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# SEEKING BETTER OUTCOMES FOR THE EMPLOYMENT FOR TANF PARTICIPANTS PROGRAM

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# DISCLAIMER

The ideas and recommendations expressed in this presentation are not those of the University of Virginia, or the University of Virginia School of Law. They are those of the authors of this presentation alone.

# RESEARCH QUESTIONS



How are localities using ETPP funds?



How can localities use ETPP most effectively?



What are other workforce development initiatives that localities and VDSS should consider?

# TAKEAWAYS

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(1) Grant recipients rely on ETPP to fund workforce training initiatives

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(2) ETPP is helping people who might otherwise not receive assistance

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(3) There is room for ETPP to grow



Survey



Interviews



Literature scan of  
best practices



Student-conducted  
data analysis

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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# TOPICS COVERED

- 
- TANF Overview
  - ETPP
  - Network2Work
  - Findings
    - Best Practices
    - Grant recipient feedback
    - VDSS feedback
    - Network2Work
  - Recommendations
    - VDSS
    - Grant recipients and VFC
  - Discussion



# TANF OVERVIEW

## Federal TANF Program

- Block grant
- Flexibility



## Virginia's TANF Program

- Cash assistance
- VIEW program
- Full Employment Program (FEP)
- Employment for TANF Participants Program (sometimes called *Employment Advancement for TANF Participants*)

# EMPLOYMENT FOR TANF PARTICIPANTS PROGRAM (ETPP)





# ABOUT ETPP

## Purpose

- To fund competitive grants for community development and training programs designed to assist current and former TANF recipients and individuals with incomes 200% or less of the federal poverty level in obtaining and retaining competitive employment

## Goals

- Improve job placement and job retention
- Increase wages upon entry
- Increase wage gains from job advancement

# ETPP JOB OUTCOMES

Table I — Job Outcomes

Year of Program	Number of Participants (Total)	Number Employed	Number Employed Full Time	Number Employed in Career Pathway	Average Wage
FY 2017	1,937	1,057	588	521	\$11.88
FY 2019	886	501	305	158	\$12.56

## Job Outcome Data— At a Glance

- ETPP is employing people
- Employment percentage: **55.45%** in FY 2017 to **57.85%** in FY 2019.
- Average wage: **\$11.88** in FY 2017 to **\$12.56** in FY 2019
- There is a **54.26% decrease** in participation from FY 2017 to FY 2019
- Career pathway employment percentage decreases from **48.5%** in FY 2017 to **31.5%** in FY 2019

# ETPP EXPENDITURE OUTCOMES

Table 2 — Expenditure Outcomes

Year of Program	Total Expenditure	Expenditure Per Participant Employed	Expenditure Per participant Employed Full Time	Expenditure per Career Pathway Employment
FY 2017	\$1,810.752	\$1,729.47	\$3,079.51	\$3,475.53
FY 2019	\$2,371,125	\$4,732.78	\$7,774.18	\$15,007.12

## Expenditure Outcome Data— At a Glance

- There is a **small absolute increase (1.31 times)** in expenditure from FY 2017 to FY 2019
- From FY 2017 to FY 2019
  - Expenditure per participant employed and per participant employed full-time **increases by 2.52 times**
  - Expenditure per participant employed in a career pathway job **increases by 4.32 times**



NETWORK2WORK:

AN ALTERNATIVE  
WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAM



# ABOUT NETWORK2WORK

Jobseeker network identifies job-seeker as a match for a good job

Enrollment specialist enrolls jobseeker in Network2Work and connects them with the Provider Network

Jobseeker completes the technical training necessary to succeed in the job and consults with the provider network to receive social and economic support

Network2Work helps job-seeker apply for the job and informs the employer that a Network2Work-certified jobseeker has applied



# NETWORK2WORK: OUTCOMES

Table 3 — Network2Work Outcomes

Program	Number of Participants (Total)	Average Wage	High-End* Average Wage
Network2Work (Pre-Pandemic)	592	\$13.18	\$19.95
Network2Work (Pandemic)	479	\$11.21	\$18.88

## Network2Work Outcomes — At a Glance

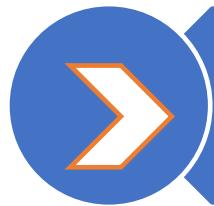
- Network2Work has served 1074 people since its inception in the Charlottesville area in 2014
  - 776 have **completed** the program
  - 297 are still **in training**
  - **Over 70%** are employed
- Network2Work has livable average wage pre-pandemic of **\$13.18, and higher** with high-end average wages.



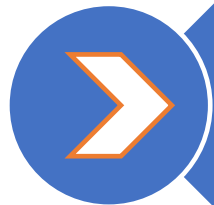
# FINDINGS

- BEST PRACTICES
- GRANTEE FEEDBACK
- NETWORK2WORK

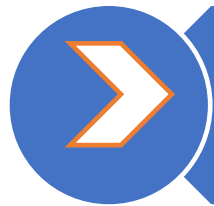
# BEST PRACTICES



Move away from "work-first strategy"



Set participants up for long-term success –  
education, effective job training informed by labor &  
industry needs, and support services



Routinely measure employment outcomes



# GRANT RECIPIENT FEEDBACK

- Recipients are **extremely reliant** on ETPP funding.
- Grantees with **multiple sources of funding** felt it made their programs more successful.
- **Community partnerships** are essential to success.
- The **COVID-19 pandemic** hampered participation rates.
- Program participants consistently struggle to find **affordable housing and reliable transportation**.

# COMPARING NETWORK2WORK AND ETPP: WAGES

Table 4 — Network2Work Comparison

Program	Number of Participants (Total)	Average Wage	High-End* Average Wage
ETPP FY 2017	1,937	\$11.88	\$16.82
ETPP FY 2019	886	\$12.56	\$15.78
Network2Work (Pre-Pandemic)	592	\$13.18	\$19.95
Network2Work (Pandemic)	479	\$11.21	\$18.88

## Comparison Data — At a Glance

- Network2Work pre-pandemic has **higher average wage** than ETPP programs in either FY 2017 or FY 2019
- Network2Work during the pandemic has a **lower average wage** than ETPP programs in both FY 2017 and FY 2019
  - Network2Work experienced only a **smaller 40% drop** during the pandemic compared to ETPP **54.26%** drop
- Network2Work has a **higher high-end average wage** than the best performing ETPP recipients.



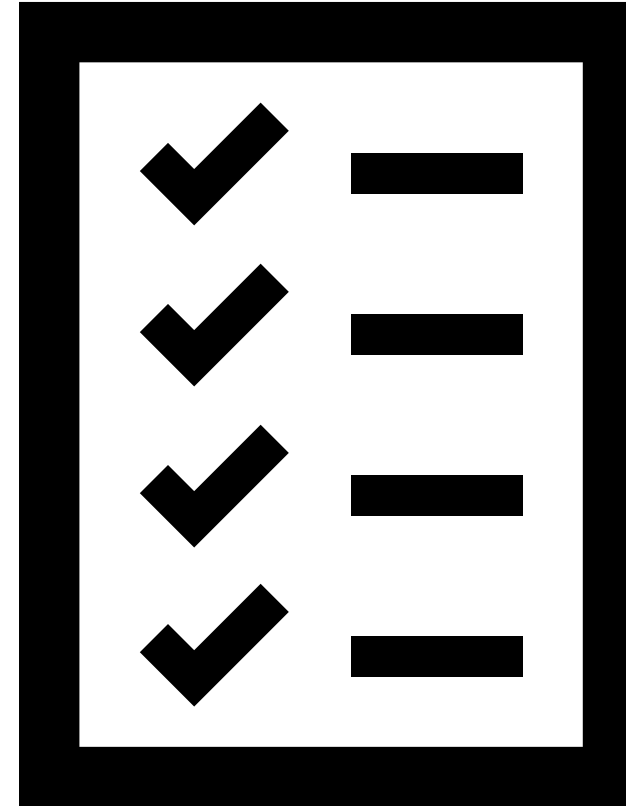
## COMPARING NETWORK2WORK AND ETPP: SCALABILITY

- Proportionate to the number of residents in need
- Responsive to increases in job-seekers
- Replicable in other cities



# RECOMMENDATIONS

- VDSS Recommendations
- Grant Recipient Recommendations



# DEPT. OF SOCIAL SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS

1

## **Consider partnering with organizations that provide broader support services**

- Effective job training informed by local labor and industry trends
- Wrap-around services assisting with childcare, transportation, and so on

2

## **Connect with grant recipients**

- Ensure grant recipients have and know a point person in DSS
- Provide feedback to grant recipients on whether funds are being used effectively

3

## **Advocate for additional rounds of funding**

- The budget remains in question for this year
- Recipients need additional funding to maintain and grow their programs

# GRANT RECIPIENT AND VFC RECOMMENDATIONS

1

## Consider advocating for the implementation of Network2Work

- Make localities aware of the Network2Work network-based recruitment model
- Encourage localities to implement Network2Work using ETPP funds

2

## Collaborate with local workforce boards to leverage funding from WIOA to help TANF recipients

- Partnering with local workforce boards, who are eligible to receive WIOA funds, would allow employment organizations to use WIOA and TANF funds in tandem

3

## Cultivate community relationships

- Partner with nonprofits, local DSS, workforce boards, and city councils to tackle poverty
- Allows employment organizations to leverage funding from local government

# GRANT RECIPIENT AND VFC RECOMMENDATIONS, CONTINUED

4

## **Ensure applications represent a coordinated approach**

- Eliminate duplicative efforts
- Increase likelihood of drawing from several funding streams

5

## **Communicate with VDSS and utilize VDSS resources throughout the grant application process**

- Lean on VDSS while applying for funds and during implementation

6

## **Focus wrap-around services on affordable housing and reliable transportation**

- Many ETPP grantees already offer wrap-around services
- Greatest barriers to long-term economic stability

# CONCLUSION

- (1) Grant recipients rely on ETPP to fund workforce training initiatives
- (2) ETPP is helping people who might otherwise not receive assistance
- (3) There is room for ETPP to grow



# DISCUSSION