?	
	If no, how will a list be created, by whom, by when, and what information should be included? If multiple people need to access it, where can it be stored to have a live copy?	

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3.	Does your project maintain a central database or a document that details knowledge collected about individual employers' recruiting processes, hiring needs, and engagement interests?	YES	NO

If yes, what does the document record? Employer name, location(s), contact information, occupations in need, most important qualities in job candidates, feedback on previous hires, minimum hiring age, diploma/ GED required, benefits offered, shift information, starting pay for different occupations, view on criminal history, type of resume preferred, how to apply, tuition assistance, etc.? Are there steps that need to be taken to bolster this practice?

If no, what will be created, what will it include (see above for ideas), who will create it, and by when?

4.	Does your project have a systematic way of sharing knowledge about employer hiring practices and other employer information with case managers working directly with HPOG participants?	YES	NO

If yes, who does that, how, and how often? Are there steps that need to be taken to bolster this practice?

If no, what will this look like – who will be in charge of sharing this information, what information, and how often? For example, might the employer relationship manager share new information learned in monthly staff meetings? When will this process start?

5.	Does your project have a systematic way of sharing knowledge about employer hiring practices and other employer information directly with HPOG participants?	YES	NO

If yes, who does that, how, and how often? Are there steps that need to be taken to bolster this practice?

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If no, what will this look like – who will be in charge of sharing this information, what information, and how often? When will this process start?	

6.	Does your program make contact with prospective new employer partners on a regular basis?	YES NO
If yes, how, by whom, how often? Is there a goal for the number of new employer prospects to be contacted/engaged? Do you use cold calls? Do you find ways for a "warm introduction" to new employers by another partner? Do you attend association, college, or workforce meetings where employers are present? Do you present on your program? Are there steps that need to be taken to bolster this practice?		
If no, using the ideas in the above question, what will your outreach efforts to target new employers on a regular basis look like? Who will be in charge of this? How will you find the employers to contact, how many employers will be contacted in what timeframes, which employers will be of focus? What will be the goal of those conversations?		

7.	For the established employer partners, does your program have an established process and timeframe for regular check-ins with the employer partner and are those employers active in your program?	YES NO
If yes, what is the regular basis (monthly, quarterly, etc.) and what is shared from the program, who is responsible for those check-ins, what is asked of the employer, and what are the next steps for participant employment? Are there steps that need to be taken to bolster this practice?		
If no, using the ideas in the above question, what would this look to have regular check-ins with established employer partners? Who would be responsible for this, on what timeframe, and for what purpose?		

8.	Are employers active in your program offering job shadowing, conducting mock interviews, participating on employer panels or job fairs, making class presentations, etc.?	YES NO

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If yes, what does this look like? Does this occur on a regular basis and how often? How are participants prepared to interact with employers? Are there steps that need to be taken to bolster this practice?	
If no, using the ideas in the above question, what would this look like, what top employers might be targeted to participate, who would be in charge of organizing, how would participants be prepared to interact with employers? When might this start?	

9	Has your project identified 1 or 2 preferred "win-win" employer engagement options that benefit both participants and employers?	YES NO

If yes, what are those, with what employers, what are the timeframes, who is responsible for them, and what are the expected results? Are there steps that need to be taken to bolster this practice?
If no, what might this look like given the questions above?

Participant Employment Services - Assessment Questions and Plans

For each question below, electronically highlight your answer (yes or no) and then address the additional planning questions *noting responsibilities and timeframes for next steps.*

Questions	Response	
1. Does each participant who enrolls in your program create an education/ employment plan?	Yes	No
a. Does it incorporate a career pathway?	Yes	No
b. Is it made by the participant with their case manager/ navigator?	Yes	No
c. Is that plan referenced back to in future conversations about employment and continued education?	Yes	No
If any answer is no, what would it look like to change the program process to make it a yes? Who would be responsible for it and by when?		

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2. Are employment services (job coaching/exploration, soft skills, resume prep, etc.) started near the beginning/at enrollment? Offering them near the beginning of enrollment puts the focus on employment from the start and prepares the participant.		Yes	No

If yes, what are those services, how are they provided, by whom, for how long, and when? Are there steps that need to be taken to bolster this practice?

If no, what services should be provided, how, by whom, for how long, and when?

3. Are case management and employment services responsibilities assigned to separate staff members (i.e. is there a separate case manager and job developer guiding a participant)?		Yes	No

a. If separate, how do those staff members communicate to streamline the process for the participant/ make handoffs? Do they meet regularly to share best practices?

b. If the same, singular staff member, how does that person balance that work load and become knowledgeable in both areas? Is there any staff development needed to be proficient in both areas?

4. Do your case managers have an assigned caseload of participants with whom they develop an ongoing support relationship?		Yes	No
5. Do case managers provide proactive case management (case managers contacting participants to check in, not just participants contacting case managers if there is a problem), with a required number of check-ins (potentially checking in weekly for participants in a short-term training and less frequently for participants in long-term training)?		Yes	No

If yes, how often are case managers required to check in and how is it documented? Does it vary by length of training? In what form of communication (e.g, phone, in-person one-on-one, small groups, email)? Are there steps that need to be taken to bolster this practice?

If no, what would be the plan for implementing proactive case management? How often would case managers need to check-in, would it vary by length of training, in what form of communication, how would this be documented?

6. What types of Employment/ Post-Employment Services does your program offer? Highlight all that apply.

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Career Guidance Soft Skills Resume/ Cover Letter Prep Interview Prep Mock Interviews Dress for Success Other (please write in):____ _____	
a. Specifically for Soft Skills, if taught, what is included in this, is it integrated with training or stand-alone, and have employers verified those as desired skills?	
b. For the other service offerings highlighted above, does your program integrate these services with training, have stand-alone workshops for these, or are they resources provided to the participant to complete at their own pace?	
c. Do you have processes to ensure that your participants have a complete portfolio of job search materials by the time they complete training, including a professional resume and cover letter, references, required application documentation, etc.?	

	Yes	No
7. Are participants matched/connected directly to employment at interested employer partners? Said another way, does the program staff understand the qualifications that a specific employer partner is looking for and then review those participants ready for hire – sending only those that fit the requirements and notifying the employer of that fact?	Yes	No

Once employer partnerships have been established and programs know exactly what employers are looking for, this has proven to result in a high percentage of participants being hired. Programs are sending those participants that are qualified and match what the employer values – both the employer and participant are happy.

If your program is not doing this, what would it look like to do this? Which top employers should be targeted? How will you know what the employer values/ will you utilize the program's employer data base? How will you match participants? How will you prepare participants to meet with the employer? Who is in charge of this process?

	Yes	No
8. Are participants routinely reporting employment back to the program?	Yes	No

If no, what is the most likely cause? How could case management practices be changed to create a stronger relationship with the participant to want to report this information back?

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9. Does your program celebrate individual participant employment success (i.e. a recognition wall)?	Yes	No
10. Does your program bring back "successful" participants to talk to new enrollees?	Yes	No
If no, what would it look like to do this? Who would be in charge of this and by when would it begin?		
11. Does the program provide post-employment services such as child care or transportation after the participant is employed?	Yes	No
12. Does the program follow-up with an employed participant to assess needs or check back in on career pathway progress or additional training needs?	Yes	No
If no, what would it look like to do this? Who would be in charge of this and by when would it begin?		