

Agenda



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Meeting: Supportive Housing Services Tri-County Planning Body Meeting
Date: May 14th, 2025
Time: 4:00pm-6:00pm
Place: Zoom Webinar, 600 NE Grand Ave, Portland, OR 97232
Purpose: The Tri-County Planning Body (TCPB) will receive an update on and discuss a Training Implementation strategy and receive updates on the Regional Implementation Plan and Metro Council President's Work Group on Future SHS implementation.
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4:00pm **Welcome and Introductions**

- Decision: meeting summary approval

4:10pm **Public Comment**

4:15pm **Conflict of Interest**

4:20pm **Training Implementation Strategy Updates**

- Presentation
- Questions & Answers

5:20pm **Regional Implementation Plan Update**

5:35pm **Metro Council President's Work Group on Future SHS Implementation Updates**

- Presentation
- Questions & Answers

5:55pm **Closing and Next steps**

- Next meeting: June 11th, 2025

6:00pm **Adjourn**

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Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

Meeting: Supportive Housing Services (SHS) Tri-County Planning Body Meeting
Date: April 9, 2025
Time: 4:00 PM – 6:30 PM
Place: Metro Council Chambers, 600 NE Grand Ave, Portland, OR 97232 and Zoom Webinar
Purpose: The Tri-County Planning Body (TCPB) will discuss and vote on the Healthcare Alignment Implementation Strategies and receive a presentation on the SHS Oversight Committee's Annual Report.

Member attendees

Co-chair Steve Rudman (he/him), Yoni Kahn (he/him), Yvette Marie Hernandez (she/her), Cameran Murphy (they/them), Cristina Palacios (she/her), Mindy Stadtlander (she/her), Sahaan McKelvey (he/him), Monta Knudson (he/him), Nicole Larson (she/her)

Absent members

Co-chair Mercedes Elizalde (she/her), Eboni Brown (she/her), Zoi Coppiano (she/her)

Elected delegates

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington (she/her), Metro Councilor Christine Lewis (she/her), Multnomah County Chair Jessica Vega Pederson (she/her)

Absent delegates

Clackamas County Chair Tootie Smith (she/her)

Metro staff

Michael Garcia (he/him), Abby Ahern (she/her), Liam Frost (he/him), Ruth Adkins (she/her), Valeria McWilliams (she/her), Patricia Rojas (she/her)

Kearns & West facilitators

Ben Duncan (he/him), Ariella Dahlin (she/her)

Note: The meeting was recorded via Zoom; therefore, this meeting summary will remain at a high-level overview. Please review the recording and archived meeting packet for details and presentation slides.

Summary of Meeting Decisions

- The TCPB approved the March meeting summary.
- The TCPB approved the Healthcare System Alignment Implementation Strategy.
- The TCPB approved the amended RIF motion.

Welcome and Introductions

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, welcomed attendees and reviewed the meeting agenda and logistics.

Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

Patricia Rojas, Metro, announced she will be stepping down as Regional Housing Director, and her last day will be May 2nd, 2025. She thanked Tri County Planning Body (TCPB) members for serving on the body and reflected that high-level systems change is possible.

Many TCPB members reflected on Patricia's contribution to the housing sector and thanked her for her work.

Co-chair Steve Rudman provided opening remarks and reflected on the importance of integrating healthcare and housing systems.

Decision: Co-chair Rudman, Yoni Kahn, Yvette Marie Hernandez, Cameran Murphy, Cristina Palacios, Mindy Stadtlander, Sahaan McKelvey, Monta Knudson, Nicole Larson, Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington, and Multnomah County Chair Jessica Vega Pederson **approved the March meeting summary.**

Public Comment

Written public comment was received (see [page 12 in the meeting packet](#)).

Conflict of Interest

Cristina noted that Housing Oregon is on Metro's contractor list and could potentially receive future Supportive Housing Services (SHS) funding.

Yvette noted that she works for Home Forward, which receives SHS funding but participates on the TCPB as a community member.

Yoni noted that his employer, Northwest Pilot Project, receives SHS funding, but that he serves on the TCPB to share provider perspectives and does not represent his employer.

Mindy declared a conflict of interest as Health Share and Metro work together on health and housing integration, and stated she will abstain from the Healthcare System Alignment Implementation Plan vote.

Cameran shared that they work for Boys and Girls Aid, which receives SHS funding.

Monta stated that JOIN receives SHS funding.

Sahaan stated that Self Enhancement Inc. (SEI) receives SHS funds. He noted that SHS does not fund his position and that he serves on the TCPB to share provider perspectives.

Healthcare System Alignment Implementation Strategy

Presentation

Ruth Adkins, Metro, shared the Healthcare System Alignment Implementation Strategy results from the work Metro, Health Share, county partners, and Homebase have been doing. She noted that the partner table is being expanded, and reviewed the Healthcare System goal and recommendation language.

Ruth noted that there is work underway to implement Oregon's health-related social needs (HRSN) benefit, created through the state's Medicaid 1115 waiver. She highlighted that this work is separate but parallel to the work in the Implementation Strategy.

Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

Acacia McGuire Anderson, Clackamas County; Lori Kelley, Multnomah County; and Leslie Gong, Washington County, shared highlights of health and housing integrations at the county level. They reflected that each county's integration team has expanded, case conferencing has been successful, and HRSN implementation has begun.

Adam Peterson, Health Share, shared that Health Share covers about 25% of individuals in the Portland metro region. He reviewed Health Share's approach to bridging system gaps, which is focused on the HRSN benefit, High Acuity Behavioral Health Initiative, and Regional Integration Continuum (RIC).

Adam reflected that healthcare and housing systems are serving the same people, and system alignment is needed to serve them effectively. He reviewed the High Acuity Behavioral Health Initiative, which serves those with substance use disorders and/or a diagnosis of psychosis by using an ecosystem clinical portfolio. Adam reviewed the key functions and components of RIC success, including legal and relational infrastructure, data centralization, and case conferencing.

Ruth shared that the three implementation strategies emerged from a landscape analysis and county-level work. Ruth detailed each key strategy's vision, activities, timeline, and deliverables. The three strategies are:

1. Develop a Regional Plan for Medically Enhanced Housing and Shelter Models
2. Establish Regional Support for Cross-System Care Coordination
3. Build Regional Cross-System Data Sharing Infrastructure

The overall timeline for phase one would start in March and end in December 2025, with an interim progress report in September and a report refining the strategies in December. Funding from the Regional Investment Fund (RIF) would support county health/housing integration staff and consultants and Washington County's medical respite program for FY25- 26 for a total of \$1.8 million.

Round Table Discussion

Ben facilitated a roundtable for TCPB members to ask any questions and share their thoughts.

- **Comment, Yoni:** This is complicated work, and this concept has widespread community support. The integration of housing and healthcare is crucial to facilitate the efficient use of housing resources. The impact of this proposal hits every part of the housing service continuum and will stabilize individuals using resources from different systems. It is critical to share information between housing and healthcare systems to support individuals.
- **Comment, Mindy:** I agree with Yoni's comments. The complexity of the needs of community members is different now than when the systems were first created, and it is important to ensure the health and housing systems are working together.
- **Question, Cameran:** After ten years and access to education, I was able to figure out how to use the system, and I now try to help end users navigate the systems. Case conferencing is great and reaches those who have been engaged in care. We still need to reach those who are not participating in care and have a higher acuity, as they have been disengaged from care. How do we do that? Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is complicated; if individuals do not want to share information, how will we get that information to share? Will there be a pilot?

Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

- **Health Share response, Adam:** Agencies have to sign individual data sharing agreements, which will then fold into a large-scale analysis for housing security to understand populations and learn trends. Culturally relevant services are important to the process. For the health care system to have data, someone will need to check that box that says housing insecure. I am happy to talk offline.
- **Multnomah County response, Lori:** A lot of our data sharing is on the back end or data analysis to understand what is going on in the system. HMIS is complicated, and we want to make our system easier to navigate. Our system will have fields we want, and if individuals are willing to share that information can be added. Privacy is a major consideration, and we want folks to feel safe and not ask for information they may not want to give.
- **Question, Cristina:** I am concerned about information being gathered for immigrants and refugees, who are doubled up and have difficulty finding units due to their legal status. What is the plan to help those individuals who will be more afraid of sharing that information?
 - **Metro response, Ruth:** Immigration status is not information that is collected. Trusted relationships with health care providers are critical and need to be built. Case conferencing is Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant and trauma-informed. Individuals have to consent to case conferencing in Clackamas County.
- **Comment, Nicole:** I am enthusiastic about this plan. These strategies will better serve populations in the medical, behavioral, and housing systems and not silo the work. The strategies sound trauma-informed and person-centered. Case conferencing can be very effective.
- **Comment, Yvette:** I am excited for the work to come. This will help support housing those with psychosis or substance use disorders find vouchers and receive the healthcare they need.
- **Comment, Monta:** I support this, and the system needs this.
- **Comment, Multnomah County Chair Vega Pederson:** This clarifies the housing and health connection and is part of Multnomah County's homeless response system.
- **Comment, Washington County Chair Harrington:** This strategy is very well thought out.
- **Question, Sahaan:** I did not hear any red flags and love the concept of integration for these two systems. When I was doing direct service, the lack of integration would enhance my frustration. Part of this integration work should identify gaps in the needs and resources and capacities we can provide, and identify how to fill those gaps. In a perfect world, I do not want to see housing funds going to health treatment, as we have health system funds.
 - **Metro response, Ruth:** That is part of the work ahead of us, which we will need to figure out.
 - **Response, Mindy:** The better we get at this, the better advocates we are, which will help us be more precise in knowing what we need and allow us to better ask for and receive those resources.
- **Question, Co-chair Rudman:** These systems are complicated, and I look forward to their integration. It is important to set up systems so that when funding comes, dollars can be infused quickly. What is the relationship of this work to the Medicaid waiver?
 - **Metro response, Ruth:** The waiver has a lot of the same folks working on it, but it is not a regional strategy, as we think we can be most effective with the focus on the three identified strategies.
- **Comment, Metro Councilor Lewis:** This work is well thought out, and I share concerns about data privacy. It will be hard work, but it is worth doing.

Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

- **Question, Washington County Chair Harrington:** What is one thing you want Metro Council to understand about this strategy? Incredible work is going into each plan, but I think we are forgetting to develop an elevator pitch, and we need to get better at that.

Decision: Washington County Chair Harrington motioned to approve the Strategy as presented, Sahaan seconded. Mindy abstained. Co-chair Rudman, Yoni, Yvette, Cameran, Cristina, Sahaan, Monta, Nicole, Washington County Chair Harrington, Metro Councilor Lewis, and Multnomah County Chair Vega Pederson **approved the Healthcare System Alignment Implementation Strategy.**

SHS Oversight Committee Annual Report Presentation

Yesenia Delgado, Metro, reviewed the role of the SHS Oversight Committee and its annual review process. She reviewed the 10-year regional goals to reduce barriers to housing stability, connect 5,000 households to permanent supportive housing (PSH), and stabilize 10,000 households in permanent housing.

Yesenia shared key highlights and performance from FY24, including exceeding goals for rapid rehousing placements, homelessness prevention, and shelter creation. PSH placements and supportive housing units brought into operation goals were not met.

SHS Oversight Committee Co-chair Mike Savara reviewed revenue collection and expenditures. He shared that key challenges are the growing need, as for every 10 households that leave homelessness, 15 enter; competing funding priorities; financial oversight; and regional evaluation to be able to track regional goals, tell success stories, and invest in interventions that work.

Co-chair Savara reviewed the Oversight Committee's recommendations for FY24, including data integrity and evaluation, provider partnerships, regional priorities, oversight and accountability, and jurisdictional partnerships and decision making.

Co-chair Rudman reflected that it is important for TCPB members to know what the Oversight Committee is working on.

Valeria McWilliams, Metro, noted that TCPB members can share any thoughts and feedback in the post-meeting survey.

RIF Proposal Updates

Liam Frost, Metro, acknowledged the confusion that occurred at last month's meeting and shared that Metro staff, county staff, and the Metro attorney collaborated on motion language to clarify last month's vote. The clarified motion language does not require plan amendments or code changes and does require annual reporting. Metro staff proposed a motion on a slide, which is captured below, and asked for the TCPB to move to adopt the motion as is or to amend the motion before voting.

Motion: I move that the Tri-County Planning Body approve the one-time use of RIF carryover as proposed in the letter to this body from Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties dated March 12th, and that the TCPB determines these investments to be regional in nature. In particular, the TCPB finds that:

Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

1. The use of \$8.5 million of carryover for Clackamas County's will support a pilot program that aligns with the Coordinated Entry regional goal.
2. The use of \$9 million of carryover for Washington County's transition fund supports the Employee Recruitment and Retention regional goal by supporting the homeless services workforce through slower program reductions, outplacement services, FTE ramp down resources for organizations, and more.
3. As referenced in the March 13 meeting facilitator notes, Multnomah County's motion to use RIF funds was approved as proposed and presented at the March 12 TCPB meeting and no further action is required.
4. In lieu of quarterly reporting, the counties will report back on use of these funds annually to the SHS Oversight Committee.

Decision: Monta moved to adopt the amended motion as presented, Yoni seconded. Co-chair Rudman, Yoni, Yvette, Cameran, Cristina, Mindy, Sahaan, Monta, Nicole, Washington County Chair Harrington, Metro Councilor Lewis, and Multnomah County Chair Vega Pederson **approved the amended RIF motion as presented.**

Co-chair Rudman emphasized the importance of these funds being one-time only. He noted the *Update on SHS Reform process memo* (see [page 111 in the meeting packet](#)) sounded like Metro may be considering one-time requests for Metro admin funding to go towards counties and cities.

Liam responded that Metro is considering an ordinance brought to the Council years ago to allow Metro admin funding to be used for one-time requests.

Councilor Lewis clarified that the ordinance is in perpetuity, but the funds should be treated as one-time only.

Coordinated Entry Quarterly Progress Report Update Q&A

Abby Ahern, Metro, provided a brief overview of the Coordinated Entry progress report and noted that this format would be used for all TCPB goals. She asked if there were any questions or feedback.

- **Question, Washington County Chair Harrington:** What is CQI?
 - **Metro response, Abby:** Continuous quality improvement.
 - **Metro response, Valeria:** We will be sure to spell out acronyms.
- **Question, Cameran:** For strategy two, it says quarterly, but it seems like we should be able to have results available. It would be helpful to have something that clearly designates status, and if something is blank, explain why it is blank, and use plain language.
 - **Metro response, Abby:** I will add the baseline into the table. We need to establish the baseline before we can measure the difference from implementation. I can update the title and status updates.
 - **Metro response, Valeria:** The report headlines match the SHS timeline.

Closing and Next Steps

Co-chair Rudman provided closing remarks and asked to receive a Metro Council President's work group update in addition to the training implementation strategy agenda item.

Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

Valeria confirmed that it would be on May's agenda.

Next steps include:

- TCPB members to provide any additional feedback on the quarterly progress report template to Metro.
- Metro to update the quarterly progress report template.
- Next meeting: May 9, 4:00-6:00 pm
 - Training implementation strategy
 - Metro Council President's work group updates

Adjourn

Adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

R. Maggie Cornish, MSW

Testimonial Letter to the Tri-County Planning Body on

Supportive Housing Services

May 2nd, 2025

Thank you to the Tri-County Planning Body for your support in addressing homelessness and providing supportive housing in the tri-county area. I am writing to support the Housing Connector nonprofit organization which increases access to affordable housing for individuals facing barriers that often lead to homelessness. My name is Maggie Cornish, and I work at Blanchet House and Farm (pronounced Blan-shāy) as the Case Manager for Blanchet Farm in Yamhill County.

The mission of Blanchet House and Farm is to alleviate suffering and offer hope for a better life by serving essential aid with dignity. Founded in 1952, Blanchet House was created as a “House of Hospitality” where anyone in need could access food with dignity and kindness. We have since developed two sister residential life renewal work programs for men struggling with addiction, homelessness, and often many other challenges, at both Blanchet House in Old Town Portland, and at Blanchet Farm in Carlton. The men who participate in these programs contribute to the program, either by working in our kitchen downtown at Blanchet House or on the farm itself at Blanchet Farm, before going on to find outside employment, communities, and housing. Since coming into my position as Case Manager at Blanchet Farm last October, I have received over two hundred calls asking about our program and availability from across the country.

Funding for organizations like Housing Connector is crucial to my work at Blanchet Farm. As a program located in remote Carlton, Oregon, we often do not have the ability to find or even access affordable housing in the tri-county area. Affordable housing waitlists in Yamhill County for single males span years and men exiting our program are often forced to move into shared sober housing, which may not be the most ideal placement for every individual. Transportation in the region is also a barrier to searching for and accessing affordable housing, as the majority of residents at Blanchet Farm do not have driver's licenses and we are located outside of the Dial-A-Ride service area. Many residents also have barriers to obtaining housing such as past evictions, low credit scores, or housing-related debts.

I have been working with Housing Connector since we partnered with them across our residential programs last year, working together to provide housing support for residents in

mostly our program in Old Town Portland. Recently, I was able to connect two of the residents from the program at Blanchet Farm who are interested in moving into Portland together with Housing Connector profiles and provide them with information about apartments available within their budgets, accepting of their rental barriers, and even provide Zillow access to these residents so they could do some searching on their own. Being able to provide these two residents with support through Housing Connector was especially crucial because at the time of their departure from Blanchet Farm, they will not have yet started their employment as it is in Portland and transportation from the farm itself is nearly impossible. However, because they're already provided with a Letter of Support through Housing Connector and have the guaranteed support of myself as a community partner, some landlords have already agreed to accept proof of employment in lieu of paystubs.

Being able to expand the support of Housing Connector outside of Multnomah County to other areas like Washington and Yamhill County where many of our residents' families, communities, and workplaces would be crucial to our goal of providing them supportive housing as they transition from our program. Therefore, I join others in urging the Tri-County Planning Body to consider expanding support for Housing Connector and other organizations like it that remove barriers to housing for our most vulnerable neighbors.

Thank you for your attention and consideration,

Maggie Cornish

Tri-County Planning Body

Training Goal

Regional Implementation Strategy

May 2025



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Tri-County Planning Body

Training Implementation Strategy

Introduction:

Training is the educational and skill-building process that equips housing and homeless service workers to effectively support individuals and families experiencing homelessness, housing instability or seeking affordable housing. Training covers a broad spectrum of processes that includes formal education, internal trainings hosted by an organization, specialized contractors hired to meet a training need, access to online training videos, or some combination of the above.

The Tri-County Planning Body's (TCPB) training goal directs Metro and the counties to ensure service providers have access to the knowledge and skills required to operate at a high level of program functionality, with the needs of culturally specific providers prioritized through all program design. The TCPB recommends that Metro and the counties coordinate and support regional training that meets the diverse needs of individual direct service staff, with additional focus on the needs of Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) agencies.

Further conversations with TCPB members, including at November's TCPB meeting, also directed Metro and the counties to ensure that any implementation strategies presented would:

- 1) **Identify and honor the work of service providers already in the field** by evaluating and expanding trainings that providers are already offering, and by identifying opportunities for providers who have long been in the field to demonstrate their skills rather than be required to partake in introductory training programs and,
- 2) **Connect the training goal with the TCPB's Employee Recruitment and Retention (ERR) goal:** As the strategies for each goal are further developed, we plan to explore opportunities to link completion of training to compensation or other incentives.

Frontline housing and homeless service workers are the foundation of our region's response to homelessness. They are the implementers of housing and homelessness policy that supports people experiencing the trauma of homelessness, moving into housing and retaining that housing. It is frequently challenging work and, while some workers come into the field with formal education like a social work degree, many, especially those who have experienced housing instability themselves, come into it without a formal background in how to provide services. Access to high quality, readily available training in how to work with people experiencing homelessness is a fundamental need for these workers to be effective. It is also necessary for ensuring that the organizations they are working for can sustain their service delivery, which has expanded significantly under the Supportive Housing Services (SHS) measure with providers often struggling to find readily available trainings for their newly hired staff. Thus, adequate and readily available training is as much about building organizational capacity as it is about helping frontline workers understand how to effectively and equitably serve vulnerable populations while also prioritizing skills like self-care and trauma-informed practices.

Through deep research and coordination between Metro, the counties and our region's service providers, this document outlines initial implementation strategies toward building out a core training curriculum to support the fundamental needs of frontline housing service workers. These strategies are, we believe, the best initial opportunities to lead to broader systems change. While each county has providers and clients with unique needs, we all recognize that homelessness is a regional issue, and training to ensure a baseline level of equitable service provision and trauma-informed care is a regional priority.

The strategies outlined below include launching a training program at a local community college for incoming frontline housing and homeless service workers while scaling up on-demand training offerings so service workers can access the training they need now. These are just the initial strategies identified through research and racial equity considerations and concepts for future strategies are included toward the end of this document. They include partnering with our local workforce boards to integrate housing service work into the broader workforce system (including recruitment, retention, internships and more), developing a leadership academy at the same community college to help frontline workers become supervisors, and creating a housing specific continuing education unit (CEU) for behavioral health certifications. This implementation strategy should not be read as a ten-year plan for training housing and homeless service workers, rather it should reflect a foundation toward ensuring frontline workers have access to the consistent training they need to do their jobs on day one.

This implementation strategy is designed with the vision of developing an eventual path for anyone who wants to become a housing service worker – whether coming from lived experience or making a career change – to access the training and tools necessary to perform work at a high caliber in ways that are trauma-informed and center racial equity. This strategy is also designed to provide a baseline for the services these people will deliver, regardless of the jurisdiction they work in. As an initial opportunity, however, these trainings will be focused on supporting the needs of current SHS service providers.

To be clear, **these strategies are not intended to replace the excellent work our region's institutions of higher learning are doing in training the next generation of social workers.** Nor are they intended to replace the excellent and diverse work our region's homeless services providers are doing in training their staff according to their values, program design, and service delivery model. Rather, this set of strategies is being designed for people who are entering the field or have not had the privilege of that formal education to access the skills they need to support their clients well, and to supplement the organization-specific training provided at the agency level. Moreover, **it is about creating regional training tools and opportunities** in support of county standards of service delivery that achieve our regional goals.

Racial equity considerations for training

As Metro and the counties consider ways to regionalize training, the following racial equity considerations are crucial. A full overview of both the internal and cross-jurisdictional Racial Equity Lens Tool exercises that were convened by Metro's regional capacity team to inform these strategies can be found in Appendix C.

- **Client facing needs:** The development of a baseline level of training that is widely accessible will help to ensure that clients of color experience a shared quality of care, regardless of where they access the system. This will also help to avoid any adverse equity implications to smaller organizations offering culturally specific services, which may lack the access and funding to more robust training programs that organizations who serve the mainstream population are able to participate in.
- **Agency to agency differences:** The work of **honoring provider expertise is especially important to consider** in developing and implementing a new regional training program. When beginning this work, Metro recognized the importance of developing an initial understanding of not only what training opportunities are already present and being utilized in the region, but also the training needs of the front-line housing workforce which are currently not being met. Identifying the current training successes in the region will allow for the collaborative incorporation of these programs into any training program that is developed, will help to ensure that any program developed is additive, rather than duplicative, and allow for the identification and capacity building of currently existing, effective training programs.
- **Ensuring the expertise of culturally specific providers is centered in both program design and implementation.** Where there are trainings that are broadly available (e.g. Mental Health First Aid), they are often developed through a lens of mainstream cultural needs. Creating a new training program provides an opportunity to develop trainings that will both be accessible to culturally specific agencies and help to incorporate best practices for serving communities of color into trainings offered to mainstream agencies to ensure a shared level of care for clients of color. To ensure equitable outcomes, feedback from culturally specific providers, individuals with lived experience, and members of disadvantaged communities will be solicited and incorporated throughout various stages of program development and implementation.

Regionalization of a new training program aims help to address these disparities by centering the following values:

- **Increase the number of training access points** throughout the region so that providers can access trainings in the county where they provide services.
- **Allow for the creation of specific programming** that is tailored to the needs of the region's providers, with particular emphasis being placed on the needs of organizations offering culturally specific services as well as population-specific providers (e.g. youth, seniors, LGBTQ+, etc.).
- **Increase awareness** of the trainings current providers are already delivering that can be accessed across the region while identifying the investments and expanded capacity necessary to scale up those trainings.
- **Offer a person-centered approach to training**, meeting people where they are and not duplicating efforts, with particular emphasis being placed on the needs of organizations offering culturally specific services.
- **Allow for the identification of local instructors**, allowing culturally specific communities to learn from a member of their organization/community.

How counties have responded to provider training needs to date

Understanding the long-term persistent need for training for frontline workers, each county has developed and implemented their own training programs and procedures. These training programs are different from county to county, which is reflective of both the unique needs of each county's providers and the populations they serve as well as the need for the counties to scale up programs and offerings quickly in response to SHS funding coming online. A summary of each county's training efforts can be found below.

Clackamas County requires all contracted housing and homeless service providers to complete training in the following areas:

- The **Housing First Responder training**, which is mandatory for all providers, covers a variety of essential topics, including **motivational interviewing**, helping workers engage effectively with clients; **working with individuals in crisis**, a crucial skill for managing high-stress situations; **homelessness diversion**, to assist individuals in avoiding or exiting homelessness; and **domestic violence (DV) training**, to ensure workers can support survivors appropriately. The program also includes **system mapping**, enabling staff to navigate and understand available services, and **de-escalation techniques**, which are vital for handling tense or challenging interactions.
- Clackamas County offers training in **Regional Long-Term Rent Assistance (RLRA)**, giving staff the knowledge needed to support clients in securing stable housing. **Case conferencing** training provides a platform for workers to collaborate and discuss complex cases, ensuring the best outcomes for those they serve.
- Additional opportunities include training in:
 - HMIS
 - Assertive engagement
 - Fair Housing
 - Mental Health First Aid
 - Mandatory reporting

Multnomah County has taken the following actions to provide training to their housing and homeless services providers:

- Expanding access to Multnomah County's Assertive Engagement (AE) training by hiring additional **Assertive Engagement trainers** to provide training four times a month, at no cost to community partners. The Assertive Engagement Team also launched an e-learning series, offering the training, which has traditionally been hosted over a three-day period, in the form of six self-paced online modules followed by a live four-hour skills practice session. Participants are then certified in Assertive Engagement and have access to an ongoing community of practice. These sessions are particularly valuable for enhancing communication and building trust with clients. The availability of a self-paced online option has increased access to the AE training for a workforce of direct service providers who are busy, often work in shifts that do not coincide

with the 9am-5pm workday, and/or are required to be physically present with their participants or on site during their shifts.

- The county has hired an **Equity Training Coordinator who develops, facilitates, recommends, and coordinates equity-based trainings for providers and creates and disseminates a monthly Equity Based Learning Calendar**, ensuring that staff have access to the most relevant and up-to-date resources. Recently the Equity Training Coordinator, along with the Metro housing department Equity Manager, co-led a workgroup creating a regional training calendar. The Equity Training Coordinator also facilitates a Trainer Cohort with Multnomah County's providers, creating a space for trainers at the agency level to share resources and best practices around training, and facilitate opportunities for providers to share their expertise and provide cross training to one another.
- For those working with survivors of domestic and sexual violence, a **Domestic & Sexual Violence Program Specialist** is available to offer focused training in these critical areas.
- Recognizing the importance of proactive learning, Multnomah County offers **enhanced training opportunities** that are tailored to address emerging needs in the housing services field.
- The **Coordinated Entry/Access program** has a free podcast resource, allowing staff to engage with training material in a flexible, on-the-go format.
- The county's **Continuum of Care** training is available on-demand, giving workers access to valuable content whenever it fits their schedules.
- Multnomah County also offers **several live trainings and training modules**: Assertive Engagement, fair housing basics, equal access to housing, domestic violence survivors, and more.

Washington County has taken the following steps in their efforts to provide adequate training to their housing and homeless services providers/staff:

- **On-demand training** through Power DMS, a learning management software program. This platform provides flexibility for workers to engage with training content at their own pace, ensuring that staff can continue learning and growing without disrupting their daily responsibilities.
 - **Some examples of Power DMS trainings include:**
 - Housing Case Management 101
 - Housing navigation
 - RLRA overview
 - HMIS requirements and workflow
 - Eviction prevention
 - Housing First and PSH basics
 - Home visit safety
 - Boundaries and ethics
 - Conflict resolution
 - Domestic violence safety planning
 - Harm reduction & naloxone administration
 - Motivational interviewing

- Washington County is offering **provider training** that focuses on increasing **culturally responsive service provision**, helping staff better understand and meet the diverse needs of the community they serve.
- A **learning series** is also available to contracted providers, offering deep dives into important topics and providing an opportunity for professional growth.
- To complement live and interactive training, Washington County has made **pre-recorded trainings** available on their YouTube channel. These videos cover essential topics like **housing navigation, regional long-term rent assistance, domestic violence, and resiliency/self-care**.
- For broader community engagement, the **Housing and Supportive Services Network** holds monthly meetings that are open to all. These meetings foster collaboration, encourage the sharing of best practices, and create a space for providers to connect and learn from one another.

Regional coordination to date

Recognizing that providers across the region needed training and technical assistance to scale their work, Metro Council set a priority in the FY 23 budget process to provide training and technical assistance. The housing department moved forward with envisioning and launching the Metro housing department's regional capacity team to develop programming in response to the Tri-County Planning Body's technical assistance and training goals. The guiding principles of this team are to:

- **Collaborate with county partners:** The Metro regional capacity team is focused on ensuring they are working closely with county partners to learn what is working well, refine their work and use any findings to support our regional system of care and learning from them as they scale these offerings up.
- **Avoid duplication:** The team wants to ensure that any training offerings are unique, which is why its members have worked closely with county partners to envision the implementation strategies outlined here and grounded them in research to ensure the strategies are not otherwise or already accessible through existing programs.
- **Add value to the system:** The team wants to ensure that any work that it implements will be found to be valuable by providers and will lead toward a stronger, regionalized vision of training.
- **Regionalize technical assistance and training work:** Along with the above-mentioned guiding principles, the team seeks to ensure that any work they do has a regional lens, that what they produce can be accessed by SHS providers anywhere in the region and that it can be consistently replicated across county lines.

Research guiding the development of implementation strategies

Research has been a cornerstone of this process to ensure non-duplication of already existing trainings.

The attached research paper is evidence of this. It contains:

- A detailed overview of all outreach efforts that have been conducted as part of this project.

- Courses offered by local institutions of higher education that align with the possible housing service worker certification (HSWC) curriculum.¹
- The existing local and national efforts to establish a training program for the front-line housing service worker workforce.
- The existing state community and behavioral healthcare certifications that utilize a train-the-trainer model, which could be replicated for implementation in the future.
- The work being accomplished by workforce boards, and how these organizations could assist in the delivery of this training.

In July 2024, Metro staff circulated a survey to employees at the counties as well as Metro’s housing department staff who had previously worked in direct service to identify what was necessary to include in an initial training program for frontline housing service workers. The survey asked two questions:

- What skills do you think incoming housing services workers most need when they come into the job?
- As we consider developing a housing service worker certification, what trainings or learning opportunities do you think should be included?

Metro staff then consolidated the responses into high level focus areas, and from there, developed a series of theoretical course descriptions with coursework content to highlight the outcomes jurisdictional funders believe are necessary for housing service workers to receive early in their careers.

These course descriptions (which can be found in Appendix A, updated with service provider feedback) became a cornerstone of Metro’s research for this goal. They were used to identify whether any existing training programs in the region already included a complete overview of all the desired learning outcomes. The research demonstrated that, while there are some elements at our post-secondary educational institutions and behavioral health certifications, which could be leveraged to build a housing service worker curriculum, no such program that encompasses all the desired outcomes currently exists in the region.

Recognizing that provider feedback was critical to ensure that the theoretical courses would be useful to providers, in fall 2024, Metro staff engaged with nearly 200 homeless service providers in the region to share information about our technical assistance and training work through presentations and one-on-one conversation.

In addition, Metro staff surveyed providers in greater Portland to gather their feedback on these course descriptions and to get their help identifying the learning outcomes and key deliverables that should be present within a theoretical 40-hour introductory course. The course descriptions were updated in

¹ Metro’s regional capacity team has been organizing the research and strategy development for this implementation strategy under the umbrella term Housing Service Worker Certification or HSWC. The intent is to broadly define individuals working in direct service with people experiencing homelessness (street outreach workers, housing navigators, case managers, drop-in center staff and more) while identifying opportunities to ensure that broad group of people can access professionalized trainings that will help them early in their careers. More details on this delineation can be found in the introduction of this strategy’s accompanying research paper “Professionalizing housing service work: opportunities in greater Portland.”

February 2025 to reflect provider feedback. As mentioned above, a summary of the feedback that was received from the HSWC provider survey, along with a red-lined version of the updated course descriptions, can be found in Appendix A.

As the team works toward developing Implementation Strategy 1 (developing a course at a community college), county staff are helping to further refine what the curriculum for an initial course should include. They are identifying the learning outcomes that are most necessary for incoming service workers and helping to identify what courses should be taught at later intervals, while also further identifying which trainings are hosted by the counties that could, instead, be scaled up.

Based on this research, the implementation strategies outlined below are the initial opportunities that Metro and the counties believe are the most viable opportunities to building out a strategic regional approach for providing trainings for frontline workers. We want to recognize that this is not an exhaustive list of training opportunities. Rather, we recognize that there are many potential strategies to scaling up trainings for frontline workers.

Metro and the counties have been approaching this implementation strategy like a puzzle. We believe that the strategies outlined are the initial puzzle pieces that will help us get to the bigger picture vision of a scaled training program available to all frontline service providers in greater Portland.

Implementation strategy #1: develop a non-credit training program through a community college

Program description

This strategy involves partnering with a local community college to develop a series of micro-credential² training courses based on the framework for housing service worker certification curriculum that has been collaboratively developed between Metro, the counties, and the region's providers. The strategy proposes the development and piloting of two introductory courses, each running 20 hours, that together will form a micro-credential at Portland Community College (PCC). These introductory courses will be designed to be access by employees at SHS contracted service providers. The courses that are being considered currently include:

- Basics of housing service worker case management
- Basics of housing system navigation

The goal of this strategy is to provide the region's front-line housing service workforce with a regionally consistent, baseline level of training that will allow for an adequate level of trauma-informed, culturally responsive service provision to the vulnerable populations that these positions serve. Metro is exploring the following instructional models for scaled course implementation: in-person, virtual, hybrid, and in on-demand virtual format.

² A micro-credential is an award given to a learner after they complete a series of courses (often two to three.) They are highly variable depending on the education institution offering them and customizable. They do not require state approval, can be incorporated into other non-credit programs and could be replicated across community colleges.

Benefits

- While this strategy proposes developing and piloting this course at Portland Community College, which has the most access points in the region, a shared curriculum could be replicated across multiple community colleges (though that has not been done before). Using a racial equity lens in the curriculum development and intentionally engaging culturally specific providers and communities of color could create a strategy for ensuring culturally responsive services can be adopted across the region.
- The development of a micro-credential is very user driven, allowing the curriculum to be developed with provider input, being responsive to the needs of organizations in the region.
- The micro-credential can be assessed and updated much easier than a Non-Credit Training Certificate³ or an accredited program.
- Coursework can be applied toward traditional academic degrees through a "credit for prior learning" (CPL) process, which exists at all local community colleges.
- Community colleges in the area have already developed several of the trainings and courses outlined in the potential curriculum (e.g. Mental Health First Aid) and would be willing to adapt them to the specific courses outlined in the potential curriculum.
- Community colleges can place a micro-credential training on the Eligible Training Program List (ETPL), which will open additional, long-term funding opportunities, including federal funding.
- Partnering with a community college will allow for the consistent updating of curriculum based on changes in regional strategy, student feedback, and county-specific requests (where appropriate).

Equity considerations

- The feedback of impacted parties was prioritized throughout the design of the potential curriculum, and program more generally. Initial course descriptions, which were developed by Metro and the counties during the needs analysis in July 2024, were then circulated among the region's providers to ensure that they adequately addressed the training needs in the region. Throughout this process, the needs of culturally specific providers were uplifted, with Metro regional capacity team staff engaging in intentional, direct outreach efforts to reach these populations. Metro and county staff will engage in future, targeted outreach efforts to more completely reach these populations. A detailed report of the feedback that was received, and how it was applied, can be found in Appendix A. Further equity considerations that were identified through the application of a racial equity lens tool can be found in Appendix C.

Understanding the historic barriers that communities of color have experienced when attempting to access higher education, Metro's regional capacity team researched other implementation strategies

³ A Non-Credit Training Certificate or NCTC Program is hosted at a community college and provides necessary training for an industry, usually manufacturing or healthcare. NCTC's must be approved by the State of Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Committee (HECC), and they must include a minimum of 18 hours of training and up to 210 hours. NCTCs could be replicated across different community colleges, though this has not been done before in Oregon for the social services industry.

that would not require the employee to enroll at an institution of higher education. Within a higher education setting in particular, it will be crucial to elevate the feedback and voices of those with lived experience, members of disadvantaged communities, and employees of culturally specific providers to ensure equitable program outcomes and access. To be clear, however, **enrolling in a non-credited micro credential program will not require any previous educational attainment.**

Long-term program possibilities

- Micro-credentials could be replicated throughout any community college in the state of Oregon. The portability of these programs could result in each community college in the region hosting a version of the introductory curriculum, which would increase the number of access points for front-line housing service workers to obtain this training.
- Micro-credentials are flexible, meaning that courses could be developed in various areas of the developed curriculum as well as areas that have not yet been scoped out. For example, after launching an initial cohort of new to the field providers, Metro and the counties could work with a community college to build out additional, advanced courses even including a leadership training program for frontline workers who have been or would like to be promoted into supervisory roles. This could take the form of Continuing Education Units (CEU's)⁴, or a micro-credential on the topic of leadership within the housing services sector and would reflect feedback received in outreach efforts indicating that the region's providers not only desire training at the introductory level but are also wanting training that will allow for career advancement.
- Partnering with local workforce boards (see below) could help with design and long-term sustainability of the program into a workforce pipeline for the housing system and the broader workforce system.

Timeline and Milestones

Milestones will be shared in the TCPB's monthly progress report.

It is anticipated that the items listed in the chart below will be completed by September 2026, including results and next steps, which will include recommendations on how Metro may scale this type of training program or identify additional strategies to providing training opportunities throughout the region.

⁴ Continuing Education Units or CEUs are used to upgrade a person's competency in their professional when they're established in their career. In certain professions, CEUs are required to be completed on a recurring schedule.

Phase	Deliverables	Details/Steps	Responsible Party	Expected Completion
1	Collaboratively develop a potential housing service worker certification curriculum	<p>1. Perform a training needs analysis by surveying jurisdictional partners at each county, as well as Metro staff with front-line housing service worker experience.</p> <p>2. Organize responses from the needs analysis into 5 high-level subject areas, each accompanied by learning outcomes, that will form the basis of the HSWC curriculum.</p> <p>3. Engage with the region's front-line service providers through presentations to coalitions, one-on-one conversations, direct email outreach, and the circulation of the HSWC provider survey to get feedback on the HSWC curriculum specifically, and feedback on the design of the HSWC program more generally.</p> <p>4. Analyze survey feedback and update the HSWC possible curriculum to better reflect the training needs of the region's providers.</p>	Metro	<p>Q3 FY 24-25</p> <p>(February 2025)</p> <p><i>Complete</i></p>
2	Partner with community college to develop an HSWC, 40-hour, in-person introductory course based on the HSWC proposed curriculum	<p>1. Host initial conversations with community colleges to develop scope of work</p> <p>2. Work with Metro attorney, community college to develop and sign intergovernmental agreement</p> <p>3. Collaboratively develop programs with community college, while including advisory support of region's providers, including culturally specific providers, other</p>	Metro	December 2025

		<p>experts in the field and people with lived experience.</p> <p>4. Collaborate with county partners to determine applicable trainings and learning outcomes for course development to avoid duplication of efforts.</p>		
3	Pilot initial micro-credential program	<p>1. Partner with region's service providers to identify up to 24 new housing service workers (ideally in their roles for less than one year) to participate in the course.</p> <p>2. Participants in initial cohort attend regular courses, provide feedback throughout</p> <p>3. Debrief at end of pilot program</p>	Metro, counties	April 2026
4	Refine, scale, and sustain	<p>1. Incorporate provider feedback from first course to refine and launch another round of introductory course</p> <p>2. Identify other opportunities for additional courses outlined in HSWC and consider piloting</p> <p>3. Identify other audiences for HSWC courses (e.g. people who are entirely new to the field) and develop partnerships with workforce boards, other invested parties to scale</p> <p>4. Start development of a sustainability plan and planning for possible program expansion and additional cohorts.</p>	Metro, counties	September 2026

Final Project Deliverables

- A tailored 40-hour introductory micro-credential, specifically designed to meet the unique needs of the region's providers, available for front-line housing service workers to enroll. The initial costs, including enrollment of the first cohort will be paid by Metro's admin funds with future funding to be determined. Since PCC allows outside instructors to teach non-credit coursework, program instruction may be offered by both PCC instructors and members of the region's housing services workforce.
- Access to an institution of higher education for the region's front-line providers.
- An opportunity to obtain the baseline level of skills needed to adequately perform job duties required of front-line housing service workers.

Budget

Description	Cost
Curriculum development (per course)	\$25,000
Cost per cohort (first cohort)	\$15,000
Curriculum refinement (approximate)	\$10,000
Cost per additional cohort in developed program	\$10,000
Development of on-demand courses	\$25,000
Total	\$85,000

Note: This budget is being provided by Metro's administrative funds and does NOT require Regional Investment Fund (RIF) approval; budget subject to change based on RFP contracting processes.

Metrics

Goal	Metrics
A more well-trained front-line housing service worker workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of individuals who complete HSWC course ● Percent who found the course useful ● Number of access points ● Participant experience surveys, which take place 3 months after an individual has completed the course.
A scaled initial introductory course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Course refined and launched for a second cohort (and beyond) from initial feedback with a continuous quality improvement philosophy ● Additional interested parties have access to course (e.g. through workforce boards)
Additional courses developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Additional courses are developed/cohorts launched based on the HSWC curriculum ● Courses beyond the HSWC entry-level curriculum are developed (e.g. a housing leadership training academy for people becoming managers)

Implementation strategy #2: identifying and scaling up existing trainings

Program description

The primary current focus of this strategy is developing an understanding of whether the region's providers find the on-demand virtual trainings currently being offered by the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) and the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) to be effective in preparing them for the responsibilities of their roles. It also highlights the county training Regional Investment Fund asks for the coming fiscal year (which will be added before the June 2025 TCPB meeting.) An additional layer of this strategy in analyzing currently offered trainings can be found in the "other implementation considerations" below. This opportunity was identified during the Racial Equity Lens application of the HSWC program that occurred in Fall 2024.

The On-Demand Training Pilot Program was developed with two key needs in mind:

1. A recognition that the development of a new front-line housing service worker certification program (implementation strategy #1) will take some time, and
2. The understanding that there is a significant training access need right now.

The Metro regional capacity team wanted to test whether these trainings that can be made available more immediately were found to be useful by the region's providers.

There are 14 organizations who are participating in the initial pilot program. Two individuals from each organization, one front-line housing service worker and one manager/supervisor, were asked to complete a total of seven courses offered by CSH and NAEH (with the participant enrolling in at least two courses per organization) for a total of 28 housing service workers participating. At the end of each course, the participants were asked to complete a survey to provide feedback on how useful they found the training to be. At the end of the pilot program, each participant was also asked to complete a post-pilot survey, which solicits feedback on the participants' experience in the pilot program overall.

The pilot program launched on January 7, 2025, and the final pilot report, which will include recommendations for next steps, should be available in summer 2025.

Benefits

- Fastest option to provide the region with access to training programs.

Equity considerations

- Provider participation matrix: The On-Demand Training Program was designed with equity in mind. To ensure this, a participation matrix was developed, which helped to determine which organizations were eligible to participate in the pilot program. The specifications include (see Appendix B for the complete matrix):
 - Reserving a certain number of spots in the program for organizations offering culturally specific services.
 - Reserving a certain number of spots for organizations that serve specific populations, including:

- Individuals/families experiencing chronic homelessness
- Homeless families
- Victims of domestic violence
- Disability
- Senior
- Immigrant/refugee
- LGBTQIA2S+
- Homeless youth
- o At least one organization from each of the following operating budgets:
 - Small: Less than \$1 million
 - Medium: \$1-5 million
 - Large: \$5 million+
- o At least two organizations from each county
- Metro’s regional capacity team conducted intentional, direct outreach to SHS providers through our fall 2024 outreach to nearly 200 service providers and via email and phone calls, to fill the pilot program.
- On-demand training programs are more immediately available than an introductory certificate program, and their virtual nature makes them more accessible to the region’s providers than an in-person course would be.
- Consider the impact and possible extended capacity that increasing awareness of already existing training programs might have on the providers offering said trainings.

Long-term possibilities

- Provide widespread regional access to the on-demand courses available through CSH and NAEH.
- Identify other organizations who offer these kind of training programs and make them available to the providers in the region.

Timeline and Milestones

Milestones will be shared in the TCPB’s monthly progress report.

It is anticipated that the items listed in the chart below will be completed by June 2025, including results and next steps, which will include recommendations on how Metro may scale this type of training program or identify additional strategies to providing training opportunities throughout the region.

Phase	Deliverables	Details/Steps	Responsible Party	Expected Completion
Pre-planning	Program development and ramp-up	1. Work with CSH and NAEH to be able to include their training programs in this iteration of the pilot. 2. Conduct intentional outreach to fill the program by presenting at coalitions and governmental	Metro	Q2 FY 24-25 (December 2024) <i>Complete</i>

		<p>working groups, direct emails, one-on-one conversations, and through a targeted email blast.</p> <p>3. Develop pilot participation matrix.</p> <p>4. Develop program operating procedures and policies.</p> <p>5. Develop pilot program communication plan, participant tracking spreadsheet, and program manual.</p>		
Pilot period	Pilot program active	<p>1. Identify two program participants per organization</p> <p>2. Have every program participant sign and complete the participation agreement and enroll in their CSH and NAEH courses.</p> <p>3. Track participant progress, verify that each survey is completed, and trouble shoot any technical difficulties.</p>	Metro	Q4 FY 24-25 (May 2025)
Post pilot	Development of the pilot report	<p>1. Analyze survey feedback data</p> <p>2. Identify recommendations for next steps, including potentially scaling the pilot</p> <p>3. Complete pilot report</p> <p>4. Release findings to pilot participants and other impacted parties</p>	Metro	Q4 FY 24-25 (June 2025)

Final Project Deliverables

- Develop an understanding of the usefulness of the on-demand programs offered by CSH and NAEH in providing adequate training to the region's front-line housing service worker workforce.
- A pilot report, providing recommendations for next steps based off feedback received from pilot program participants.

- Determination of whether a round 2 pilot is necessary or whether to consider scaling.
 - If a second iteration of the pilot does occur, the findings from the first round will help to guide subsequent efforts.

Budget

Description	Cost
NAEH Trainings (30 people)	\$5,600
CSH Trainings (30 people)	\$3,000
Total	\$8,600

Note: This budget is being funded by Metro's administrative funds and does NOT require RIF approval; budget subject to change based on RFP contracting processes. This program is currently a pilot. If the results demonstrate that it should be scaled, future funding will be determined.

Metrics

Goal	Metrics
Determine the effectiveness of the on-demand training programs offered by CSH and NAEH in meeting the training needs of the region's providers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From post course survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Percent of participants who agreed that the training content effectively prepare you for the responsibilities of a front-line housing service worker. ○ Percent of participants who feel confident in applying the skills learned from this course in a real-world housing service worker role. ● From post pilot survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Percent of participants who found that the training program prepared them for a front-line housing service worker role. ○ Percent of participants that found the skills and knowledge covered in the training course to be relevant and applicable to the challenges faced by front-line housing service workers. ○ Percent of participants who found the virtual format for delivering this type of training to be effective. ○ Percent of participants who would recommend this training program to others interested in a front-line housing service role.

Note: this is a pilot program and, if scaled, the metrics will mirror those of a more well-trained workforce, which appear in Implementation strategy #1.

HOLD: County specific trainings—RIF Requests

***Note:** This section will be updated before the June 2025 TCPB meeting with a RIF request to support each of the counties' regionally focused training programs for the coming fiscal year.*

Other implementation considerations

As Metro and the counties implement the training goal, there are additional potential program offerings that are under consideration. These strategies require additional research, scoping, development, and racial equity considerations, but we share them here for the TCPB's review and awareness as we consider the longer-term implementation of this goal.

Partnering with local workforce boards

The research to inform this implementation strategy document has demonstrated that partnering with our region's workforce boards (Clackamas Workforce Partnership in Clackamas County and Worksystems, Inc in Multnomah and Washington Counties) is a critical avenue to ensuring the partnership with a community college (outlined in Implementation Strategy 1), and any additional strategies, are sustainable. While this strategy is in its infancy, Metro and the counties are committed to further exploring this goal and keeping the TCPB updated on progress.

Workforce boards are federally mandated to oversee the development and ongoing improvement of their workforce development system, which can include strategic planning and creating accountability measures for the core programs required by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), creating best practices, coordinating career centers and creating a unified state plan. Oregon's workforce boards also have a directive from the state governor to design and integrate all systems involved in the workforce systems across the state, thus making them an important partner in the future development of this implementation strategy ensuring that it aligns with and complements the offerings region's employment system.

The strategy aims to collaboratively partner with workforce boards both as funders and system developers to leverage their network and resources (including WorkSource Oregon career centers). More specifically, the strategy is to **assist with the recruitment and job placement of students** into the community college HSWC course and area service providers while exploring opportunities to develop a sustainable system for the housing and homeless services industry.

While the initial iteration(s) of the micro-credential program will likely focus on cohorts of service workers that are currently working in the field to help train them and refine the course(s), **partnering with a workforce board may help with ongoing recruitment, internship and job placement services** for workers who are interested in a career change or have experienced homelessness. Workforce boards may also have the potential to support with gathering and integrating feedback for curriculum development and supporting the initial cohorts.

Workforce boards could bring several key additional resources to the program:

- The workforce board **career coaching network** is already regionally in place would pair program participants with a career coach to work with the student to set them up for success in a long-term career. This may include coordinating with the student support services available at the community college, assisting with the recruitment for the course itself, and providing job search support upon the completion of the course
- Workforce boards support **internship development and job placement**. As we consider scaling the community college program, or other potential training strategies into a regionwide workforce training program for frontline housing and homeless service workers, the workforce boards could develop internships with frontline providers so that the students gain real world experience in working with people experiencing homelessness. Additionally, the career coaches could support job placement for students, helping to develop a robust pipeline of talented employees to support this critical industry and supporting the development of a housing workforce system.
- Partnering with local workforce boards also brings the opportunity to **unlock additional federal and state funding** through the Workforce Innovations and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which provides federal funding for recognized eligible programs. This strategy could result in a sustainable source of funding for the training programs.

Beyond partnering with the workforce boards to support students in the proposed community college program, workforce boards have a track record of **collating and organizing individual trainings**, which may be an opportunity to better understand what trainings are happening regionally, and given their state mandate and positionality on workforce coordination are an important partner to continue engaging with.

Additional opportunities to scale existing regional trainings

A key goal of this project is to develop an understanding of the training programs that are currently available and being accessed by providers in the region. To honor the work currently being done, as well as effectively collaborate with training providers in the region, the Metro regional capacity team has undertaken efforts to develop a repository of the training programs that are currently available and being accessed by the providers in the region. Further developing this strategy will likely require additional analysis and surveying of community partners.

The goals of this project are to increase provider access to the trainings available in the region by increasing awareness, increase the number of regional training access points, and increase cross-jurisdictional training collaboration by raising provider access and knowledge to training opportunities throughout the region. This may include displaying these trainings on a central website or offering a scholarship program for providers to be able to access these already existing regional training opportunities.

Identifying housing service worker strategies in existing behavioral and community health certifications

This implementation strategy explores adding housing-specific curriculum to existing behavioral and community health certification training programs. There are six different Traditional Health Worker (THW) Certifications regulated by the Oregon Health Authority and five types of behavioral health certifications offered by the Mental Health and Addiction Board of Oregon (MHACBO).

This strategy specifically focuses on the following THW certifications: Peer Support Specialist (PSS), Peer Wellness Specialist (PWS) and Community Health Worker (CHW). Also included is the Certified Recovery Mentor (CRM) through the MHACBO. A CRM is same as the PSS or PWS, they are all peer roles and either the PSS or PWS training can also certify a person as a CRM. The PSS, PWS, CHW and CRM certifications are selected because of their relevance to the housing services field and because agencies providing housing services are already certifying staff in these roles.

These existing certifications have overlapping course content with the housing service worker certification training requirements identified by the jurisdictions and providers. The content missing is mostly related to housing-specific job functions like housing navigation, history of local housing and data as it relates to housing. The goal is to create housing specific curriculum to add to an existing training program.

Possible implementation options include:

- Creating housing-specific curriculum to add to the initial certification training programs for existing CHW, PSS and PWS trainings or to new trainings created.
- Creating a housing-specific Continuing Education Unit (CEU) since each certification requires CEUs to keep current on the certification.

Adding housing content to existing community and behavioral healthcare certifications either in the initial training or as a customized housing-specific CEU could provide several benefits:

- The above certifications allow an agency to bill Medicaid for services rendered. This strategy could potentially open additional opportunities for service providers to unlock new layers of funding while supporting clients with their housing needs.
- More flexibility with training requirements and easy to scale due to the Oregon Health Authority's curriculum development framework and certification requirements.
- An immediate opportunity for those offering THW trainings to provide individuals pursuing certification or recertifying with housing-specific training.
- Prioritizes providing housing-specific training to individuals with lived experience of addiction and mental health disorders, who are often working with clients who are housing adjacent.
- The trainings can be customized to the organization providing it (a train-the-trainer model). OHA sets a rubric then allows organizations to create customized, tailored and often culturally specific training within that rubric. This could lead to a network of instructors throughout the region who are able to provide training for front-line housing service workers (with an emphasis on identifying BIPOC instructors, and instructors for organizations who offer culturally specific services).

Throughout the implementation of this strategy, Metro and the counties will also be exploring the process of partnering with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), Mental Health and Addiction Certification Board of Oregon (MHACBO) and the organizations who provide these trainings (for example, Mental Health and Addiction Association of Oregon and Cascadia Health who provide peer trainings, or OCHIN and Oregon Community Health Workers Association who provide Community Health Worker training). The end goal of this strategy would be for peer providers and Community Health Workers, roles which are often housing adjacent, to have the tools they need to support clients with their housing and homelessness needs.

Appendix A:

Housing Service Worker Certification and Research Project Training Survey Results

February 2025

Overview

Metro housing department's regional capacity team conducted a survey between October 2024 and January 2025 amongst the region's housing and homeless direct service providers. The survey focused on identifying whether the potential course descriptions and training curriculum Metro and the counties developed for the Housing Service Worker certification program matched provider needs.

This document outlines:

- **Outreach and engagement**, including an overview of who the Metro regional capacity team presented to.
- **Provider rank of needs** regarding training.
- **Other priorities to consider** when developing new training or training curriculum.
- **Provider feedback on the five possible HSWC subject areas**
- **Additional content and considerations** as Metro and the counties consider implementing a training curriculum
- **A cross comparison of the HSWC curriculum courses** and where they are currently being hosted based on provider feedback.

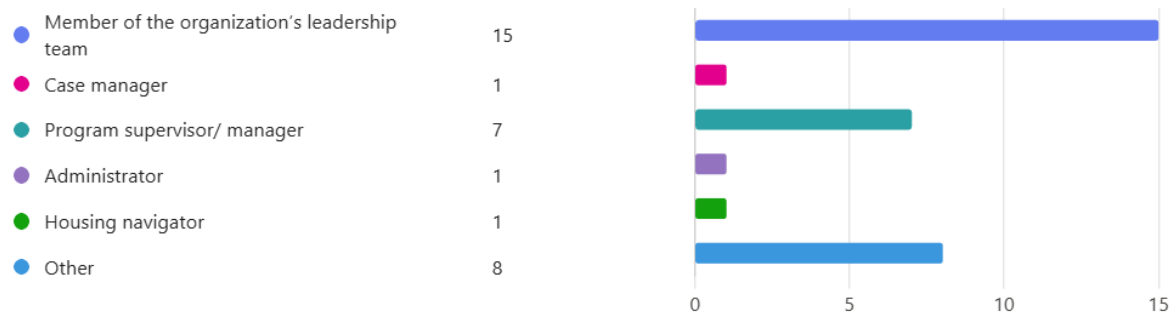
Outreach and engagement

In the fall of 2024, Metro housing department's regional capacity team engaged with nearly 200 providers by presenting to various coalition and county SHS advisory committee bodies. The survey was shared during these meetings and circulated afterward to participants. It was also shared via mailing lists by coalition partners such as Here Together, Housing Oregon, Portland Housing Bureau, as well as by the counties through Washington County's Housing and Supportive Services Network (HSSN) and Clackamas County's Supportive Housing Services Work group. In total, 32 different providers responded to the survey. The Metro regional capacity team recognizes that this is a small sample size, however, there is diverse representation within this sample, with representation from each county, various staff roles, and various types of service providers.

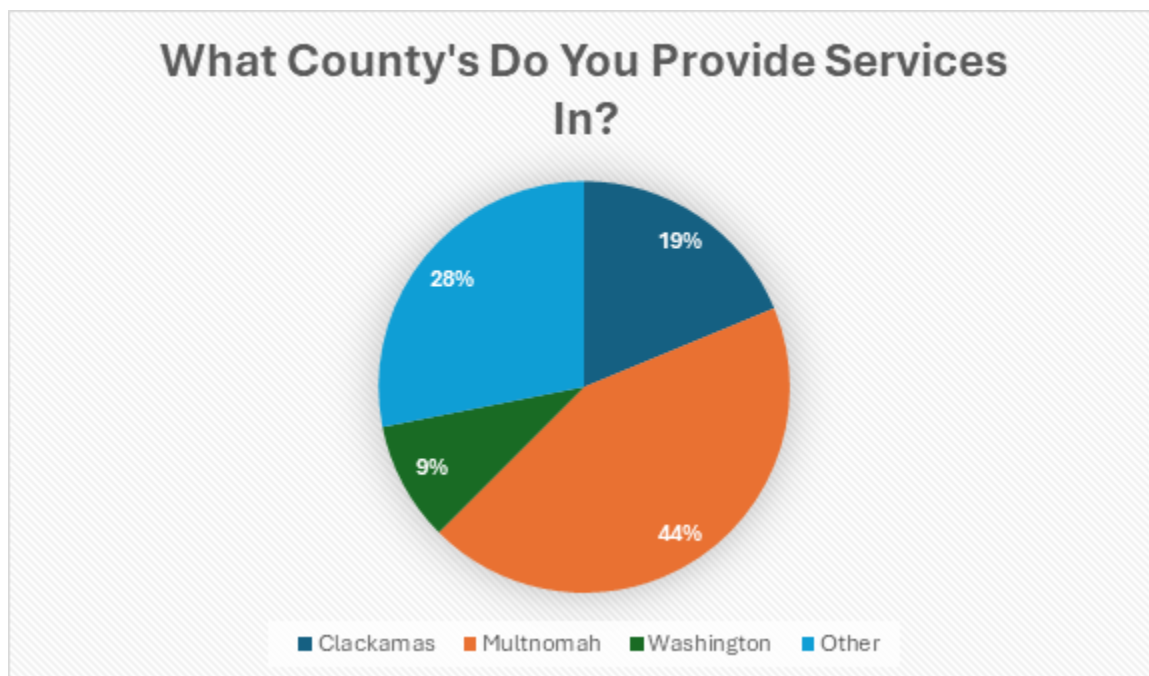
The Metro regional capacity team also recognizes that a large number of survey respondents identified themselves as being leaders within their organization, rather than case manager or direct service staff. Only one self-identified culturally specific provider responded to the survey. To ensure that the feedback from frontline service employees is more prevalent in future outreach efforts and that there is greater representation from culturally specific providers, the Metro regional capacity team will be exploring working more closely with the Metro Communications team, who may have more strategies for reaching these populations.

In the survey the Metro regional capacity team heard from program managers, case managers, executive directors, housing navigators and more. The breakdown can be found below.

Other respondents included Housing Mediation Support Specialists, Resident Services, Intake Services, ODHS Child Welfare, McKinney-Vento Liaison and Children in Foster Care Point of Contact. Some respondents selected more than one organizational role, reflecting the various responsibilities shouldered by individuals in this field.

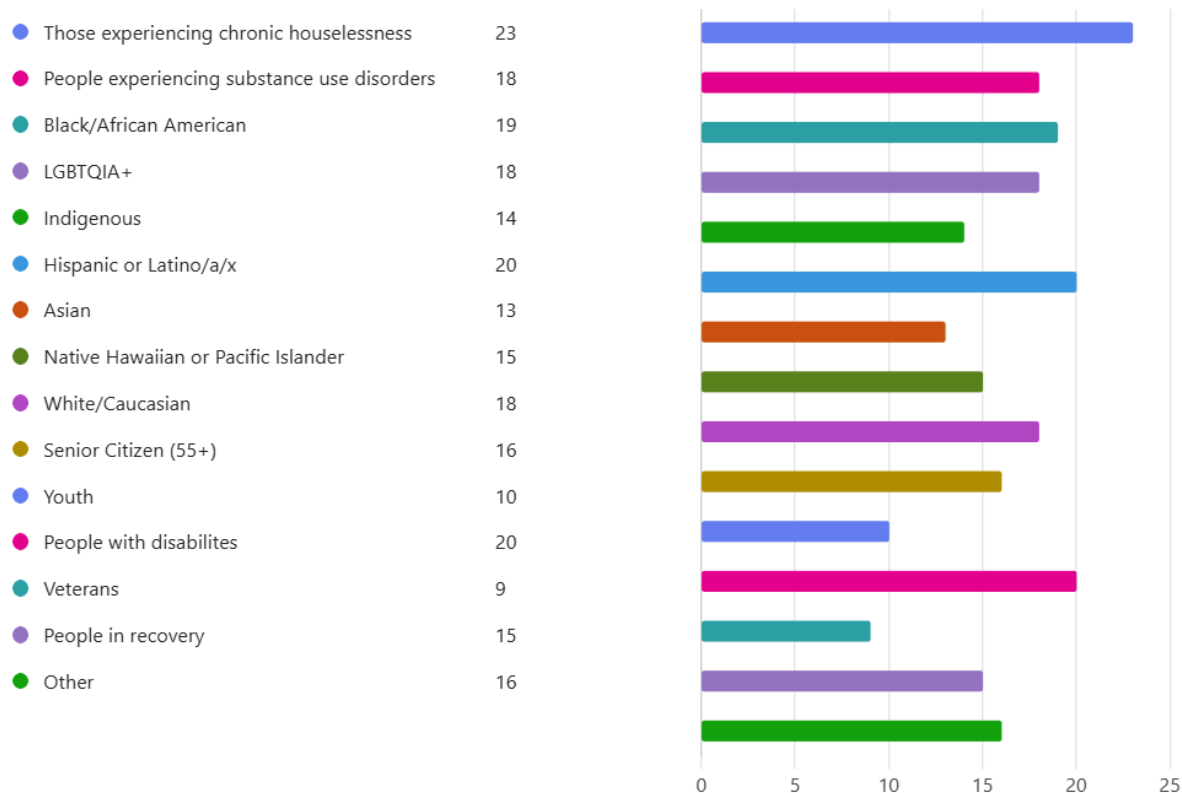


There was geographic representation with providers from all three counties participating in the survey—with 6 respondents being from Clackamas County, 14 respondents from Multnomah County and 3 respondents from Washington County. There were several participants who serve clients in more than one county and some who currently do not hold contracts which were categorized as “other,” and had 9 respondents. See the graphic below for a numeric breakdown.



Providers also identified the populations they serve at their organization. The image below is a graph that shows which populations the providers work with. Overall, the providers supported people

experiencing chronic houselessness, BIPOC communities, people with disabilities, people experiencing substance use disorder with other populations including domestic or sexual violence survivors, families, people with employment barriers, and children. A full breakdown can be found in the graph below.



Provider rank of needs

In this section, providers were asked to rank from a pre-populated list what they believed to be the most important for the Metro regional capacity team to consider when creating new training. All 32 survey respondents answered this question. The list below highlights their responses to the prompt.

1. “There are early level trainings available that provide my newer staff with a clear understanding of the fundamental requirements of providing services to people experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness.” **37.5 percent of the providers listed this as being their first most important for consideration when creating a new training course.**
2. “There are basic, on demand trainings on subjects like trauma-informed care or culturally responsive street outreach my staff can access at any point.” **34.4 percent of the providers listed this as being their second most important for consideration when creating a new training course.**
3. “There are continuing education trainings available for my more seasoned staff to sharpen their skills in service delivery. There is a specialized certificate that shows which trainings have been completed and can be recognized across agencies (may not include college credit).” **31.3**

percent of the providers listed this as being the third most important for consideration when creating a new training course.

4. "Training is accessible in person and regularly offered at various locations throughout the region." **28.1 percent of the providers listed this as being the fourth most important for consideration when creating a new training course.**
5. "There is a specialized certificate that shows which trainings have been completed and can be recognized across agencies (may not include college credit)." **50 percent of the providers listed this as being second to least important for consideration when creating a new training program.**
6. "There is college credit associated with the training program." **75 percent of the providers listed this as the least important for consideration when creating a new training program.**

Other priorities that Metro should consider

After the previous question, where providers were given a range of options to choose from, the providers were able to write out responses and share other priorities that Metro should consider when creating a new training curriculum. Some of the common themes included Metro being aware of what trainings are being offered and are required by counties, wage increases for completion of trainings, culturally specific trainings, and housing navigation trainings.

Themes:

- **Wage increases and professional development** since the possibility of a certificate or schooling is mentioned, providers were interested in how this would advance their careers in this field and support increases in wages.
- **Housing and benefits navigation** for providers to better connect their clients to what they need including Social Security Income/Social Security Disability Income (SSI/SSDI)
- **Culturally competent/population specific trainings** for providers to better be able to understand and serve their BIPOC and other diverse populations. There was also an ask for training that was specific to supporting younger populations. Honor the expertise of culturally specific providers and increase the cultural responsiveness of providers who receive training from culturally specific providers/curriculum.
- **Mental health and substance use specific training.** Providers would like training that includes what questions to ask folks when you are doing outreach, and how to deal with clients who have high needs, behavioral health needs and/or in recovery.
- **Training is accessible** in more ways than one. Providers not only want this training course to be something they can take on-demand or in a classroom, they also want it available in different languages.

Additional considerations

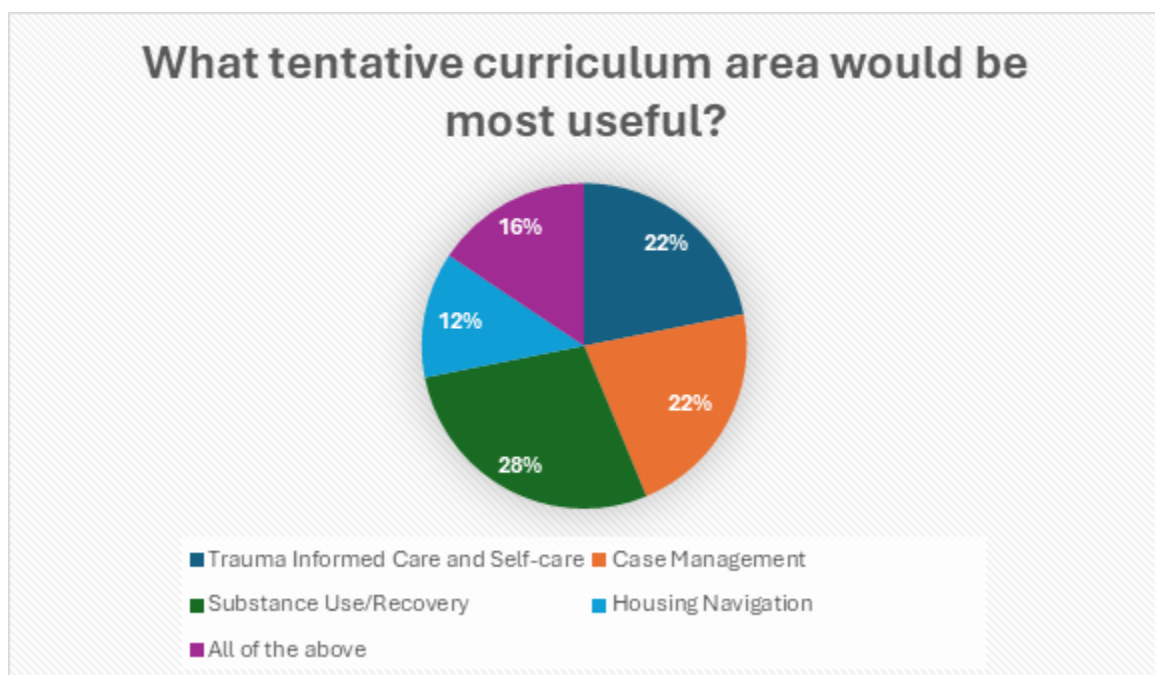
After sharing their feedback on the available trainings, providers were asked what additional content would be helpful to include considering what had already been described in each training course. Providers highlighted the need for a focus on youth, advanced training for staff, behavioral health and mental health first aid, and a few others.

Themes:

- **No one size fits all training.** Providers noted that none of these training courses by themselves would solve everything for providers. They need continued training to continue to grow in their work and meet client needs.
- **How to support different houseless populations.** Providers serve several different houseless populations, so training that can help teach them how to serve youth and LGBTQIA+ for example would be helpful.
- **Advanced training for staff.** Providers noted that while basic training would be helpful for some, a lot of providers have been doing this work for a long time and need more advanced training to continue to do good work.
- **Culturally specific training** to better support their BIPOC clients and to understand the difficulties they face when finding housing, entering housing and maintaining housing.

What tentative subject area would be most useful?

When providers were asked what they thought would be the most useful subject, many of them stated that they serve diverse populations and that all these training courses are important. Some highlighted the importance of housing navigation and case management while others highlighted the need for substance use and trauma-informed care courses. The graph below shows the percentage of providers that highlighted each subject they felt would be most useful.



Subjects that were named to be most useful.

- 28% of providers thought that Substance Use/Recovery was the most useful.

- **22%** of providers thought that both Case Management and Trauma Informed Care/Self-care were the most useful.
- **16%** of the providers thought that all the subjects were useful.
- **12%** of the providers thought that Housing Navigation was most useful.

The Five Subject Areas for Consideration

The providers were presented with five subject areas for training consideration, which Metro and the Counties co-developed. These training areas were:

- Substance Use Recovery and Mental Health,
- Housing Service Worker Case Management,
- Basics of Housing System Navigation,
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion,
- Trauma-Informed Care and Self-Care.

Each course description was accompanied by a list of the possible learning outcomes that had been identified for each topic.

The providers were asked three questions:

- Does this align with your work?
- What edits or feedback do you have on the subject areas,
- What trainings are you currently administering in each subject area, both directly in house or through external partnerships/contracts.?

In response to the first question, while providers shared feedback on what subjects to include in certain ones and not others (e.g. not including addiction in trauma-informed care), **there was universal support for the subject areas as laid out.**

In response to the second and third questions, Metro staff integrated their feedback into the subject areas and **the red line version of those edits can be found below (in other words, everything the providers added to the original course descriptions is included in red)**. Staff also tabulated the trainings providers conduct in house along with research on other local training courses (included below).

Housing Service Worker Case Management

The Housing Service Worker Case Management subject area would equip front-line housing service workers with the skills necessary for effective case management. By exploring the history of housing issues in Oregon and current strategies to address inequities, participants would gain insights into effective case planning, motivational interviewing, and working with specific populations, enhancing their ability to offer comprehensive and empathetic and culturally appropriate support. This subject area would cover maintaining client confidentiality and ethical standards, as well as essential areas such as benefits navigation. This subject area would also address practical aspects of client care, including managing bed bugs and lice, and understanding hoarding behaviors.

Learning outcomes may include:

- Benefits Navigation
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, AKA “Food stamps”)
 - The Supplemental Income Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
 - Supplemental Security Income/Social Security Disability Insurance (SSI/SSDI)
 - Oregon Health Plan (OHP)
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - ID/Birth Certificate assistance
 - Housing Vouchers
 - Energy Assistance
 - **Employment services**
- Financial Wellness/Education
- Data
 - Google Suite/Microsoft Office
 - HMIS
 - Community Services
- Causes of Homelessness/poverty
- Fundamentals of Case Management including:
 - Assertive Engagement (including strength-based approach and unconditional positive regard)
 - Motivational Interviewing
 - Power Dynamics
 - Progressive Assistance
 - Conflict Resolution/Crisis Intervention
 - Ethics and Conflict of Interest
 - Financial Education
 - Strength-based approach (a component of Assertive Engagement)
 - **Barrier reduction**
- History of Housing in Oregon/Portland 101
 - Particular focus placed on Oregon’s history of systemic racism in housing
 - **Unconditional positive regard (a component of Assertive Engagement)**

Basics of Housing System Navigation

The "Basics of Housing System Navigation" subject area would be designed to empower front-line housing service workers with foundational knowledge and practical skills for navigating complex housing systems. Participants would gain insights into the intricacies of affordable housing, including the application of various types of housing vouchers and the principles of Housing First. This subject area would cover critical topics such as the causes of homelessness and poverty (generally), emergency response planning, and the application of trauma-informed approaches when addressing domestic

violence and other crises. Additionally, attendees would learn about community resources, fair housing laws, and the history of housing issues in Oregon and Portland, which are crucial for effective housing navigation and client advocacy in the Portland-metro area. With a focus on housing solutions and rapid rehousing, participants would also become proficient in managing paperwork and understanding income eligibility for subsidized housing.

Learning outcomes may include:

- Housing systems, including:
 - Housing vouchers
 - Federal housing funding
 - Regional Long-term Rent Assistance (RLRA) vouchers
 - Section 8 Vouchers
 - Project Based Vouchers (PBV)
 - Types of Housing, including:
 - Income restricted apartments
 - Fair market apartments
 - Supportive Housing
 - Affordable Housing
 - Housing Authority
 - Federal Housing Funding
 - Fair housing law
 - Eviction Navigation/Prevention
 - Eviction expungement
 - Rapid Rehousing
 - Permanent Support Housing
 - Reasonable accommodations
 - Oregon Landlord/Tenant law
 - McKinney-Vento
 - Cross-sector collaboration
 - Navigating the shelter system
- Causes of Homelessness/Poverty (generally)
- Coordinated Entry
- History of Housing in Oregon/Portland 201
- The Principles of Housing First
- Housing Navigation Practices
- Sustainability in housing
- Domestic violence
- Housing for individuals with a criminal record

- Tenant organizing/tenant rights

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" subject area would be designed for front-line housing service workers to deepen their understanding and application of inclusive practices in their daily work. Participants would explore the fundamentals of diversity, equity, and inclusion, including cultural humility and the importance of cultural responsiveness in supporting clients from various identity groups. This subject area addresses implicit bias, power dynamics, and the ethics of working with diverse populations, emphasizing respect for lived experiences.

Learning outcomes may include:

- Fundamentals of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, including:
 - Cultural Humility,
 - Culturally Responsive
 - TIC Mandatory Reporting,
 - Working with people with intersectional identities
 - LGBTQ2IA+ content
- Harm Reduction
- Honoring Lived Experience
- Implicit Bias
- History of racial exclusion in Oregon
- Power Dynamics
- Self-Awareness

Trauma-Informed Care and Self-Care

The "Trauma-Informed Care and Self-Care" subject area would be crafted for front-line housing service workers to provide essential strategies for both client support and personal well-being. This subject area would focus on the foundations of Trauma-Informed Care, teaching participants how to apply trauma-sensitive approaches when working with individuals experiencing homelessness, poverty, domestic violence, substance use disorder, and other significant challenges. Emphasis is placed on developing robust self-care practices to combat compassion fatigue and maintain resilience. This subject area would also cover practical aspects such as creating safer spaces, integrating harm reduction principles, and understanding power dynamics, equipping service workers with the skills to support both themselves and their clients effectively.

Learning outcomes may include:

- Coping strategies.
- Boundary Setting

- Compassion Fatigue
- Foundations of Trauma-Informed Care and Trauma Intervention Programs
- Person Centered Thinking
- Safer Spaces and Planning
- Self-Care
- Employee Resiliency and Self-Care
- Resiliency
- Self-Awareness
- Access to recovery supports
- Secondary trauma

Substance Use, Recovery, and Mental Health

The "Substance use, Recovery, and Mental Health" subject area for front-line housing service workers would provide essential tools and strategies to effectively support individuals facing complex mental health/substance use disorder challenges. Participants would explore crucial topics such as crisis intervention and emergency response protocol, including planning and procedures for handling urgent situations. Additionally, the subject area would cover life skills development and building resiliency to empower both clients and service providers in navigating the recovery journey.

Learning outcomes may include:

- Boundary Setting
- Bystander Intervention
- Crisis Intervention
- De-escalation
- Conflict Resolution
- Emergency Response; Emergency Action Planning and Procedures:
 - Naloxone administration,
 - First aid,
 - CPR,
 - Mental health first aid
 - Critical time intervention
 - Seeking Safety
 - Bloodborne pathogens
- Fundamentals of Harm Reduction
- Navigating mental health and recovery resources, including:
 - Treatment options based on insurance
 - Recovery housing options
 - Housing with mental health support
 - Outpatient and inpatient services

- Public health resources
- Common substances found in shelter
- Common mental health disorders
- Relapse and relapse prevention
- Wellness Recovery Action Plans (W.R.A.P.)
- Orientation to Recovery community
- Support and self-help groups
- Medication-assisted treatment (MAT)

Local course offerings

During this survey we asked providers which of these trainings they were offering in-house or via third party. The following tables show a somewhat comprehensive list of what the agencies who took this training are accessing and in which counties. The tables are broken down by potential course area.

Substance Use Recovery and Mental Health

Training	Number of agencies offering	Counties agencies are offering this training (C=Clackamas, M=Multnomah, W=Washington)
Boundary Setting	10	C,M,W
Bystander Intervention	4	M
Crisis Intervention	8	C,M,W
Conflict Resolution	9	C,M,W
Emergency Response	7	C,M,W
Fundamentals of Harm Reduction	5	M
Naloxone (Administration)	9	C,M,W
First Aid	9	C,M,W
CPR	9	C,M,W

Basics of Housing Case Management

Training	Number of agencies offering	Counties agencies are offering this training (C=Clackamas, M=Multnomah, W=Washington)
Benefits Navigation	4	M,W
SNAP	2	M
WIC	2	M
Social Security Disability Insurance	3	M
OHP	3	M
TANF	2	M

ID/Birth Certificate Assistance	3	M
Housing Vouchers	5	C,W,M
Energy Assistance	5	C,M,W
Financial Wellness/Education	6	C,M,W
Data	4	C,M,W
HMIS	5	C,M,W
Google Suite/Microsoft Office	3	C,M,W
Community Services	3	M
Causes of homelessness/poverty	2	M
Fundamentals of case management	3	M
Assertive Engagement	6	C,M,W
Motivation Interviewing	4	M
Power Dynamics	4	M
Progressive Assistance	4	C,M,W
Conflict Resolution/ Crisis Intervention	6	C,M,W
Ethics and Conflict of Interest	4	C,M,W
Financial Education	5	C,M,W
Strengths-based Approach	4	C,M,W
History of Housing in Oregon/Portland 101	2	M
Oregon's History of Systemic Racism in housing	3	M

Basics of Housing Navigation

Training	Number of agencies offering	Counties agencies are offering this training (C=Clackamas, M=Multnomah, W=Washington)
Housing Systems	5	M
Housing Vouchers	6	C,M,W
Fair Housing Law	8	C,M,W
Eviction Navigation/Prevention	8	C,M,W
Rapid Re-housing	9	C,M,W
Permanent Supportive Housing	6	C,M,W
Causes of homelessness/poverty	4	M
Coordinated Entry	7	C,M,W
History of Housing in Oregon/Portland 201	3	M
The Principles of Housing First	6	C,M,W

Housing Navigation Practices	6	C,M,W
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Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Training	Number of agencies offering	Counties agencies are offering this training (C=Clackamas, M=Multnomah, W=Washington)
Fundamentals of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	9	M
Cultural Humility	5	C,M,W
Culturally Responsive	5	C,M,W
Mandatory Reporting	5	M
Working w/ people w/ intersectional identities	5	M
Harm Reduction	6	M
Honoring Lived Experience	5	M
Implicit Bias	8	C,M,W
Power Dynamics	6	M

Trauma Informed Care and Self Care

Training	Number of agencies offering	Counties agencies are offering this training (C=Clackamas, M=Multnomah, W=Washington)
Coping Strategies	5	C,M,W
Boundary Setting	7	C,M,W
Compassion Fatigue	8	C,M,W
Foundations of Trauma-Informed Care	7	C,M,W
Trauma Intervention Programs	4	M
Person Centered Thinking	6	C,M,W
Safer Spaces and Planning	4	C,M,W
Self-Care	8	C,M,W
Employee Resiliency and Self-care	6	C,M,W
Resiliency	5	C,M,W

Appendix B:

On-Demand Training Pilot Program Participation Matrix

Purpose

This document provides the selection matrix which will be used to determine the organizations that participate in the Metro regional capacity team's (RCT) On-Demand Training Pilot Program.

This matrix centers both racial equity and data by:

- Prioritizing participation from diverse communities throughout the Portland Metro region and,
- Utilizing the [Point-in-Time Count data](#) to inform the contents of the framework.

Framework

Use the below guidance to determine which organizations to enroll into the On-Demand Training Program pilot program (10 spots available):

1. **AT LEAST** three agencies should provide culturally-specific services to individuals in any of the following communities:
 - a. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
 - b. Hispanic/Latinx
 - c. African American
 - d. American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous
 - e. Asian or Asian American

**We will strive to ensure that the three culturally specific agencies provide services to three different cultural groups*

2. **AT LEAST** three organizations should provide services to individuals in any of the following categories:
 - a. Individuals experiencing chronic homelessness
 - b. Homeless Families
 - c. DV
 - d. Disability
 - e. Senior
 - f. Immigrant/Refugee
 - g. LGBTQIA2S+
 - h. Homeless youth
3. **We will strive to have at least** organization that has an operating budget from each of the below categories:
 - a. Small Organizations: Less than \$1 million
 - b. Medium Organizations: \$1million - \$5 million
 - c. Large Organizations: \$5 million+

4. Geographic Representation: **We will strive to have at least two agencies providing services in each county represented**

Appendix C:

Racial Equity Lens Application

Note: This appendix outlines the two distinct Racial Equity Lens Tool (RELT) exercises that were conducted to develop the training implementation strategy. The first was conducted by Metro Housing Department's Regional Capacity Team (RCT) at the outset of the project research in fall 2024 and the second, based off that initial RELT, was conducted with Metro Housing Department's Regional Capacity Team and representatives from each county in April 2025.

Both exercises used the Joint Office of Homeless Services/Multnomah County Homeless Services Department Racial Equity Lens tool.

As mentioned above, Metro and the counties are committed to conducting racial equity lens analyses at critical junctures in this project, including reviewing strategies as they move forward and before launching strategies beyond building a program at a community college.

Metro Internal Racial Equity Lens (Fall 2024)

Introduction

This report provides an overview of the Fall 2024 Housing Service Worker Certification and Research Project (HSWC) Racial Equity Lens (REL) exercise and highlights the recommendations for the future design/implementation of the project. This report also outlines distinct tasks and staff responsibilities to implement each recommendation, provides an implementation framework to ensure the successful application of all findings, and provides a process for long-term project tracking.

In addition to guiding the work of the Regional Capacity Team (RCT), this report is meant to inform the expectations and deliverables of the racial equity lens application process within the Metro Housing Department.

Methodology

Metro's regional capacity team used the Joint Office of Homeless Services' (JOHS) Racial Equity Lens tool on the HSWC program as a whole and, more specifically, the HSWC Research Paper which serves as the basis for HSWC design and implementation. The HSWC REL exercise team was comprised of members from the Metro regional capacity team (RCT), including:

- Cole Merkel (Supervising Manager)
- Daisy Nguyen (Technical Assistance Program Manager)
- Justin Barrieault (Training Program Manager)
- Melia Deters (Program Coordinator)

- Finnegan Budd (Program Assistant)

A total of three meetings were held to both complete the HSWC REL exercise and debrief the program team:

- HSWC REL meeting #1: Wednesday October 9th, 2024 (2 hours)
- HSWC REL meeting #2: Wednesday October 23rd, 2024 (1 hour)
- HSWC REL debrief: Tuesday December 3rd, 2024 (1 hour) *

*Finnegan Budd wasn't able to attend this meeting, but Ash Elverfeld, who was on leave during the first two REL sessions, was in attendance.

Findings

Recommendations from the HSWC REL exercise are organized into 4 high-level topic areas:

1. HSWC Research Paper
2. Outreach and Engagement
3. HSWC Design (community college strategy)
4. HSWC Implementation (community college strategy)

The specific recommendations from each topic area have been provided below. Each recommendation is accompanied by an explanation of how implementation of this action will advance racial equity.

HSWC Research Paper

Finding #1: Include demographic information and information on populations served by all organizations/institutions identified as a possible strategy for implementation.

How will this advance racial equity?

Any institution that Metro chooses to partner with to pilot the HSWC must equitably serve the Portland metro population, and not provide services primarily to the dominant culture population at the exclusion of other communities. Developing an understanding of the demographics served by each institution will allow Metro to identify the organization(s) that serve BIPOC/marginalized communities. These organizations will have a better understanding of the systemic barriers that these populations face, may have culturally specific services in place already, and will better allow these populations to foster community.

Finding #2: Include research on implementation strategies in each of the 3 jurisdictions.

How will this advance racial equity?

In order for the HSWC to be implemented effectively and equitably, it is important to understand the possible barriers to implementation that might arise. Developing an understanding of the possible challenges to implementation in each county will allow the HSWC project team to plan accordingly, and lead to more equitable outcomes and provision of services to the most marginalized communities in all three jurisdictions.

Finding #3: Be aware of the systemic barriers that hosting the program at an institution of higher education, and research other implementation strategies.

How will this advance racial equity?

It is well known that the cost, lack of support, and overt racial discrimination present within the higher education system have created barriers for students of color from enrolling in (and graduating from) these institutions. Furthermore, pipelines feeding into higher education have been marred by systemic racism, and to this day continue to privilege dominant culture individuals.

It is important to research other implementation methods outside of the higher education sector to address this disparity and create multiple points of access for individuals who are interested in enrolling into the HSWC.

Outreach and Engagement

Finding #1: Develop a framework for which communities we would specifically like to include feedback from throughout HSWC design/implementation.

How will this advance racial equity?

To ensure that the HSWC project is responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable communities in our region, it is important to include feedback from these populations throughout the design, implementation, and assessment of the project. Therefore, developing a framework for whose feedback should be specifically included into the program will allow the HSWC project team to engage in more targeted outreach efforts in order to ensure that the voices of these communities are present.

Finding #2: Explore how to work more closely with the Metro Comms team for future outreach and engagement.

How will this advance racial equity?

While the HSWC outreach and engagement plan that was developed by the RCT HSWC project team was robust, and served its purpose well, it was not created by communications/outreach professionals, and did not include any pedagogical techniques that have been proven to be effective. Furthermore, it is very possible that some outreach channels were missed, due to the RCT's lack of knowledge of their presence in our region.

It is the hope that connecting with the Metro Comms team will help the RCT HSWC project team to develop outreach and communications plans/tactics that will more effectively reach BIPOC communities (and communities of color) in the Portland metro region for future iterations of outreach.

Finding #3: Develop methodology to include feedback from program participants

How will this advance racial equity?

The outcomes of the HSWC will directly affect individuals who receive homeless services from providers. Including feedback from individuals who receive these services will help the RCT HSWC project team developing programming that more effectively meets the needs of program participants in our region. This is particularly important as the most recent [Point-in-Time Count](#) data demonstrates the racial disparities currently present in Oregon's homelessness population.

Finding #4: Conduct individual outreach efforts to culturally specific providers.

How will this advance racial equity?

This will help to ensure that any curriculum/deliverables produced by the HSWC will meet the needs of BIPOC communities (and communities of color) in the Portland metro region.

HSWC Design

Finding #1: Ensure HSWC accessibility (ex: language, price, location).

How will this advance racial equity?

This will help to ensure that any curriculum/deliverables produced by the HSWC will be widely accessible to all communities within the region, regardless of the individuals' access to internet, location of residence, or language spoken.

Finding #2: Include region-specific education in the curriculum.

How will this advance racial equity?

This will help to ensure that any curriculum/deliverables produced by the HSWC is responsive and relevant to the strategies already being implemented by each jurisdiction (and the region as a whole). This will allow for specific education relevant to the services being offered in the individual's location of work.

Finding #3: Include input from culturally specific providers throughout the curriculum development process.

How will this advance racial equity?

This will help to ensure that any curriculum/deliverables produced by the HSWC will meet the needs of BIPOC communities (and communities of color) in the Portland metro region.

Finding #4: Intentionally develop programs to serve immigrant communities and communities of color.

How will this advance racial equity?

This will help to ensure that any curriculum/deliverables produced by the HSWC will meet the needs of immigrant communities and communities of color in the Portland metro region.

Finding #5: Help providers to scale-up existing trainings (identification).

How will this advance racial equity?

It is important to honor trainings programs that already exist in our region, particularly those offering culturally specific trainings. Identifying these will allow the HSWC project team to develop an action plan to elevate the impact and accessibility of these training programs, as well as possible including aspects of them into the HSWC.

HSWC Implementation

Finding #1: Identify BIPOC, local, instructors who work for culturally specific organizations to teach the curriculum.

How will this advance racial equity?

Ensuring that we have a diverse pool of HSWC instructors will make the course more approachable/desirable to communities who might be wary to enroll at an institution of higher

education and receive instruction from a member of the dominant culture. Receiving instruction from someone who shares your identity can help to increase the impact and effectiveness of the course as well.

Finding #2: Help local providers to scale-up existing trainings (implementation).

How will this advance racial equity?

It is important to honor trainings programs that already exist in our region, particularly those offering culturally specific trainings. Having identified the region's already existing trainings (above), the RCT HSWC project team may develop a framework that will allow for these to be scaled up and made more accessible and possibly incorporated into the HSWC.

Finding #3: Explore train – the – trainer models.

How will this advance racial equity?

Train-the-trainer models could allow for more organizations to offer the HSWC program. This will help to increase the amount of access points for this training and increase accessibility throughout the region.

Implementation of Recommendations

To ensure that the findings from the HSWC REL exercise are implemented, and that these recommendations, once implemented, achieve their desired impact, policies and procedures in the following areas must be standardized and agreed upon by members of the RCT:

- Project check-in procedures
- Staff roles/responsibilities,
- Project timelines
- Tracking methodology
- Framework for impact assessment

This section provides a framework for each of these practices, as well as elaborates on methodology that can be utilized to help ensure accountability and follow through from the RCT.

HSWC Weekly Meetings

RCT staff will utilize the weekly recurring HSWC project check-in meeting to assign, manage, and assess the findings from the HSWC REL application. A standing agenda item (REL report check-in) will be added to the weekly check-in meeting, dedicating 15-20 min per meeting for this project.

The RCT HSWC project team will utilize this dedicated time in the following ways:

1. Assign staff roles and responsibilities
2. Check-in on progress and achievements
3. Develop strategies, action items, and timelines for the implementation of each finding
4. Problem-solve any roadblocks that might pop up
5. Assess impact post implementation to determine if the desired outcome has been achieved

The weekly cadence of this meeting will help to hold staff accountable for completing tasks/providing updates on a regular basis and will also provide space for collaborative problem-solving and team coordination.

Staff Assignments

As stated above, the HSWC weekly project meeting will serve as a space to assign staff roles in the implementation of HSWC REL findings. This will be done in a way that not only honors staff capacity and ability to devote time to this project, but in a manner which also prioritizes professional development and skill refinement relating the development, implementation, and assessment of equitable outcomes.

Prior to staff assignment in the weekly HSWC meeting, the RCT Manager and RCT Training Program Manager will meet to discuss possible assignments based on staff capacity and current skillsets. This can occur during the already existing weekly check-in between these two staff.

During HSWC weekly, staff responsibilities will be assigned and the HSWC project team will decide upon a realistic project timeline.

Prioritization of Recommendations

In order to organize implementation efforts, HSWC REL recommendations have been categorized into the 3 sections elaborated below. Recommendations were organized based on overall project timelines relating to the design and implementation of the HSWC program.

Prioritization Category #1: Immediate Implementation

Only recommendations that have an already established implementation timeline in the near future (within 1-month of this writing) have been categorized into this section.

Findings in this category include:

- Research paper finding #1: Include demographic information and information on populations served by all organizations/institutions identified as a possible strategy for implementation.
- Research paper finding #3: Be aware of the systemic barriers that hosting the program at an institution of higher education, and research other implementation strategies.

Both of these findings have already been discussed by the RCT HSWC project team, with staff responsibilities and project timelines having already been established.

Prioritization Category #2: Future Strategies

Recommendations in this category cannot be implemented at this moment, due to the current progress of HSWC design and implementation. For example, many of the recommendations in this section cannot be implemented until the HSWC curriculum development process has begun.

Findings in this category include:

1. HSWC design recommendation #1: Ensure HSWC accessibility (ex: language, price, location)
2. HSWC design recommendation #2: Include region-specific education in the curriculum

3. HSWC design recommendation #3: Include input from culturally specific providers throughout the curriculum development process
4. HSWC design recommendation #4: Intentionally develop programs to serve immigrant communities.
5. HSWC Implementation recommendation #1: Identify BIPOC, local, instructors who work for culturally specific organizations to teach the curriculum.
6. Research paper recommendation #2: Include research on implementation strategies in each of the 3 jurisdictions by speaking specifically with providers in each region to understand any barriers that we could run into during implementation.

The HSWC weekly check-in REL process has been designed to specifically ensure that these recommendations, which may not be able to be implemented for months, are not forgotten about. The weekly meeting cadence will allow the HSWC project team to continually check-in on these findings, and the dedicated REL agenda item will make space for the collaborative design of an implementation plan/timeline for each.

Prioritization Category #3: Unassigned Recommendations

Recommendations in this category have yet to be planned out and discussed by the RCT and are not dependent on the current progress of HSWC design/implementation.

Findings in this category include:

- Outreach and Engagement recommendation #1: Develop a framework for which communities we would specifically like to include feedback from throughout HSWC design/implementation
- Outreach and Engagement recommendation #2: Explore how to work more closely with the Metro Comms team for future engagement
- Outreach and Engagement recommendation #3: Develop methodology to include feedback from program participants
- Outreach and Engagement recommendation #4: Conduct individual outreach efforts to culturally specific providers
- HSWC Design recommendation #5: Help providers to scale-up existing trainings (identification)
- HSWC Implementation recommendation #3: Explore train – the – trainer models

These recommendations will be the primary source of staff assignments for HSWC REL implementation. Implementation of these recommendations will occur gradually, based on staff capacity and the current priorities of the HSWC project, and need not all occur simultaneously.

The HSWC project team will ultimately make the decision around which of these recommendations is prioritized first, implementation timelines, and key performance indicators that will demonstrate successful implementation of each recommendation.

Progress Tracking

Implementation progress of each recommendation will be tracked in the following two ways:

1. Overall Recommendation Progress: This will be tracked in this document, and a spreadsheet for each recommendation can be found in the appendix for this purpose. This will allow for the accurate tracking of individual tasks, the recommendation they make up, and the HSWC project as a whole.
2. Monday.com: Individual assignments will be tracked on Monday.com. This will not only help in the individual assignment of tasks but will also allow the HSWC project manager to track individual progress on implementation.

Reporting

The HSWC project team will provide the RCT (overall) with an update on implementation on a quarterly basis. This will take place during the already established RCT meetings, which occur on a weekly basis. The work is ultimately accountable to the TCPB.

Cross-Jurisdictional Racial Equity Lens (April 2025)

Introduction

This report provides a summary of the April 2025 Racial Equity Lens Tool (RELT) application on the Tri-County Planning Body (TCPB) training goal, the Housing Service Worker Certification and Research project (HSWC). The exercise focused specifically on training implementation strategy #1, implementation through Portland Community College, and involved tri-county (Clackamas, Multnomah, Washington) participation, with Metro regional capacity team (RCT) staff convening the discussion in the role of facilitator.

This report contains:

- An overview of the RELT exercise, including a list of the participants, the racial equity lens tool that was utilized, and participation methodology.
- A summary of the key findings and recommendations generated by the exercise.
- A framework for the implementation and analysis of the findings/recommendations.
- Proposed protocol for future cross-jurisdictional collaboration.

Methodology

The RELT exercise occurred on Wednesday April 16th, 2025, and utilized the Joint Office of Homeless Services' (JOHS) Racial Equity Lens tool. This exercise was hosted and facilitated by Metro regional capacity team staff and involved participants from Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties. A list of participants, and the role they played, can be found below:

- Facilitation
 - Justin Barrieault (Metro)
 - Melia Deters (Metro)
- Advisory
 - Cole Merkel (Metro)
 - Alexandra Appleton (Metro)

- Technology and timekeeping
 - Finnegan Budd (Metro)
- Participation
 - Lauren Decker (Clackamas County)
 - Emily Nelson (Multnomah County)
 - Lawashia Mowe (Multnomah County)
 - Chelsea Catlin (Washington County)
 - Lindsay Dent (Washington County)

This RELT exercise is built on the previous RELT application that RCT staff conducted in Fall 2024. The Fall 2024 application was done internally, including only RCT staff. The methodology, findings, and implementation strategy from this exercise are detailed above.

Participants in the collaborative April 2025 RELT application (which is the subject of this report) were afforded multiple opportunities to participate in the RELT activity. The completed Fall 2024 RELT exercise spreadsheet was provided to county representatives two weeks in advance of the exercise session, to allow participants the opportunity to populate the spreadsheet with their thoughts and additional considerations in advance of the meeting. This was done intentionally to both help streamline the process and allow for various participant engagement preferences.

During the RELT exercise, participants were invited to read and expand on their already submitted material, participate in the exercise verbally, or a combination of both. This allowed for a multi-faceted participatory opportunity meant to accommodate various engagement/learning styles.

Findings

Listed below are some of the findings/recommendations from the April 2025 RELT activity. These findings, while not an exhaustive list from the activity, represent a highlighting of the key themes that emerged:

Research/Data:

- Identify opportunities to not only collect data but also ensure decision making is guided by the analysis of this data.
- Include data from the Housing Careers program in Washington County, which worked to place individuals who had received services in internships and careers with service providing agencies.
- Utilize data on local workforce composition and disparities, especially among people of color working in housing careers.
- Research the demographics of higher education institution staff, and better understand the strategic equity plan of each institution
- Use current demographic data of the identified services to influence decision making, such as data from various local colleges/institutions.

HSWC Design/Implementation

- Ensure that individuals who are not proficient in English have access to training opportunities.
- Consider accessible training opportunities for individuals with disabilities, and those who live in rural communities.
- Develop a framework for collecting and analyzing feedback during the curriculum development process.
- Develop a framework to incorporate region-specific and county requested curriculum into the training program.

Outreach and Engagement

- Leverage the network and connections held by each county's jurisdiction to solicit feedback on any training programming that is developed.
- Explore how to utilize existing communication infrastructure/methods within the community rather than solely relying on communication teams/tools within governmental institutions.
- Solicit feedback from impacted communities, particularly those from disadvantaged communities and individuals with lived experience, into the curriculum development process.
- Ensure feedback from front-line service providers are incorporated throughout program design/implementation/analysis.
- Incorporate opportunities for feedback at every phase of program development and implementation.
- Ask service providers to host an 'office hours' session giving direct service staff an opportunity to provide feedback on the curriculum and course experience, as well as highlight persisting training gaps.
- Identify ways to receive feedback from BIPOC and culturally specific organizations that do not overly rely on or burden these populations.

HSWC Analysis

- Utilize SHS annual reports to better understand the racial demographics of individuals who work in direct service positions to ensure equitable access to all developed/scaled training opportunities.

Implementation

There are various methods that are being used to track progress and move this work forward:

- Metro regional capacity team weekly project team meeting: Weekly team check-ins where the Training Program Manager regularly provides an update on equity work and occasionally engages the team in an equity exercise, including equity action planning and Key Performance Indicator (KPI) identification.
- Monday.com: Utilization of Monday.com (a project management platform) to track progress on each equity finding/recommendation. This platform is checked/updated several times per week, and progress is communicated with the team as a whole.

- Monthly Training Workgroup between Metro and the counties: Metro is committed to utilizing the monthly training workgroup meetings to engage in equity exercises.

Metro staff will also utilize all internal resources available to progress this work, including language access services and leveraging the Metro housing communications team. The Metro regional capacity team also commits to partnering with the Metro housing equity manager to develop equity operating procedures for the training program to help effectively guide this work forward.

Collaboration

Metro is committed to working in collaboration with county jurisdictional partners in the following ways:

- Collectively identify decision points which will require an equity analysis, and the format that this analysis will take
- Develop a shared understanding of what in
- Individuals need to be at the table to advance equity efforts
- Identify methodology to provide updates and progress reports on equity work

This is by no means an exhaustive list of possible opportunities for future collaboration, but rather a summary of near-term goals. Any additional recommendations for collaborative efforts are encouraged, as it will take full cross-jurisdictional participation to ensure the equitable development and implementation of regional training programming for the housing services workforce.



Metro

Meeting will start at 4:00pm

Metro Regional Supportive Housing Services

Tri-County Planning Body | May 14th , 2025



Metro

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Agenda

4:00pm	Welcome and Introductions
4:10pm	Public Comment
4:15pm	Conflict of Interest
4:20pm	Training Implementation Strategy
5:20pm	Regional Implementation Plan Update
5:35 pm	Metro Council President's Work Group on SHS Reform Update
5:55pm	Closing and Next Steps
6:00pm	Adjourn



Metro

Public Comment



Metro

Staff Updates



Metro

Training Implementation Strategy

Training Implementation Strategy: Progress Update

Tri-County Planning Body

May 14, 2025



Content

- Racial equity considerations
- Research
- Proposed implementation strategies
- Potential future directions

TCPB training goal

Goal: Service providers have access to the knowledge and skills required to operate at a high level of program functionality; the need of culturally specific providers will be prioritized through all program design.

Recommendation: Counties and Metro coordinate and support regional training that meets the diverse needs of individual direct service staff, with sensitivity to the needs of BIPOC agencies.

The work of the counties

Clackamas County

- Housing First Response training is required for all providers (includes motivational interviewing, working with folks in crisis, homelessness diversion and more)
- Additional trainings in RLRA, Case conferencing, fair housing, mental health first aid and more

Multnomah County

- Assertive engagement trainers
- Equity Training Coordinator
- Domestic & sexual violence program specialist (TA & training focused)
- Proactive, enhanced training opportunities

Washington County

- On-demand trainings through Power DMS
- Provider training aimed at increasing culturally responsive service provision
- Learning series available to contracted providers
- Housing and Supportive Services Network monthly meetings for all

Metro's regional capacity team

- Formed in 2024 to support the ongoing and emerging needs of frontline service providers.
- Regional Training Opportunities
 - Support frontline workers with their training needs now while working to build a sustainable system for training access across the region.
- RFQu 4269
 - A first of its kind tri-county and Metro procurement to identify and build a bench of Technical Assistance consultants in 15 specialty areas.
- TA Demonstration Project
 - Identifying opportunities for regionalizing technical assistance, learning best practices in PSH delivery from culturally specific providers, and helping clients stay housed by understanding which PSH interventions are necessary and helping to operationalize them.

Training goal update: Housing Service Worker Certification and research project





Metro

Racial equity considerations

Racial equity considerations

- **Client facing needs:** baseline level training that is widely accessible will help clients of color to receive a shared quality of care.
- **Agency to agency differences:** honoring provider expertise by taking note of what trainings are being accessed already for our program to be additive and not duplicative.
- **Ensuring the expertise of culturally specific providers is centered in both program design and implementation.**

Strategies to advance racial equity

- Increase the number of training access points regionally
- Allow for the creation of specific programming that is tailored to the needs of providers
- Increase awareness of the trainings already being delivered
- Offer a person-centered approach to training
- Allow for the identification of local instructors with experience in the field, emphasis on BIPOC instructors



Metro

Research

Research question

- What training resources currently exist in our region that encompass the fundamental skills that housing and homeless service workers need to be prepared for the work early in their careers?
- What new resources might need to be created to better support their training?

Survey

Q: *What skills do you think incoming housing services workers most need when they come into the job?*

Q: *As we consider developing a housing service worker certification, what trainings or learning opportunities do you think should be included?*

Potential Courses

Substance use, recovery and mental health	Housing service worker case management	Basics of housing system navigation	Diversity, equity and inclusion	Trauma-informed care and self care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundary Setting • Crisis Intervention • Conflict Resolution • Emergency Response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Naloxone – First Aid – CPR – Mental Health First Aid • Recovery housing options • Relapse and relapse prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits Navigation • Fundamentals of Case Management • Data Systems (HMIS and Community Services) • Financial Wellness Education • Employment services • Barrier reduction • Unconditional positive resolve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Systems • Vouchers • Rapid Rehousing • Eviction Prevention • Coordinated Entry • The Principles of Housing First • Sustainability in housing • Housing individuals with a criminal record • Tenant rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Humility • Implicit Bias • Power Dynamics • Harm Reduction • Honoring Lived Experience • History of racial exclusion in Portland • Self-awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coping Strategies • Foundations of Trauma Informed Care and Trauma Intervention Programs • Employee Resilience and Self Care • Access to recovery support • Secondary trauma

Local research

- Post-secondary education programs
- Community and behavioral health certifications
- Workforce boards



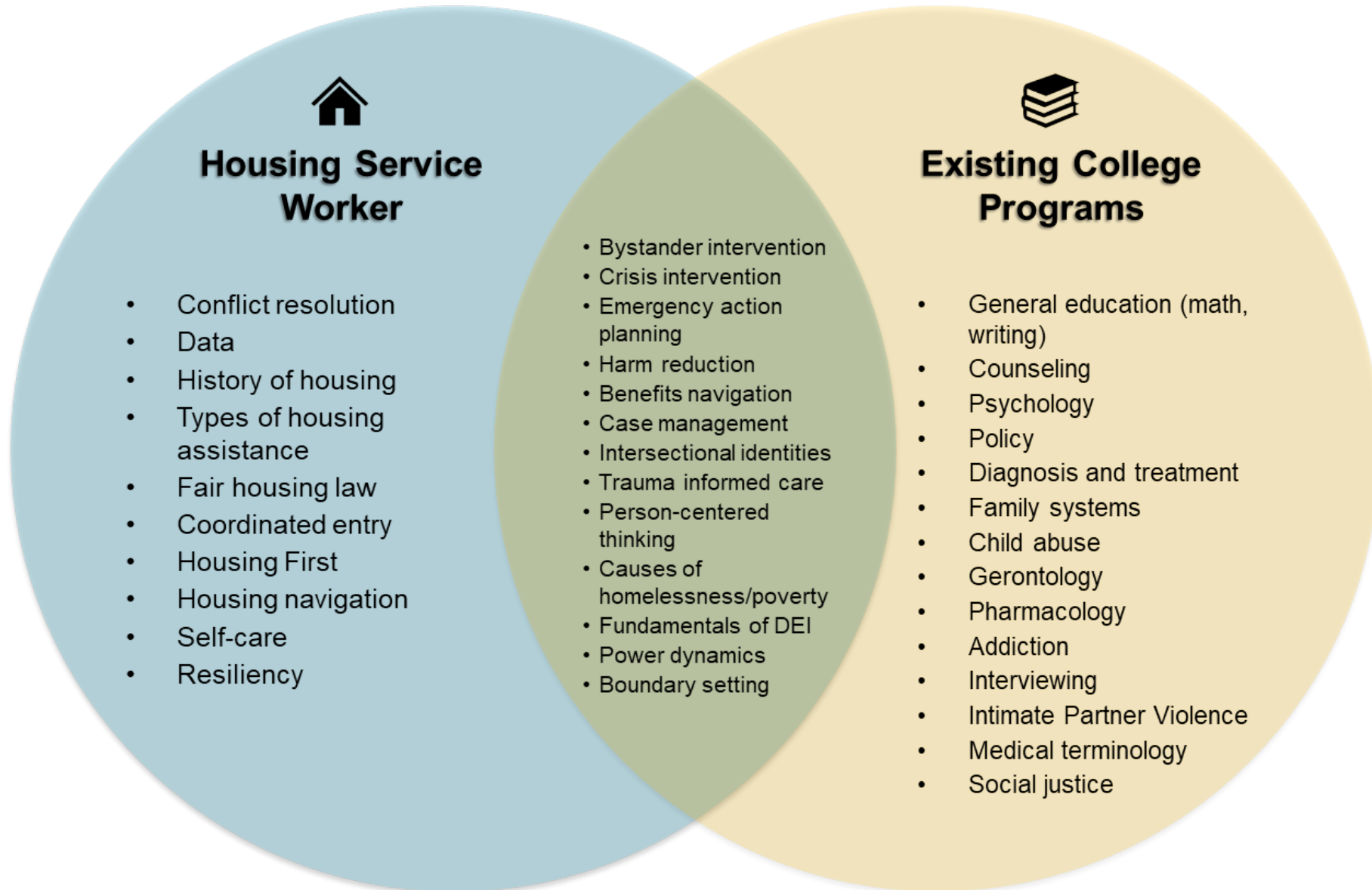
Metro

Post-secondary education programs

Post-secondary education programs

	Certificate	Length of program	Cost	Associate degree	Length of program	Cost	Bachelor's degree	Length of program	Cost			
Clackamas Community College	Alcohol and Drug Counselor Career Pathway Certificate of Completion	3 months	\$2,400	Human Services Generalist Associate of Applied Science	2 years	\$12,700						
	Human Services Generalist Certificate of Completion	9 months	\$6,255									
Mt. Hood Community College	Behavioral Health Care Specialist Certificate	9 months	\$12,700	Mental Health Social Service and Addiction Counseling Associate of Applied Science	2 years	\$12,700						
	Youth Worker Certificate	1 year	\$6,200									
Portland Community College	Foundations in Human Services Career Pathway Certificate	3 months	\$2,200	Family and Human Services Associate Degree	2 years	\$12,000						
George Fox, Pacific, Portland State, University of Portland, and Warner Pacific										Bachelor of Social Work	4 years	\$47,500-\$227,000

Community college course overlap





Metro

Community and behavioral healthcare certifications

Healthcare certifications

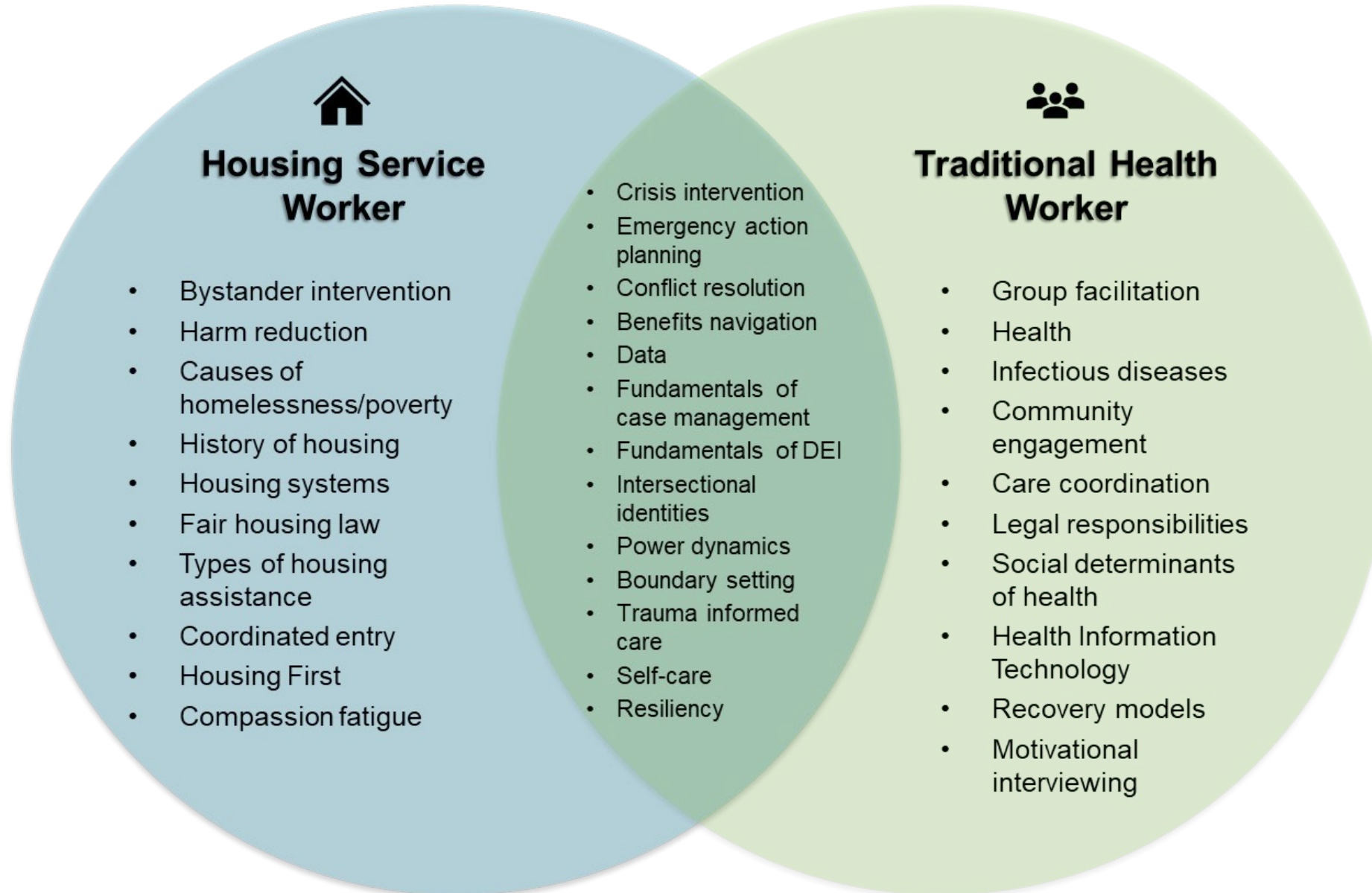
OHA Traditional Health Worker (THW)

- **Community Health Worker**
- **Peer Support Specialist**
- **Peer Wellness Specialist**
- Personal Health Navigator

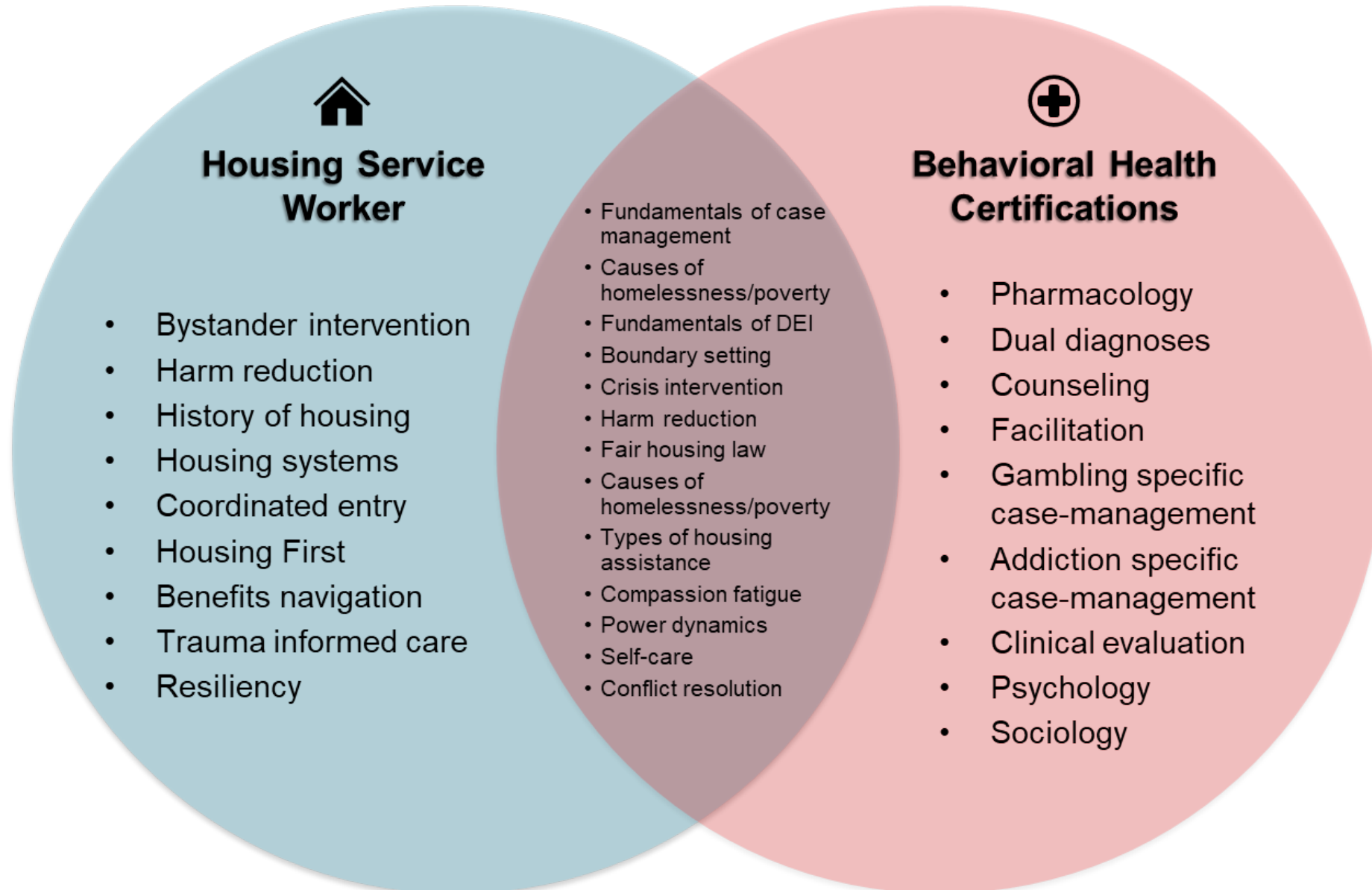
Mental Health and Addictions Certification Board of Oregon (MHACBO)

- Qualified Mental Health Associate
- Qualified Mental Health Professional
- Certified Drug and Alcohol Counselor
- Certified Gambling Addiction Counselor
- Certified Prevention Specialist
- **Certified Recovery Mentor**

Traditional Health Worker training overlap



MHACBO training overlap





Metro

Workforce boards

Workforce boards

- Clackamas Workforce Partnership (CWP) and Worksystems, Inc. (WSI)
- Responsibilities:
 - Oversee workforce development services
 - Convene impacted parties to address workforce issues
 - Manage one-stop career centers (WorkSource)
 - Create policies
 - Create workforce development programs
- Benefits of coordination with the workforce agencies:
 - Broad insight to workforce development, including recent housing-related efforts
 - Recruitment and retention
 - Possibility to braid funding
 - Career coaches
 - Program creation
 - Training collation

Workforce boards: Potential funding intersections

- Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)
- Individual Training Account (ITA)
- Example: MHAAO's Peer Wellness Specialist training is ETPL approved, learners can have their 'tuition' covered by CWP or WSI

Proposed implementation strategies





Metro

Strategy #1

Partner with a community college to develop a training program for first year housing service workers

Description

- Partner with Portland Community College (PCC) to develop introductory training courses for new SHS service workers
- Courses will focus on:
 - Basics of housing service worker case management
 - Basics of housing system navigation
- PCC has most regional footprint, is most affordable, has existing curriculum that can be adapted and have been strong thought partners

Deliverables

- A tailored 40-hour introductory course, specifically designed to meet the unique needs of the region's providers, available for front-line housing service workers to enroll.
 - The initial costs, including enrollment of the first cohort will be paid by Metro's admin funds.

Potential for scalability

- Initial cohorts (current SHS service providers) will help refine the course; **future cohorts could be people who are interested in getting into housing service work**
- **Can develop additional courses:** e.g. 201 level training, management and leadership, and more
- Could be **replicated at other community colleges**; could become certification
- **Courses could be applied to traditional degree** through Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)
- Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) could **access federal workforce funding**

Equity considerations

- **Curriculum development:** The feedback of impacted parties will be prioritized throughout the design of the training curriculum, and program more generally.
- **Access:** Understanding the historic barriers that communities of color have experience when attempting to access higher education

Equity considerations

Community college enrollment racial demographics

Racial demographic	Clackamas Community College	Mt. Hood Community College	Portland Community college	2020 Census (Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties combined)
White	45.0%	50.0%	52.0%	66.7%
BIPOC	22.0%	-	40.0%	32.7%
Latino	14.0%	14.0%	19.0%	13.7%
Asian	4.0%	7.0%	8.0%	8.2%
Black or African American	2.0%	4.0%	5.0%	3.3%
Native American	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.6%
Multicultural/multi-ethnic	4.0%	4.0%	6.0%	6.4%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	-	1.0%	1.0%	0.5%
Other	-	-	-	0.6%
Unknown	31.0%	19.0%	8.0%	-

Community college student support services offered

	Clackamas Community College	Mt. Hood Community College	Portland Community College
Academic help/tutoring	x	x	x
Basic needs/benefits support	x	x	x
Career planning	x	x	x
Counseling	x	x	x
Disability resources	x		x
Language support			x
LGBTQIA+ support			x
Multicultural resources	x		x
Undocumented student resources		x	x
Veterans' resources	x	x	x
Food pantry	x		x
Women's resources		x	x

Budget proposal (approximate)

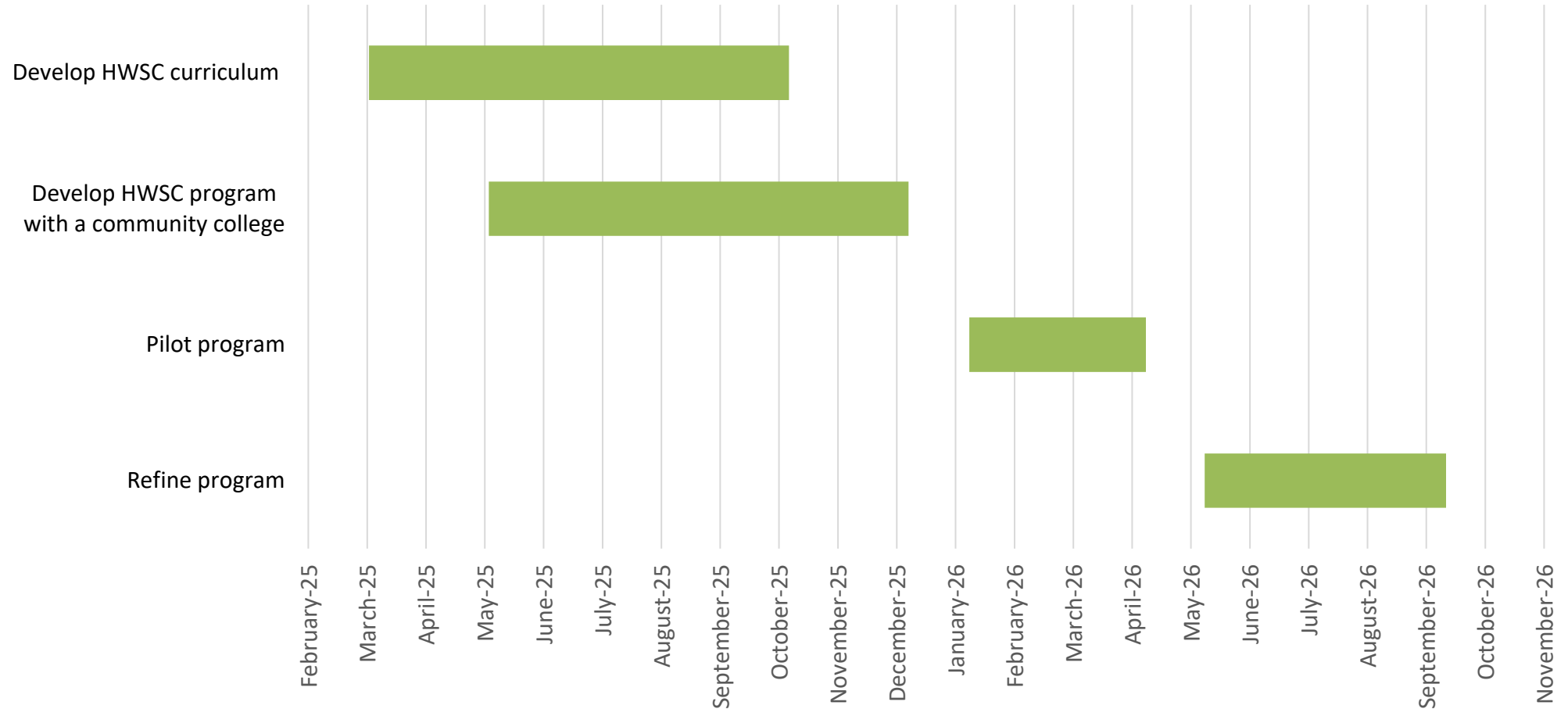
Description	Cost
Curriculum Development	\$25,000
Cost per cohort (First Cohort)	\$15,000
Curriculum refinement (approximate)	\$10,000
Cost per additional cohort in developed program	\$10,000
Development of on-demand courses	\$25,000
Total	\$85,000

Note: This budget is being provided by Metro's administrative funds and does NOT require RIF approval; budget subject to change based on RFP contracting processes.

Metrics

Goal	Metrics
A more well-trained front-line housing service worker workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of individuals who complete the course• Percent who found the course useful• Number of access points• Participant experience surveys, which take place 3 months after an individual has completed the course
A scaled initial introductory course	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Course refined and launched for a second cohort (and beyond) from initial feedback with a continuous quality improvement philosophy• Additional interested parties have access to course (e.g. through workforce boards)
Additional courses developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional courses are developed/cohorts launched based on the initial curriculum• Courses beyond the entry-level curriculum are developed (e.g. a housing leadership training academy for people becoming managers)

Project timeline highlights (Feb 2025-Sept 2026)





Metro

Strategy #2

Identifying and scaling up existing trainings



Metro

**County RIF requests will
be shared at June's
TCPB meeting.**

On-Demand Training Pilot description

- **On-Demand Training Pilot:** Meet provider training needs today by offering free access to National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) on-demand trainings
 - Two staff per agency (frontline worker and a supervisor) – up to 15 agencies
 - Each takes seven on-demand trainings at their convenience over a two-month period
 - Complete a survey for each training
 - Complete a post pilot survey
 - Help Metro understand the efficacy of the on-demand training

Deliverables

- Develop an understanding of the usefulness of the on-demand programs offered by CSH and NAEH in providing adequate training to the region's front-line housing service worker workforce.
- A pilot report, providing recommendations for next steps based off feedback received from pilot program participants.
- Determination of whether a round 2 pilot is necessary or whether to consider scaling.
 - If a second iteration of the pilot does occur, the findings from the first round will help to guide subsequent efforts.

On-Demand Training Pilot equity considerations

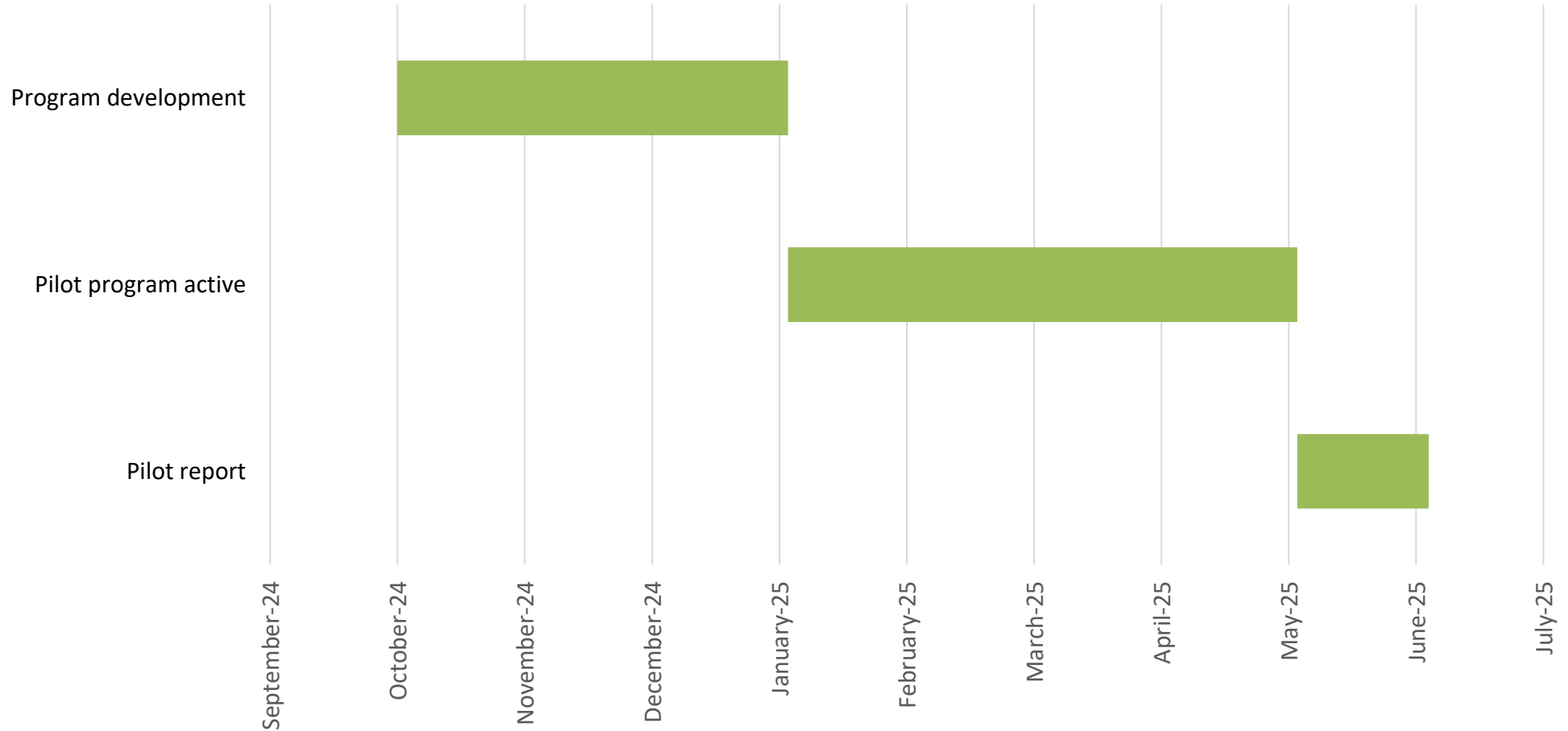
- Designed with equity in mind including a participation matrix
- Conducted intentional, direct outreach to SHS providers through multiple avenues
- On-demand trainings are immediately available

Budget

Description	Cost
NAEH Trainings (30 people)	\$5,600
CSH Trainings (30 people)	\$3,000
Total	\$8,600

Note: This budget is being funded by Metro's administrative funds and does NOT require RIF approval; budget subject to change based on RFP contracting processes. This program is currently a pilot. If the results demonstrate that it should be scaled, future funding will be determined.

Project timeline highlights (Dec 2024-June 2025)



On Demand Training metrics

Goal	Metrics
Determine the effectiveness of the on-demand training programs offered by CSH and NAEH in meeting the training needs of the region's providers.	<p>From post course survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percent of participants who agreed that the training content effectively prepare you for the responsibilities of a front-line housing service worker.• Percent of participants who feel confident in applying the skills learned from this course in a real-world housing service worker role. <p>From post pilot survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percent of participants who found that the training program prepared them for a front-line housing service worker role.• Percent of participants that found the skills and knowledge covered in the training course to be relevant and applicable to the challenges faced by front-line housing service workers.• Percent of participants who found the virtual format for delivering this type of training to be effective.• Percent of participants who would recommend this training program to others interested in a front-line housing service role.

Note: this is a pilot program and, if scaled, the metrics will mirror those of a more well-trained workforce, which appear in Implementation strategy #1.



Metro

Potential future implementation strategies

Additional opportunities to scale existing regional trainings

- Develop an understanding of the training programs available and how they are being utilized by providers
 - Potential next steps: additional analysis, surveying of partners, identifying their interest in providing trainings more broadly
- Potential webpage with list of accessible trainings for service providers
 - Potential long-term goal: training videos on same website

Partnering with workforce board

- Partnering with a workforce board may help with ongoing recruitment, internship, and job placement for the community college program
- Could unlock additional federal and state funding opportunities
- Workforce boards have a track record of collating and organizing individual trainings which can help deepen our knowledge of trainings offered regionally

Intersections with existing behavioral and community health certifications

- Community Health Workers (CHWs), Peer Support Specialists (PSS), Peer Wellness Specialists (PWS) and Certified Recovery Mentors (CRM)
- Possible implementation options include:
 - Initial training program
 - CEU

Questions?





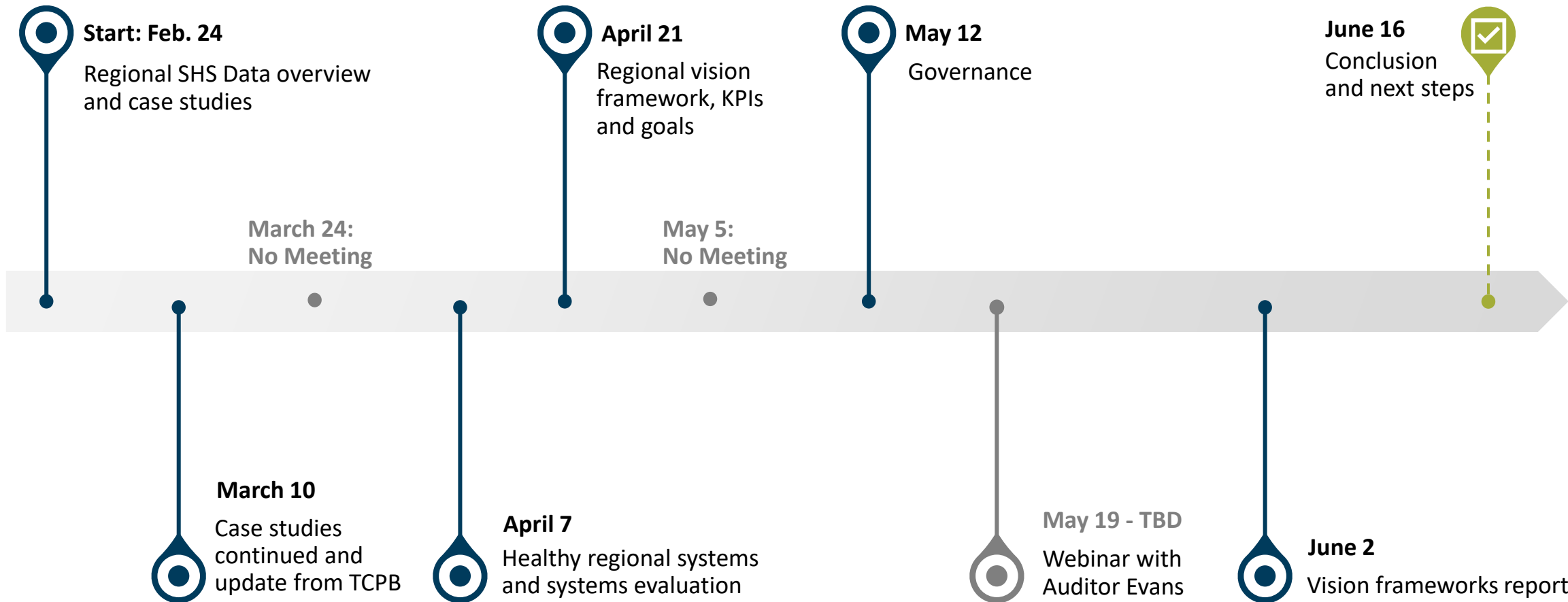
Metro

Regional Implementation Plan Update

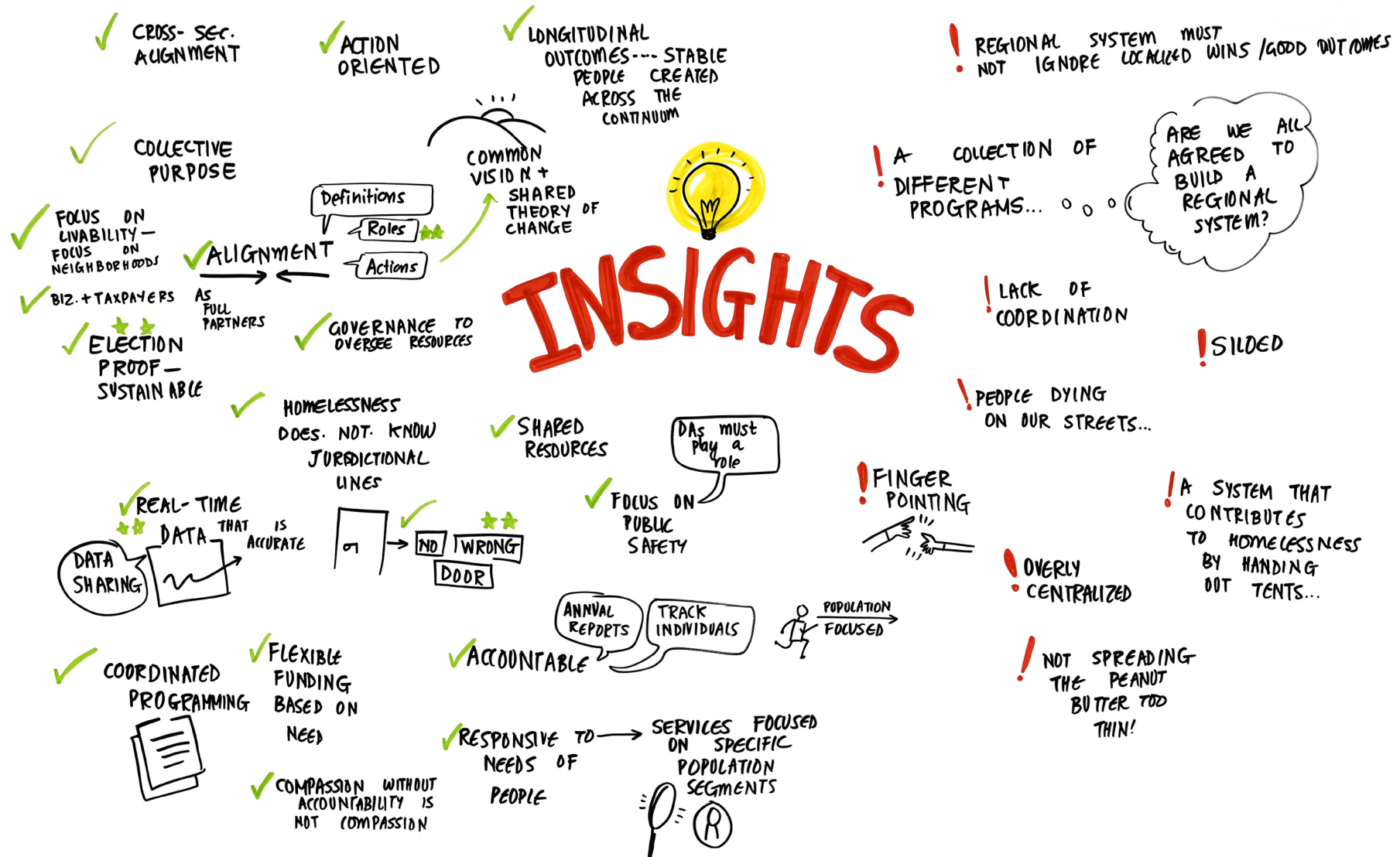


Metro

Metro Council President's Work Group on SHS Reform



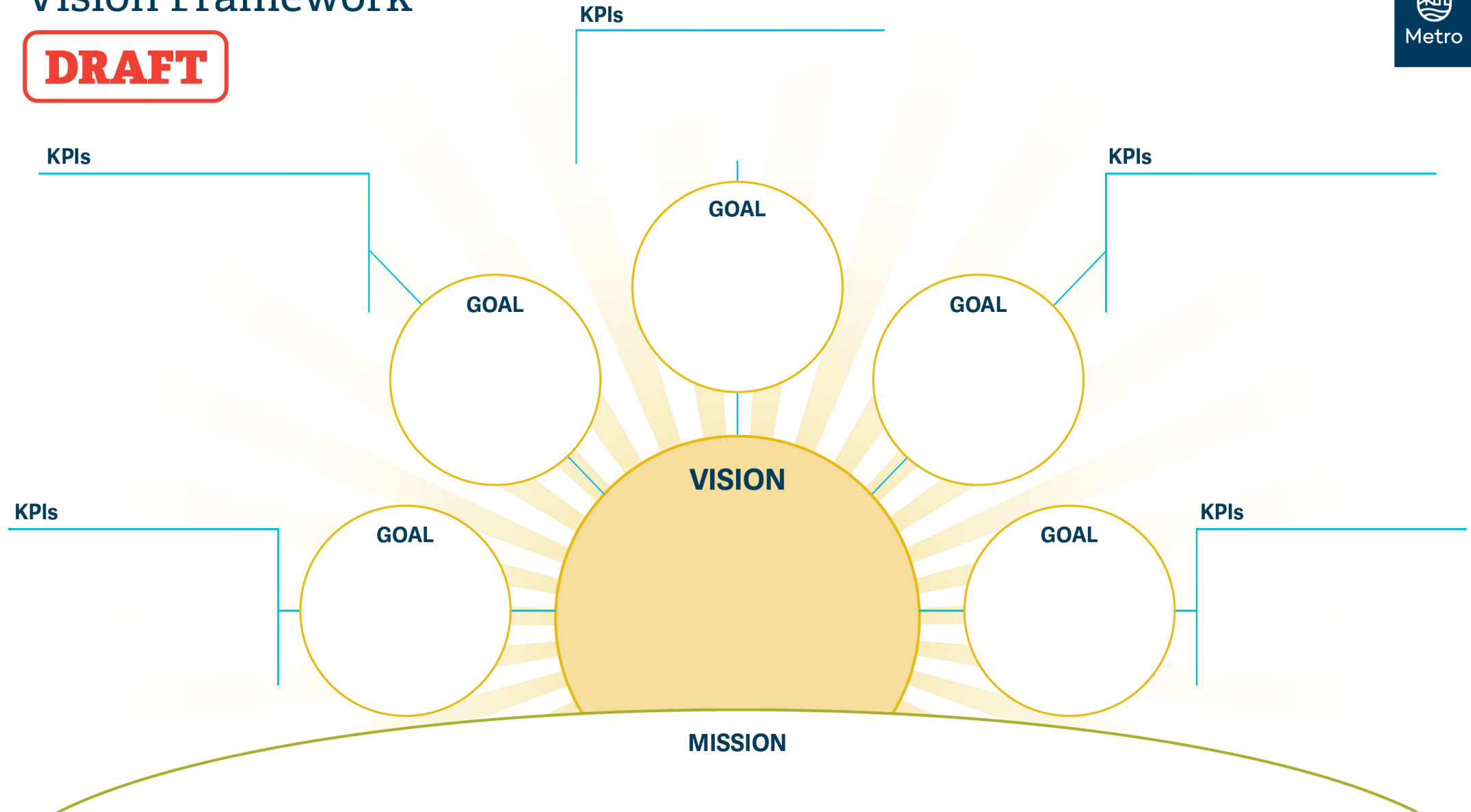
DEFINING A HEALTHY REGIONAL SYSTEM

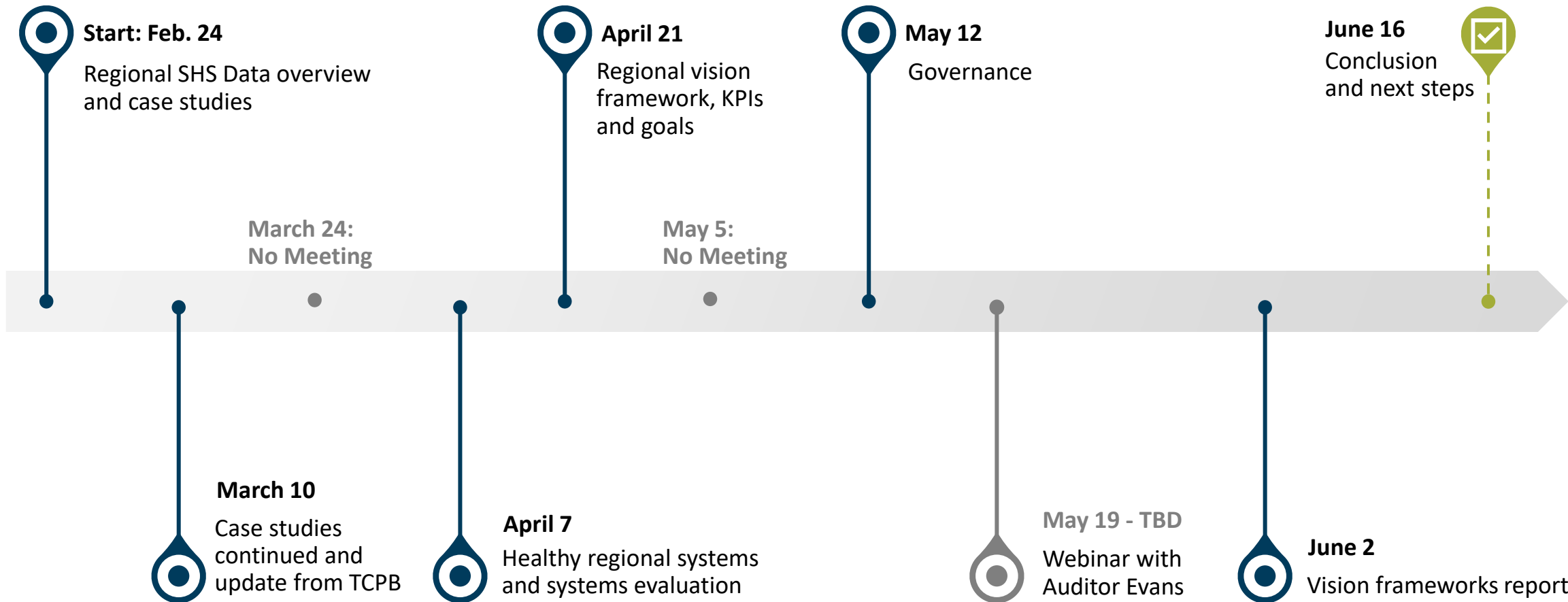


Vision Framework



DRAFT





Next Steps

- Post approved meeting summary online
- Next meeting: Wednesday June 11th, 2025

Meeting Adjourned



METRO SUPPORTIVE HOUSING SERVICES TRI-COUNTY PLANNING BODY

Monthly progress report | May 2025

The goal of this report is to keep the TCPB, the Supportive Housing Services Regional Oversight Committee, Metro Council and other stakeholders informed about ongoing regional coordination progress. A more detailed report will be provided as part of the SHS Regional Annual Report, following submission of annual progress reports by Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties.

Tri-County Planning Body regional goals*

Goal	Implementation Strategies Status	Progress
<i>Regional Landlord Recruitment</i>	<i>Implementation Strategies approved by TCPB (03/13/2024)</i> <i>Implementation strategies (4 of 5) underway. Strategy 3 (24/7 Hotline to launch in December)</i> <i>Next Quarterly Report in June 2025</i>	<i>As part of the Plan's Strategy #1: Communication and education plan, Metro have created a webpage on Metro's website with information on county landlord financial incentive. Metro has contracted with a consultant, Le Chevallier Strategies, for a communications campaign focused on landlords. Metro is working with Focus Strategies (FS), a consultant, on Strategy #2: Align financial incentives and Strategy #5: Investigate needs for property management. FS has completed many interviews with experts both within and outside the Metro region in the process of researching these two strategies. FS will provide two memos, one for each strategy, to the TCPB by the end of July. Multnomah County continues to make progress on Strategy # 3: tracking and access to unit inventory. They have launched a pilot using Housing Connector and are analyzing initial outcomes data. Clackamas County has not yet begun work on Strategy #4: prioritize quality problem-solving services, and they plan to launch a hotline for landlords in December, 2025. All counties and Metro meet monthly to update each other on progress, share ideas, and problem-solve.</i>
<i>Coordinated Entry</i>	<i>Implementation Strategies approved by TCPB (10/09/2024)</i>	<i>Work on the four strategies outlined in the CERIP has begun, and counties and Metro collaborate across all strategies. For Strategy #1: Regionalize visibility of participant data,</i>

Implementation strategies (4 of 4) underway.

Next Quarterly Report in April 2025

conversations with regional HMIS administration are on-going. For Strategy #2: align assessment questions, counties and Metro continue to discuss details of aligning assessment questions. For Strategy #3: Regionalize approaches to prioritization for racial equity, counties have learned about each other's approaches and metro is conducting research on similarities and differences in racial/ethnic demographic information among the three counties. For Strategy #4: regionalize approach to case conferencing, county CE staff are observing each other's case conferencing meetings and will bring learnings to a shared discussion. All counties and Metro meet monthly to work through the steps of the implementation plan, share ideas, and problem-solve.

*Healthcare
system
alignment*

*Implementation Strategies approved by TCPB
and SHS OC in April 2025*

Implementation underway

First Quarterly Report in September 2025

Following unanimous approval by the TCPB and SHS OC, Metro staff and our partners are moving into implementation, including expansion and/or re-establishment of working groups. An initial partner kick-off meeting for Strategy 1 (regional coordination of medical respite/recuperative care) took place on May 5. Strategy 2 (Regional Integration Continuum/case conferencing/care coordination) is guided by an expanded table of jurisdictional, health, and housing provider partners, convened by the Metro-funded team at Health Share. For strategy 3 (regional data sharing coordination), we are working with partners to determine scope and cadence for the regional workgroup. Metro staff is engaged with staff at the Portland-Multnomah Homelessness Response Action Plan (HRAP) to ensure ongoing coordination and collaboration.

Training

*Implementation Strategies will be presented at
May TCPB meeting with final approval*

Metro and the counties continue to collaborate on implementing the training goal, which we are excited to present to the TCPB

(including county training RIF requests) in June 2025

this month with a follow up vote on the full implementation strategy and county training and TA RIF requests coming in June. This month's packet also includes the final draft of the research paper on available trainings in the region that Metro staff have been developing since last summer. In preparation for the implementation strategy presentation, last month Metro and the counties met to complete a racial equity lens analysis on the training implementation strategies, which built off the racial equity analysis for training Metro's regional capacity team conducted last fall.

Immediate trainings being offered: Work is happening now to advance trainings throughout the region. In early January, Metro's regional capacity team launched a pilot project to assess the effectiveness, value, and regional scalability of the on-demand trainings available through the National Alliance to End Homelessness and the Corporation for Supportive Housing. In total, two staff at 15 agencies are taking seven training courses and share their feedback to inform future implementation for Metro and the counties. The pilot report, which will include findings and recommendations, should be released in summer 2025.

Technical Assistance Implementation Strategies approved by TCPB (2/12/2025)

First quarterly report in June 2025

Counties TA RIF requests under development and presentation for June 2025

The Technical Assistance Implementation Strategy was approved by the TCPB on 2/12/2025. Metro staff will continue to work with the counties to gather counties' TA RIF requests.

The Permanent Supportive Housing Technical Assistance Demonstration and Research project aims to identify opportunities for regionalizing technical assistance, learn best practices in PSH delivery from culturally specific providers and

support the regional goal of helping clients stay housed by understanding which PSH interventions are necessary and helping to operationalize them.

Metro is in final negotiations with the consultants to provide technical assistance support to the PSH providers and facilitate the community of practice cohort, and, thanks to evaluation support from the counties, is finalizing the notification and grant agreement process with the four PSH providers who will participate in the project. The primary goal is to identify one service provider from each county, the majority of whom are culturally specific.

Metro anticipates pairing the providers with their consultants and launching the cohort before the end of this fiscal year.

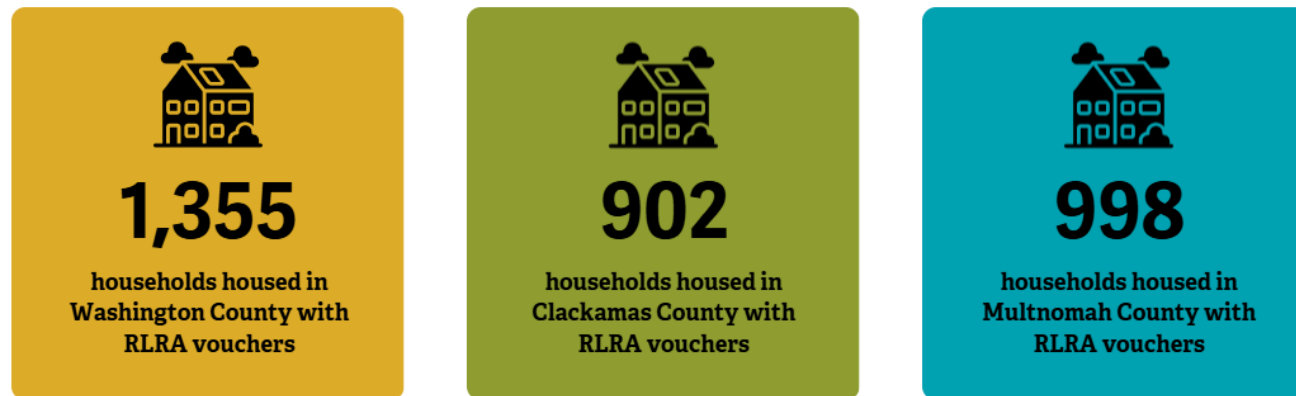
<i>Employee Recruitment and Retention (ERR)</i>	<i>Implementation Strategies scheduled to be presented at June TCPB meeting</i>
	<i>Implementation strategies under development</i>
	<i>First Quarterly Report TBD depending on timing for strategy approval</i>

In April we held a productive work session with providers and county partners, working in partnership with the HereTogether coalition, to discuss challenges and opportunities to work toward a livable wage standard over time while also developing regional alignment of contract policies. We heard from providers that they want to be included in laying the necessary groundwork and working through the complexities, and that this issue needs to be escalated to elected leaders with accountability and timelines for action. We will continue to engage providers and other partners to finalize the regional plan, which is scheduled to come to TCPB in June.

**A full description of regional goals and recommendations is included in Attachment 1.*

Existing REGIONAL PROGRAMS AND COORDINATION EFFORTS

****Households housed through the RLRA program as of December 31, 2024:***



The data comes from the SHS quarterly reports, which includes disaggregated data (by race and ethnicity, disability status and gender identity) and can be accessed here: <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/public-projects/supportive-housing-services/progress>

**As of 8/15/2024, Metro has updated the way numbers are reported on our SHS dashboards. Beginning at the end of Year 3, Metro has shifted to reporting the number of households served with SHS resources. We are no longer reporting the number of people served, as several people can be members of the same household which has been served with SHS resources. Please note: This will cause the number on the dashboard to appear smaller, even though SHS service levels have only continued to increase.*

Risk Mitigation Program: All RLRA landlords are provided access to a regional risk mitigation program that covers costs incurred by participating landlords related to unit repair, legal action, and limited uncollected rents that are the responsibility of the tenant and in excess of any deposit as part of the RLRA Regional Landlord Guarantee.

The following information is derived from the counties' [FY2023-24 Regional Annual Report](#)

Health and housing integration: In addition to, and in coordination with, the TCPB-directed regional strategies in this goal area, counties have worked together on initiatives to support health and housing systems integration. This includes the implementation of the Medicaid 1115 Demonstration waiver, which allows certain housing services to be covered by Medicaid.

Regional data systems and standards: Metro and the counties worked together to align regional data collection and reporting. This included refining report templates and developing clearer definitions and shared methodologies. Progress was made on a data sharing agreement between Metro and Counties. Continued work to align definitions and strengthen data reporting is ongoing, with a focus on PSH and Populations A and B. Further work is planned to refine regional outcome metrics and develop a framework for assessing progress toward regional goals. To facilitate Multnomah county's transition to central administration of the region's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), county data teams coordinated closely to regionalize HMIS policies, procedures and intergovernmental agreements (IGAs).

Regional long-term rent assistance (RLRA): A workgroup with representatives from the counties and Metro has been meeting monthly since 2021 to problem-solve, share learning, develop regional templates, and develop and update regional policies and guidelines for RLRA administration. A regional data team meets regularly to develop coordinated data collection, reporting tools, and methodologies. Their reports are shared with the RLRA workgroup as a continuous improvement effort.

Best practices and shared learning: The three counties engage in regular leadership conversations and workgroups to share lessons learned and promote common approaches. For example, tri-county regional equity meetings provide a venue for sharing best practices and insights and aligning SHS equity strategies across the region. Monthly Built for Zero (BfZ) meetings bring together representatives from the three counties and Metro to collaborate and learn from one another's implementation of the Built for Zero initiative.

TRI-COUNTY PLANNING BODY GOAL AND RECOMMENDATION LANGUAGE

May 10th, 2023

COORDINATED ENTRY

- Goal:** Coordinated Entry is more accessible, equitable and efficient for staff and clients.
- Recommendations:** Map the unique challenges and successes of each of the three Coordinated Entry Systems.
- Assess opportunities to create connectivity among the three Coordinated Entry Systems to improve equitable access and work towards regionalizing some tools within Coordinated Entry.
- Explore opportunities for co-enrollment with other systems.

REGIONAL LANDLORD RECRUITMENT

- Goal:** Increase the availability of readily accessible and appropriate housing units for service providers.
- Recommendations:** Contract with a qualified consultant to identify areas where regionalization can support existing and future county efforts and submit recommendations.
- Develop a regional communications campaign to recruit new landlords, including specific outreach and engagement to culturally specific media and BIPOC community groups.

HEALTHCARE SYSTEM ALIGNMENT

- Goal:** Greater alignment and long-term partnerships with healthcare systems that meaningfully benefit people experiencing homelessness and the systems that serve them.
- Recommendations:** Metro staff convenes and coordinates with counties and key healthcare systems stakeholders to identify opportunities that integrate the Medicaid waiver with the Supportive Housing Services initiative. Bring draft proposal with next steps and timeline to committee within 6 months.

TRAINING

- Goal:** Service providers have access to the knowledge and skills required to operate at a high level of program functionality; the need of culturally specific providers will be prioritized through all program design.

Recommendation: Counties and Metro coordinate and support regional training that meets the diverse needs of individual direct service staff, with sensitivity to the needs of BIPOC agencies.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Goal: Organizations have access to the technical assistance required to operate at a high level of organization functionality; the need of culturally specific providers will be prioritized through all program design.

Recommendation: Counties and Metro coordinate and support regional technical assistance and investments in capacity building especially among culturally specific providers.

EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Goal: County contracts for SHS funded agencies and providers will establish standards throughout the region to achieve livable wages for direct service staff.

Recommendations: Map current wage and benefit conditions.

Draft a housing-worker wage framework that provides guidance to Counties and SHS-funded agencies and providers and includes contracting evaluation and alignment.

Consider ways to allow for differential pay for lived experience, bilingual employees, and culturally specific organizations.

Consider ways to address challenges faced by organizations with multiple funding streams.

Assess reasonable scale of outcomes and case load as it relates to compensation.

Within each Supportive Housing Services (SHS)-funded agency, monitor the distribution of pay from lowest to highest paid staff to ensure improvements in pay equity.



Supportive Housing Services Oversight Committee Meeting Summary

Meeting: Supportive Housing Services (SHS) Oversight Committee Meeting
Date: March 24, 2025
Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Place: Virtual meeting (Zoom)
Purpose: Receive Metro tax collection and disbursement updates and discuss FY26 budget development, admin rates, and Q2 Q&A with counties.

Member attendees

Co-Chair Dr. Mandrill Taylor (he/him), Dr. James (Jim) Bane (he/him), Peter Rosenblatt (he/him), Kai Laing (he/him), Dan Fowler (he/him), Jeremiah Rigsby (he/him), Jenny Lee (she/her), Cara Hash (she/her)

Absent members

Co-chair Mike Savara (he/him), Felicita Monteblanco (she/her)

Elected delegates

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington (she/her), Metro Councilor Christine Lewis (she/her)

Absent elected delegates

Clackamas County Chair Tootie Smith (she/her), Multnomah County Chair Jessica Vega Pederson (she/her)

Metro staff

Patricia Rojas (she/her), Liam Frost (he/him), Yesenia Delgado (she/her), Breanna Hudson (she/her), Yvette Perez-Chavez (she/her)

Kearns & West facilitator

Josh Mahar (he/him)

Note: The meeting was recorded via Zoom; therefore, this meeting summary will remain at a high-level overview. Please review the recording and archived meeting packet for details and presentation slides.

Summary of Meeting Decisions

- The Committee approved the February 10 meeting summary.

Welcome and Introductions

Josh Mahar, Kearns & West, facilitated introductions between attendees.

Yesenia Delgado, Metro, shared that the four jurisdictions have reached alignment on a data-sharing agreement, with one agreement executed and two in route for signature. She shared that the four jurisdictions and the Committee Co-chairs met to discuss Population A and B reporting and

Supportive Housing Services Oversight Committee Meeting Summary

have reached an agreement for the next regional report. She shared that the jurisdictions are aligning data methodologies and will keep the Committee updated.

Yesenia stated that Carter MacNichol has stepped down from the Committee. She thanked him for his contributions. She noted that Metro staff are speaking to Metro Council President regarding whether or not to reopen Committee recruitment and will provide an update at the next meeting.

- **Question, Peter Rosenblatt:** Will we be going into another reporting cycle where we will not have regional data?
 - **Metro response, Yesenia:** We will have a regional template for jurisdictions to use and submit.

Craig Beebe, Metro, shared updates on the Metro Council President's workgroup regarding reforms and the future of the SHS program. The workgroup is comprised of elected officials, coalition leaders, and business leaders and has the charge to develop a North Star collective vision that has actionable and measurable key performance indicators. He shared that President Lynn Peterson is co-chairing the group with Clackamas County Commissioner Ben West.

Craig stated that the group has met twice. The first meeting focused on the Multnomah County Budget gap, transparency needs, data landscapes, and allocation structures for a volatile tax. The second meeting focused on case studies of North Star visions across the United States and Canada. He noted that the next meeting will be on April 7 and meeting materials are available on Metro's [meeting calendar](#).

Committee members had the following questions:

- **Question, Peter:** I thought March 31 was the next meeting; it is listed on the meeting calendar. I have been watching the meetings, and an idea that was mentioned was to merge each county's Continuum of Cares (CoC) into one regional CoC. I want to state that it is hard to merge CoCs, and it usually results in a decrease in funding. The CoCs also extend beyond Metro's boundaries. I would highly encourage coordinating CoCs and not spending any time or research on the idea of merging CoCs.
 - **Metro response, Liam Frost:** The March 31 meeting is a webinar sponsored by Homeless Solutions Initiative, which recently released a report on stabilization services that is of interest to the workgroup.
 - **Response, Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington:** To clarify, the CoC merger idea was posed, but no discussion occurred.
 - **Metro response, Patricia Rojas:** I want to underscore that ideas are coming forward, and no technical work or research has begun.

Josh reviewed the meeting logistics and agenda.

Co-chair Dr. Mandrill Taylor shared that the Metro Council and the county commission presentations are underway and have been received thoughtfully. He emphasized that the councilors and commissioners are aware of the work the Committee is doing to address the root causes of homelessness and seems to reflect a shift from reactive management to proactive systems-level thinking.

Supportive Housing Services Oversight Committee Meeting Summary

Decision: Co-Chair Dr. Taylor, Dr. James (Jim) Bane, Peter, Kai Laing, Dan Fowler, Jeremiah Rigsby, Jenny Lee, and Cara Hash approved the meeting summary.

Conflict of Interest Declaration

Peter declared that he works at Northwest Housing Alternatives, which receives SHS funding.

Jenny declared that she works at the Coalition of Communities of Color, and some member organizations receive SHS funding.

Kai declared that he works at Self Enhancement Inc., which receives SHS funding.

Dan Fowler declared he is Chair of the Homeless Solutions Coalition of Clackamas County, which receives SHS funding.

Public Comment

No public comment was received.

Metro Tax Collection and Disbursement Updates

RJ Stangland, Metro, provided an overview of tax forecasting. He noted Metro is seeing a 14% reduction in what was originally budgeted and hopes that by the end of the May tax season there will be more data for forecasting. He highlighted that the meeting packets now include [interactive FY25 tax revenue and disbursement charts](#).

Committee members had the following questions:

- **Comment, Peter:** I appreciated the hyperlink to the charts.
- **Question, Washington County Chair Harrington:** It seems like the charts appear differently on the two memos provided. Would the Committee be interested in discussing the changes more?
 - **Response, Peter:** It is important to announce changes to graphs for transparency. I do like the new graphs better.
 - **Response, Dr. Bane:** I appreciate the new graphs and feel they are more comprehensible.
 - **Response, Dan Fowler:** For public transparency, it would be helpful to share screen when discussing graphs.
 - **Metro response, Yesenia:** Thank you for the feedback. Staff will share graphs for members of the public.
- **Question, Dr. Bane:** I do not understand the bar graph on [page 16 of the meeting packet](#).
 - **Metro Response, Jane Marie Ford:** The bar graph shows collections by tax year. For example, from August 24 to February 25, 2.3 million were brought in for 2021. 2024 has the most quarterly estimated payments coming in. Negatives can occur when folks make estimated payments and then true up the numbers.
- **Multnomah County Comment, Dan Field:** The forecasting is creating friction in the administration of the program. There is inconsistency, and I would propose that Metro brings together all three counties' forecasting expertise to develop a forecast and policy

Supportive Housing Services Oversight Committee Meeting Summary

recommendations. The four jurisdictions have not agreed to an approach to be able to publicly communicate the volatility of the tax.

- **Metro response, Jane Marie:** We do have a financial review team that meets the purpose of your suggestion.
- **Metro response, Josh Harwood:** Only Multnomah County has an economist, and we meet regularly. We are planning on developing a roundtable like the one you described, but it is the nature of the forecast to experience fluctuations.

FY26 Budget Development

Yesenia reviewed the FY26 work plan and budget timeline, noting that draft FY26 work plans are due in April and that counties approve final budgets in June. She said that counties have stabilization and contingency funds to use. She noted that the Tri County Planning Body received a proposal from the counties to use the Regional Investment Fund (RIF) reserves to support budget gaps, which the TCPB agreed to move forward.

Committee members had the following questions:

- **Question, Peter:** Yesenia used “may” and “are allowed” when referring to stabilization and contingency funds. Can counties choose not to allocate funds to these purposes? Does Metro set aside stabilization and contingency funds?
 - **Metro response, Yesenia:** Counties must set aside 10% of funds for stabilization, and recently, Metro recommended increasing that set aside to 15%. A contingency fund is optional, but all counties utilize it. Metro does not have stabilization funds in the same way.
 - **Response, Washington County Chair Harrington:** Our county fiscal financial policies compel us to have contingencies and reserves.

Jes Larson, Washinton County, shared that their draft work plan is being developed and is focused on scaling back some components and building goals based on the amended forecasted revenue. She noted that they saw signs of funding softening and anticipated scaling back items, so the county talked with their providers and looked at their system of care holistically. She noted that Washington County was successful in meeting the needs for chronic homelessness in families and youths.

Jes shared that Washington County needs transition housing for folks who need more programmatic support, but permanent supportive housing (PSH) is not the right fit. The work plan will focus on balancing the system with the addition of transition housing and a reduction in other programming. She stated the county will provide a contract plan for providers on how contracts will reflect the shift. She shared that there will be a reduction in provider capacity, and one-time funds will support caseload management and transitions from current programming. The one-time funds will be from uncommitted RIF carryover, as Washington County is holding stabilization reserves for economic downturns.

Vahid Brown, Clackamas County, shared that Clackamas County similarly reached out to providers once the updated forecast was received. He shared that the county’s guiding principles in managing the deficit are to preserve a balanced system, use one-time funds strategically, and maintain a stabilization fund to address potential needs that could arise from federal policies.

Supportive Housing Services Oversight Committee Meeting Summary

Vahid noted that program cuts will not occur, but regional long-term rental assistance (RLRA) voucher issuance has been paused. He noted that Clackamas County has about 1,000 households in PSH supported by RLRA and is focused on stabilizing that program. He shared that the Move Forward Initiative is focused on RLRA recipients and will provide workforce, barrier removal, and benefit recovery programming. He noted they are working with providers to repurpose their workloads to match the shift in programming. He highlighted that Clackamas County placed 5% of its funds into contingency and 20% into stabilization.

Dan Field, Multnomah County, reflected that there are similar themes between the three counties and that Multnomah County is also trying to maintain a balanced system. He stated the county is focused on PSH to support the strategies in Multnomah County's Homeless Response Action Plan. He highlighted that a significant amount of funding has flowed through the City of Portland for shelter sites the City creates and operates. He reflected that the county has been funding services through county departments like the health and community services departments.

Dan Field highlighted their partnership with Multnomah County Library to have peer support workers available. He reflected the need for a sustainable workforce, but as funding decreases, there may be staff reductions. He noted that RIF reserves and contingency funds would be used to fund gaps.

Committee members had the following questions:

- **Question, Peter:** For the next meeting, I would like to see a table detailing how much money each county has in their stabilization, RIF, and contingency buckets.
 - **Response, Washington County Chair Harrington:** To be clear, all these funds are accounted for. I think you are asking for a high-level review of where to find that information.
 - **Metro response, Yesenia:** We can put together a table summarizing that information.
 - **Metro response, Patricia:** Stabilization reserves are set to 10% in the intergovernmental agreements and recently increased to 15%. The purpose of the reserves is to address the volatility of the tax.
- **Question, Dan Fowler:** Thank you, county staff, for thinking creatively. How does state funding impact the work we do?
 - **Clackamas County response, Vahid:** Governor Tina Kotek had great new initiatives, and state funds came at a good time. The state rent program is similar to RLRA and has been supporting our Native American culturally specific housing. Overall, state funding has helped us focus on rural programming.
 - **Multnomah County response, Dan Field:** It has been helpful to work with the state. The Oregon All In program allowed us to do direct rehousing of folks and fund existing shelters.
 - **Washington County response, Jes:** Governor Kotek's budget and state investment will be able to sustain the expansion of programs created under her executive order.
- **Comment, Co-chair Dr. Taylor:** We have financial realities that require innovative design, and we cannot afford service gridlock. As resources get stretched thin, we need to ensure folks move effectively through the CoC, and this is reflected in budget frameworks.
- **Question, Dr. Bane:** I appreciate that both Clackamas and Washington Counties are moving funds to ensure individuals still move from homelessness to housing. How will Multnomah County reappropriate funds to ensure that progression?

Supportive Housing Services Oversight Committee Meeting Summary

- **Multnomah County response, Dan Field:** Those dollars will not include the City of Portland funds that Metro delegates through the county. We have underperformed in moving people from shelter into housing, and we need to sustain or increase rental assistance to move people into PSH. Multnomah County has a diverse ecosystem of shelters. Our challenge is how do we make those investments to move folks through shelter. Motel shelters are more expensive than congregate shelters. We are meeting internally to discuss matching resources with the right people and efficacy across shelter types.
- **Comment, Peter:** Today I heard good planning for the future. I do not hear this tone in other meetings I attend: Board of Commissioner meetings, Metro meetings, or Here Together meetings. If everyone could agree and use the same financial documents when discussing SHS, that would be great. I hear different numbers discussed in those other meetings. Thank you, county staff, for the thoughtful presentations.
- **Comment, Washington County Chair Harrington:** I appreciate Peter's comment, and I want to contextualize it. Different realities are discussed in different forums. Metro Council was considering significantly decreasing county funding. Counties communicated that it would be disruptive to the essential systems of care. We saw signs of softening tax collection in Q4 of 2024 and are digesting the transition plan. None of this is wrong or bad, we are all trying to do good work. There are various political pressures from county to federal levels.
- **Comment, Liam:** No decisions have been made regarding Metro applying admin carryover to address gaps.

Admin Rates Discussion

The Committee had no questions regarding admin rates.

Q2 County Q&A

Yesenia reviewed regional progress for FY21 -25 and regional progress to the FY25 workplan goals, detailing the tables on [pages 47-48 of the meeting packet](#).

Committee members had the following questions:

- **Question, Peter:** Congratulations on meeting these goals. There is a work group of family providers in Clackamas County looking at what the housing system needs to end homelessness for families in the county. The missing piece to this is the unmet need. The public can see what the unmet need is, and there is concern that SHS is not doing what it should.
 - **Metro response, Yesenia:** Our reporting system is built on outputs. The higher levels of outcomes can be difficult to do quarterly, but the annual report has information on what counties are seeing for specific populations. The Committee made this recommendation this year, and the question has been elevated about what the high-level goals and outcomes are that we are building towards.
 - **Response, Co-chair Dr. Taylor:** We presented this in our annual report on service utilization gap analysis for where demand exceeds capacity.
- **Comment, Dan Fowler:** Unmet needs need context. Sometimes, I worry that it seems to the public that we are not effective. If we did not do this work, it would be worse. Context needs to be created for visuals and reports so that the work is valued.

Supportive Housing Services Oversight Committee Meeting Summary

- **Comment, Co-chair Dr. Taylor:** I agree, public health preventions continue to integrate preventive measures and are comprehensive of context.
- **Comment, Dr. Bane:** This is truly a public health problem, and communicating systemic problems can be difficult. We are providing the best care we can. I like the public health model for public communication.

Josh asked the counties to share any notable highlights from their Q2 reports.

Jes shared that Washington County compared messaging about an emergency response system to the housing crisis. She reflected that the goal is not to end homelessness in the county, but that they are on track for their housing placement goals. The county has spent 42% of its adjusted forecast expenditure, which is higher than they like to see as Q3 and Q4 traditionally has more spending. She highlighted that they broke ground for a future Hillsboro shelter, which is part of the stabilization plan.

Vahid shared that Clackamas County's rapid rehousing and eviction prevention programs are moving ahead of pace, and their Community Paramedic Division applauded the work completed. He noted the county is doing a lot of work to launch the Medicaid 11-15 waiver.

Breanna Flores, Multnomah County, shared that the county is ahead of its Q2 goals and met its shelter goal. She noted that SHS dollars filled gaps to have the beds needed for the community sheltering strategy. She noted that their adult system has been underfunded, and the Q2 report discusses that in detail. Breanna thanked providers for doing the work and noted some items have been pushed out to FY 2026 due to construction delays. She highlighted that they are expanding their PSH system and culturally specific programs.

Committee members had the following questions:

- **Comment, Jeremiah:** The rollout of the waiver in the housing sector has been overwhelming, as there is a lot of demand. I would like to talk about the impact of the waiver on SHS providers, it seems that there is limited capacity. I am curious to know if the waiver is taking work away from other housing services.
- **Comment, Peter:** It would be great if there was a flow chart for case managers on funding sources available for households. I think the waiver issues are being worked out, and then it will be a great part of the solution.

Next Steps

Yesenia thanked county staff for presenting.

Josh thanked everyone for their participation and noted that Committee members can email any remaining questions to Metro staff.

Next steps include:

- Metro staff to create a summary table detailing how much money each county has in their stabilization, RIF, and contingency funds.
- The Committee to consider discussing the 11-15 waiver impacts.
- Next meeting: April 28, 2025, 9:30 am – 12 pm.



Supportive Housing Services Oversight Committee Meeting Summary

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:47 am.



PROFESSIONALIZING HOUSING SERVICE WORK: OPPORTUNITIES IN GREATER PORTLAND

PREPARED BY METRO HOUSING DEPARTMENT'S REGIONAL CAPACITY
TEAM

Lead: Melia Deters
Justin Barrieault
Ash Elverfeld
Cole Merkel

FINAL DRAFT, May 2025

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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Housing service workers¹ form the backbone of the greater Portland area's response to homelessness. Working with people who have experienced homelessness is complex and often traumatic, the result of supporting people who have themselves experienced complex traumas. Successfully working with people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity requires specialized skills and trainings, which are often provided by the agency that incoming workers are hired by, rather than a centralized, education-oriented institution or program. The availability of centralized, readily available training for frontline housing and homeless service workers could help develop a skilled workforce pipeline while alleviating the training burden from the region's homeless service agencies, allowing them to focus on supporting the complex needs of their clients.

Voter passage and implementation of the Metro Supportive Housing Services measure, the largest homeless services investment per capita in the country, has uncovered additional layers to our region's social service workforce challenges. New agencies and programs have been created resulting in many new frontline workers entering the field. This growth has demonstrated a need for new training pathways so that these workers have the tools and skills they need to support clients on their first day of work with a shared expectation of care. Metro, along with Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties—in conjunction with the Metro Supportive Housing Services Tri-County Planning Body, and our region's service providers—have identified that systematizing training for frontline service providers is a fundamental requirement to scale up our region's response to homelessness.

The following research paper outlines the introductory framework of necessary courses and trainings for frontline housing and homeless service workers and potential strategies for implementing a training program in greater Portland. At its core, the mission of this research—and any resulting policy recommendations that come from it—is to ensure a diverse, well-trained workforce of housing service workers who have the skills, the tools and the training to successfully support individuals experiencing homelessness or transitioning to housing. In other words, the goal of this work is to ensure that anyone who wants to do this work—whether they've themselves experienced homelessness or housing insecurity or are looking for a career change—can enter the field readily, easily and with the appropriate training and support they need to succeed. As an organizing principle, the team developing this project has been calling it the housing service worker certification or HSWC.

This paper has been researched and written in phases with the core thesis in each section exploring whether a training program exists that meets the various needs of individuals entering frontline homeless service work. **The research demonstrates there is currently no existing program offering all the necessary courses suggested by providers and**

¹ For the purposes of this paper and broader research project “housing service worker” is intended to serve as a wide-ranging term that includes anyone who is employed by a nonprofit agency in the frontline work of delivering housing and homeless services. This may include, but is not limited to: case managers, shelter workers, street outreach workers, housing retention workers, coordinated entry staff, drop-in center workers and more.

jurisdictions and argues that some existing training programs could be adapted to meet these needs, or that a new program could be developed through a local training institution. Where identified, potential HSWC implementation strategies are included in the relevant sections of the paper as well as in Appendix A.

The paper's first iteration was focused on post-secondary education options. After the first phase, Metro's regional capacity team brought the initial research findings to homeless service providers around the region by attending coalition meetings and meeting one-on-one with staff of frontline service providers to gather and incorporate their feedback. The second iteration has additional research on workforce boards, state certification and regulation models in healthcare, internships and apprenticeships.

This final draft covers the following areas:

- A summary of **supporting data** from national and local entities pointing towards the need for a housing service worker training program.
- A summary of the **skills and trainings** that Metro, the counties and service providers who were surveyed believe incoming service workers should have access to early in their roles.
- A scan of **national programs and trends** (including higher education programs, advocacy trainings and on demand trainings), which may serve as a potential model for this work.
- A scan of **certifications and degrees at post-secondary education institutions** in the greater Portland area.
- A scan of local **certification models available in behavioral and community healthcare.**
- A summary of the role of **workforce boards** and where they might intersect in this project.
- **Program elements** that the authors recommend incorporating in any potential implementation strategy.
- **Potential strategies** to consider pursuing.

SECTION TWO: SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Local outreach and anecdotal evidence

This effort originated as a request from Metro's Tri-County Planning Body (TCPB), an advisory committee comprised of local subject matter experts, service providers, community members and elected officials. The TCPB's decision to prioritize training as a regional goal was supported by Metro, Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties recognizing that training for frontline housing and homeless service workers is both desperately needed and something that can be regionally available. In addition to their support, Metro's regional capacity team conducted intentional outreach with the region's service providers in fall 2024 resulting in feedback from nearly 200 housing and homeless

service providers. During this provider outreach, which included coalition meetings, jurisdictional gatherings and 1:1 conversations, there was unanimous agreement that more accessible training was needed, and that Metro, working with partners, could play a strategic role in helping to fill this gap. Feedback from these meetings demonstrated the need for equity as a central priority, including the accessibility of new training opportunities for communities of color.

Metro’s regional capacity team has heard service providers echo again and again their sentiments towards the need for more accessible training. During the outreach efforts, the following anonymous statements from well-established providers encapsulated the training challenges they are experiencing:

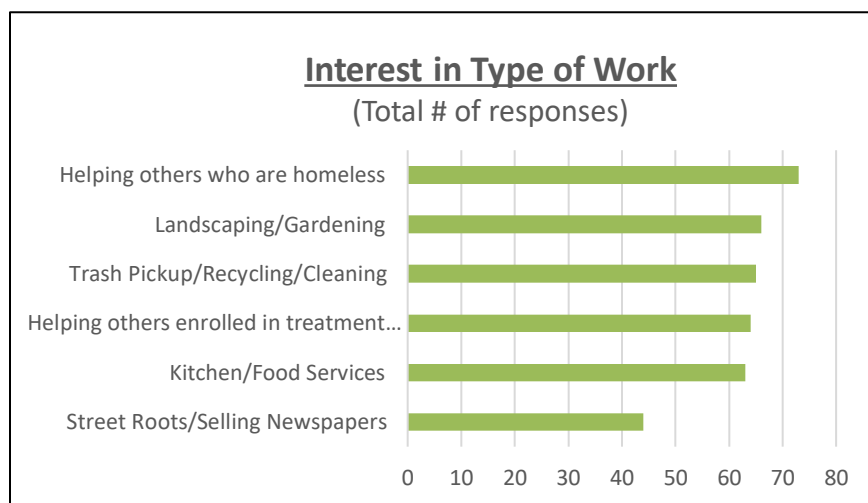
"In the past year we've onboarded eleven new staff and every time it's been challenging to find the trainings they need. And then when we do find them, we have to wait four months to get them enrolled."

"Right now, more than ever in my career, I see the least prepared staff serving the people with the most acute needs."

In addition to widespread support from various interested and impacted parties, there have been other local efforts to gauge interest in housing careers. In 2024, the City of Portland conducted a small-scale survey asking shelter guests about their work interests. There were 101 respondents. Out of 101, 73 recorded interest in work that involves helping others who are homeless. While these examples are anecdotes, they do help to demonstrate a broad appetite in the greater Portland area amongst service providers and people with lived experience of homelessness for accessible baseline trainings to ensure frontline workers have the tools and skills they need to work with people experiencing homelessness.

Chart 2.1: City of Portland survey of shelter guests on “interest in type of work”

Results are generated from an anonymous survey of shelter guests at one shelter.



Beyond people with lived experience of homelessness, the pool of candidates for a housing service worker certification program could extend to those entering the workforce interested in human services career opportunities, those looking for a mid-career pivot, or current housing-service workers looking for professional development opportunities. The policy recommendations from this project have the potential to develop and advance a workforce pipeline in a field that is crucial to the broader community, which is often undertrained and understaffed.

Local and national research on wages and equity disparities

Recent national research has also shown that better training and higher wages for frontline workers have the potential to advance racial equity.

Homeless services workers tend to be mission-driven people who make personal sacrifices to do their work. The organizations they work for are often understaffed with overwhelming work environments and don't have enough resources to deliver services that fully address the needs of their clients. While many working in the field know this to be true anecdotally, a report published by the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) illuminates it. Based on a nationwide survey of homeless services employees, the 2023 report, *Working in Homeless Services: A Survey of the Field*,¹ concludes that adequately addressing homelessness will require investments in organizations and workforce because the wellbeing of staff directly impacts the wellbeing of clients. Two new reports released in the fall of 2024 by NAEH drill further into the data and highlight disparities for unmarried or unpartnered workers and workers of color who are impacted at a greater rate by low salaries in the homeless services sector.

One of the 2024 NAEH reports, *Race-ing to Thrive: Homeless Service Workforce Survey Reveals Low Salaries (and Other Challenges) More Greatly Impact People of Color*,² highlights significant challenges faced by workers of color in the homeless services workforce. While few workers say they "live well," the greatest hardships fall on Black and Latino workers. NAEH found that 28% of white respondents reported that their salary was not enough to cover their basic needs while 42% of Black workers and 43% of Latino workers said their salary wasn't enough to cover basic needs. In the Multnomah County Joint Office of Homeless Services report from August 2023, *Classification, Compensation, and Benefits*,³ a wage study on housing service agencies with Supportive Housing Services contracts, only 31% of employees felt their salary was enough to cover their basic needs, illustrating a higher local severity. NAEH found that to make ends meet, Black and Latino workers are more likely to work additional jobs, rely on credit cards and public or charitable assistance (like SNAP benefits) when compared to their white counterparts.

The other report, *Increasingly Unsustainable: Unpartnered Homeless Services Workers Struggle to Make Ends Meet*,⁴ shows that unmarried or unpartnered homeless service workers face significant financial hardship in comparison to their married or partnered coworkers (who have an additional source of household income). From the NAEH survey, they found that 39% of unpartnered employees struggle to cover basic expenses, compared

to 11% for their partnered counterparts. They also reported higher levels of concern regarding essentials such as food, housing, and utilities, and are more likely to engage in financially detrimental coping mechanisms like borrowing money from family/friends and skipping bill payments to get by.

The pay scales in social and public services have been shaped by outdated assumptions that workers in the field are married women with husbands and that the husband is the primary earner, while the wife is a secondary income contributor. This historical model has likely contributed significantly to the low wages in the homeless services field because if women were the ones doing the work, the pay wouldn't need to be at the level of a primary household income earner. According to a report by McKinsey & Company, in their *Women in the Workplace* report,⁵ women in the U.S. continue to have higher representation across public and social sectors than in corporations. Seventy-seven percent of the survey respondents to the nationwide NAEH survey were women. Low wages may also be a factor in the underrepresentation of men in the field because partnered or unpartnered, men typically continue to be the primary earner. In a field where there is an increasing emphasis on the importance of culturally responsive services and where practices of cultural humility and competency are expectations of staff, attracting more men to homeless services jobs should be a priority since the majority of unsheltered adults are men.

On the other hand, many women in the field (particularly single women, women in same-sex partnerships and partnered women of all race and ethnicities) do not fit the mold of a secondary earner that the low-wage system was built on. Black women are more likely to be impacted by the outdated system even when they are partnered. According to NAEH, "they are the only racial/ethnic group in which the majority of women (60%) are a sole, primary, or equal earners within their homes. Black women's incomes matter. Their married couple households appear less likely to comfortably afford low salaries."

Locally, according to a November 2024 article published in *The Oregonian*,⁶ the economic instability of housing and homeless services workers remains a primary factor in why housing service workers seek new work within and outside of the housing and homeless services field. Simultaneously, staff wages have increased some with the infusion of Supportive Housing Services funding into the housing and homelessness systems in greater Portland. The Multnomah County wage study found that the average annual salary for frontline outreach and shelter employees was around \$50,000 in 2024, which was about \$10,000 higher than in 2022. Additionally, in 2024, Multnomah County's Joint Office of Homeless Services partnered with the United Way of the Columbia-Willamette to allocate \$10 million to Joint Office contracted providers based on homeless services FTE, to help providers improve retention rates and reduce vacancy rates.

Unfortunately, NAEH found in their national survey that financial strains are compounded by disparities in job roles and advancement opportunities. Workers of color are more frequently found in frontline positions and are underrepresented in management roles. Black employees report higher instances of workplace discrimination and limited professional growth opportunities. Despite these numerous challenges, workers of color

continue to show a strong commitment to their homeless services work and are actually less inclined to leave the field compared to their White counterparts- 39% of White NAEH survey respondents said they were considering leaving the field while 37% of Latino and 30% of Black workers said they were.

Increasing the salaries of workers across a system built on sexist assumptions will take significant investments, from multiple levels of government as well as private foundations. Besides increasing salaries to support workforce retention and increase the effectiveness of the systems addressing homelessness, NAEH recommends raising awareness about the needs of workers of color, ensuring the inclusion of workers of color in management and other relatively better paying jobs, and finally, funding greater opportunities for training and education.⁷ The Multnomah County wage study highlighted similar themes, with Supportive Housing Services contracted employees at local service agencies indicating that the top three things that would help them feel more supported at work were preventing/reducing burnout (this includes addressing compensation, benefits, protecting workloads, role clarity, social cultures of support and more), professional development opportunities and clearer pathways for career advancement.

The reports all offer several of the same or similar recommendations. There are multiple strategies taking place locally to act on recommendations and change the status quo for workers in the housing and homeless systems. In addition to Multnomah County's partnership with United Way to provide \$10 million in Supportive Housing Services funding directly to non-profits for workforce retention,⁸ Clackamas and Washington counties have altered their contracting practices to provide multi-year contracts for SHS-contracted organizations with Multnomah planning for the same. Additionally, Washington County has invested in a county-wide training hub for service workers.

Additionally, the Metro Tri-County Planning Body has established a regional employee recruitment and retention (ERR) goal focused squarely on wages and contracting policies: *"County contracts for SHS funded agencies and providers will establish standards throughout the region to achieve livable wages for direct service staff."* Metro staff are working internally and with county partners to develop an ERR regional implementation strategy, which is scheduled for review by the TCPB in June 2025. This work is happening in tandem with development of training and technical assistance strategies through the regional capacity program.

The greater Portland area has the opportunity with SHS funds to make significant improvements to staff wellbeing and therefore the wellbeing of those being served. From the Multnomah County wage study, there are also many recommendations and next steps that could be addressed through a combination of technical assistance and training as well as through actions identified in the forthcoming Employee Recruitment and Retention regional implementation strategy. Of the recommendations the reports highlight, training could be pursued quickly and provide significant impacts on staff wellbeing.

- Create high-quality, comprehensive, locally-contextualized and accessible trainings for all staff new to the field
- Increase awareness at the management and director levels about the needs of workers of color across all levels of the organization
- Provide opportunities for leadership and management training courses to staff in non-managerial roles in order to build the skill base for workers interested in advancement

SECTION THREE: METHOD

The research for this project was conducted in two phases:

- The first phase focused on working with county partners to identify necessary trainings for incoming frontline workers and identifying post-secondary education pathways offering similar training that might be available.
- The second phase focused on workforce boards, state certification and regulation models in healthcare that could be applicable, internships and apprenticeships.

Between the two phases, Metro's regional capacity team conducted robust outreach with the region's homeless service providers.

The section below outlines the additional work Metro did during these phases to consider racial equity and potential courses for a theoretical housing service worker certification program.

Racial equity lens application

In the fall of 2024, Metro's regional capacity team utilized the Joint Office of Homeless Services' (JOHS) racial equity lens tool to identify any possible unintended harms to historically underserved and excluded communities in the design and implementation of the HSWC program.⁹ This included an application of the tool to this research paper, which serves as the basis for HSWC design and implementation. The group that met to apply the tool was comprised of members from the regional capacity team. The group met a total of three times over a two-month period.

Recommendations from the exercise were then organized into four high-level topic areas: research, outreach and engagement, design and implementation. Implementation of these findings is ongoing.

To review the full report with all the findings, see Appendix D.

SECTION FOUR: SURVEY FINDINGS, TRAININGS AND SKILLS DESIRED FROM JURISDICTIONAL FUNDERS

At the outset of this research project, Metro's regional capacity team recognized the need to develop a baseline understanding of the trainings and skillsets that jurisdictional funders

(many of whom have former housing service workers on their teams) thought were necessary for newly hired frontline service workers to access.

In July 2024, Metro staff circulated a survey to key employees among the Supportive Housing Services jurisdictional partners: Multnomah County's Joint Office of Homeless Services, Clackamas County's Health Housing and Human Services department, Washington County's Housing Department and the Metro Housing Department. The survey asked two questions:

- What skills do you think incoming housing service workers most need when they come into the job?
- As we consider developing a housing service worker certification, what trainings or learning opportunities do you think should be included?

Metro staff then consolidated the responses into high level focus areas, and from there, developed a series of theoretical course descriptions with coursework content (listed below) to highlight the outcomes jurisdictional funders believe are necessary for housing service workers to receive early in their careers. In fall 2024, Metro staff surveyed housing service providers in greater Portland to gather their feedback on these course descriptions. The course descriptions were updated in February 2025 to reflect provider feedback. A red-lined version of the updated course descriptions that demonstrates the incorporation of provider feedback can be found in Appendix C. The course descriptions outlined below are inclusive of the feedback service providers gave. In gathering provider feedback, no information was deleted from the course descriptions, the feedback only generated additional suggestions and nuance.

It is important to note that these theoretical course descriptions are not finalized and may continue to be refined through further outreach to service providers and/or curriculum developers. In this research they served as a means of organizing desired learning outcomes and comparing to what is already available in the region's higher education and workforce training programs. In the future, they may be used to inform and develop course descriptions for a housing service worker certification program.

Theoretical course descriptions for a housing service worker curriculum

Housing service worker case management

The "housing service worker case management" subject area would equip front-line housing service workers with the skills necessary for effective case management. By exploring the history of housing issues in Oregon and current strategies to address inequities, participants would gain insights into effective case planning, motivational interviewing, and working with specific populations. This would enhance their ability to offer comprehensive, empathetic and culturally responsive support. This subject area would cover client confidentiality and ethical standards, as well as essential areas such as benefits navigation. This subject area would also address practical aspects of client care, including managing bed bugs and lice, and understanding hoarding behaviors.

Learning outcomes may include:

- Benefits navigation
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, AKA “food stamps”)
 - The Supplemental Income Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
 - Supplemental Security Income/Social Security Disability Insurance (SSI/SSDI)
 - Oregon Health Plan (OHP)
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Identification/birth certificate assistance
- Housing vouchers
- Energy assistance
- Employment services
- Financial wellness/education
- Data
- Google Suite/Microsoft Office
- Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
- Community services
- Causes of homelessness/poverty
- Fundamentals of case management including:
 - Assertive engagement
 - Motivational interviewing
 - Power dynamics
 - Progressive assistance
 - Conflict resolution/crisis intervention
 - Ethics and conflict of interest
 - Financial education
 - Strength-based approach
 - Barrier reduction
- History of Housing in Oregon/Portland 101 (particular focus placed on Oregon’s history of systemic racism in housing)
- Unconditional positive regard

Basics of housing system navigation

The "basics of housing system navigation" subject area would be designed to empower front-line housing service workers with foundational knowledge and practical skills for navigating complex housing systems. Participants would gain insights into the intricacies of affordable housing, including the application of various types of housing vouchers and the principles of Housing First. This subject area would cover critical topics such as the causes of homelessness and poverty (generally), emergency response planning, and the application of trauma-informed approaches when addressing domestic violence and other crises. Additionally, attendees would learn about community resources, fair housing laws, and the history of housing issues in Oregon and Portland, which are crucial for effective housing navigation and client advocacy in greater Portland. With a focus on housing solutions and rapid rehousing, participants would also become proficient in managing paperwork and understanding income eligibility for subsidized housing.

Learning outcomes may include:

- Housing systems, including:
 - Housing vouchers (Regional Long-term Rent Assistance, Section 8 or Housing Choice Vouchers, Project-based Vouchers)
 - Types of housing (income restricted apartment, fair market apartments, supportive housing, affordable housing)
 - Housing authorities
 - Federal housing funding
- Fair housing law
- Eviction navigation/prevention
- Eviction expungement
- Rapid rehousing
- Permanent support housing
- Reasonable accommodations
- Oregon landlord/tenant law
- McKinney-Vento
- Cross-sector collaboration
- Navigating the shelter system
- Causes of homelessness/poverty (generally)
- Coordinated entry
- History of housing in Oregon/Portland 201
- The principles of Housing First
- Housing navigation practices

- Sustainability in housing
- Domestic violence
- Housing for individuals with a criminal record
- Tenant organizing/tenant rights

Diversity, equity, and inclusion

The "diversity, equity, and inclusion" subject area would be designed for front-line housing service workers to deepen their understanding and application of inclusive practices in their daily work. Participants would explore the fundamentals of diversity, equity, and inclusion, including cultural humility and the importance of cultural responsiveness in supporting clients from various identity groups. This subject area addresses implicit bias, power dynamics, and the ethics of working with diverse populations, emphasizing respect for lived experiences.

Learning outcomes would cover DEI fundamentals, including:

- Cultural humility
- Culturally responsive services
- Mandatory reporting
- Working with people with intersectional identities
- LGBTQ2IA+ content
- Harm reduction
- Honoring lived experience
- Implicit bias
- History of racial exclusion in Oregon
- Power dynamics
- Self-awareness

Trauma-informed care and self-care

The "trauma-informed care and self-care" subject area would be crafted for front-line housing service workers to provide essential strategies for both client support and personal well-being. This subject area would focus on the foundations of trauma-informed care, teaching participants how to apply trauma-sensitive approaches when working with individuals experiencing homelessness, poverty, domestic violence, substance use disorder, and other significant challenges. Emphasis is placed on developing robust self-care practices to combat compassion fatigue and maintain resilience. This subject area would also cover practical aspects such as creating safer spaces, integrating harm reduction principles, and understanding power dynamics. This knowledge equips service workers with the skills to support both themselves and their clients effectively.

Learning outcomes may include:

- Coping strategies
- Boundary setting
- Compassion fatigue
- Foundations of trauma-informed care and trauma intervention programs
- Person centered thinking
- Safer spaces and planning
- Self-care
- Employee resiliency
- Resiliency
- Self-awareness
- Access to recovery supports
- Secondary trauma

Substance use, recovery, and mental health

The "substance use, recovery, and mental health" subject area for front-line housing service workers would provide essential tools and strategies to effectively support individuals facing complex mental health/substance use disorder challenges. Participants would explore crucial topics such as crisis intervention and emergency response protocol, including planning and procedures for handling urgent situations. Additionally, the subject area would cover life skills development and building resiliency to empower both clients and service providers in navigating the recovery journey.

Learning outcomes may include:

- Boundary setting
- Bystander intervention
- Crisis intervention
- De-escalation
- Conflict resolution
- Emergency response; emergency action planning and procedures:
 - Naloxone administration,
 - First aid
 - CPR
 - Mental Health First Aid
 - Critical time intervention

- Seeking safety
- Bloodborne pathogens
- Fundamentals of harm reduction
- Navigating mental health and recovery resources, including:
 - Treatment options based on insurance
 - Recovery housing options
 - Housing with mental health support
 - Outpatient and inpatient services
 - Public health resources
- Common substances found in shelter
- Common mental health disorders
- Relapse and relapse prevention
- Wellness Recovery Action Plans (W.R.A.P.)
- Orientation to Recovery community
- Support and self-help groups
- Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)

SECTION FIVE: NATIONAL MODELS AND INSIGHTS

In the national scan of certification and trainings, we found several different models being used to train and/or certify people to work in homeless services. While there are examples we could learn from, none are directly replicable for what we are seeking to create—a comprehensive, accessible training for frontline workers to begin work in housing and homeless services settings.

Our initial research scope was focused on programs that prioritized people with lived experience of homelessness and peer work in homeless services, but we found few examples. In response, we broadened the scope to include program entry and curriculum for anyone, not just those with lived experience. With that broadened scope, we found several certifications and degrees in post-secondary education settings, advocacy trainings, virtual trainings and an example of one program that combines virtual training with resume and job placement support.

- **The advocacy training** courses are designed for people to increase their leadership skills and advocate for effective policies to address homelessness (at a state legislature or city council meeting, for example); they can also support professional development of staff already in the field who want to leverage their experience toward systemic change.

- **The post-secondary education programs** vary in their objectives, from focusing on preparing frontline staff for the workforce to providing a steppingstone to more advanced degrees.
- **The virtual trainings** offer flexibility and more diversity of training topics (for example, on demand trainings in topics like trauma-informed care or culturally responsive street outreach).

Several of the post-secondary education programs we researched have been created and launched in recent years, and as a result, there are no strong program outcomes or metrics to observe yet. For instance, Santa Monica College’s Homeless Service Work certificate hosted their first cohort in the fall 2024 and San Diego City College’s Program for Engaged Educational Resources was created in 2021.

Without adequate historical data on the programs, we are unable to identify any inequities that might be occurring, or the job placement rate success of graduates. We hypothesize that the most impactful program designs were informed by engaging people with lived experience, engaging industry veterans and experts, providing opportunities for practicums in the field, and having access to counselors that can assist students with resume and job placement support. These models also suggest that buy-in and partnership early on from service providers and Continuum of Care leaders are essential to the immediate and long-term success of the programs.

Chat 5.1: National models

A brief glance at all the similar or adjacent national models identified.

Program name	Program agency	Program type
Program for Engaged Educational Resources (PEER)	San Diego City College	College certificate
Homeless Service Work Certificate	Santa Monica College	College certificate
Care Navigation and Coordination Certificate	Seattle Central College	College certificate
Care Navigation and Coordination Certificate	Seattle Central College	Associate degree
Associate of Arts in Behavioral Sciences: Social Work	San Diego City College	Associate degree
Speak Up!	Corporation for Supportive Housing	Advocacy training course
Lived Experience Training Academy (LETA)	National Coalition for the Homeless	Advocacy training course
Residents Organizing for Change (ROC)	Neighborhood Partnerships Oregon	Advocacy training course

Street Roots Ambassador Program	Street Roots Portland	Advocacy training course
The Alliance Center for Capacity Building (the Center)	National Alliance to End Homelessness	Virtual training course
Homeless and Housing Resource Center (HHRC)	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)	Virtual training course
Supportive Housing Training Center	Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)	Virtual training course
C4 Innovations	C4 Innovations	Virtual training course
Homeless Training Center	Homeless Training	Virtual training course
HUD Exchange	The Department of Housing and Urban Development	Virtual training course

In the section below, we outline the national models we identified in our research. To differentiate among the different models of training and certifications, they are separated in this section by post-secondary education certificate programs, associate level college programs, advocacy training programs, virtual training and other programs.

Post-secondary education programs

Certificates

There are several colleges on the West Coast that feature curriculums designed for students pursuing work in homeless services. In our research, we did not find any comparable examples in other parts of the United States. In our findings, San Diego City College's Program for Engaged Educational Resources appears to be the first of its kind in the nation with a comprehensive approach to in-class learning, practicum, and job placement support for incoming social service workers. That program launched in 2021.

The Santa Monica College Homeless Service Work Certificate program is launching its inaugural year in the fall of 2024 and offers in-class learning with job placement support. The Care Navigation and Coordination certificate program at Seattle Central College would be a good fit for someone already employed in the social and human services workforce to learn about navigation through social service and healthcare systems.

- **Program for Engaged Educational Resources (PEER), San Diego City College¹⁰**
 - **Synopsis:** This certificate program is designed for those interested in human and social services work. The curriculum focuses specifically on the field of homeless services and students are offered an academic counselor, career coach for resume and job searching skills and job fairs with homeless

services organizations. The program was created through a partnership between San Diego Housing Commission and the college.

- **Length of program:** This program can be completed in one academic term, or two to three months.
- **Includes coursework on:** counseling, homeless services, introduction to human services and system navigation.
- **Estimated cost:** San Diego City College charges \$46 per unit. This is a two-unit course, coming to a total of \$92 for tuition.
- **Homeless Service Work Certificate, Santa Monica College¹¹**
 - **Synopsis:** This certificate will prepare individuals to work on the front lines of social services, empowering individuals and families facing challenges. Those certified may provide direct services, advocate for clients' rights and needs, and connect them with essential community resources. The curriculum was developed by industry experts. The program includes partnering with people who have experience with the work and will also assist them with finding jobs.
 - **Length of program:** This program takes one academic year to complete with students attending part-time.
 - **Includes coursework on:** community resources, ethics, family systems, interviewing, introduction to human services, math, practicum, practicum seminar and writing.
 - **Estimated cost:** This program is free for the 25 students admitted to the inaugural cohort. The program funding and accompanying scholarships are provided by a contract with the Los Angeles Housing Services Authority.
- **Care Navigation and Coordination Certificate, Seattle Central College¹²**
 - **Synopsis:** This certificate program is designed to prepare students to assist people through navigating social services and healthcare systems.
 - **Length of program:** This program takes 2 quarters to complete if a student is attending part time, or 6 months.
 - Both classes for this certificate are focused on system navigation.
 - **Estimated cost:** \$1,250-\$1,500 for in-state tuition.

Associate degree programs

There are a number of associate degrees in social and human services across the country, including some that have focused coursework specific to homeless services. Featured here are two West Coast colleges:

- **Social & Human Services Associate of Applied Sciences Transfer Degree, Seattle Central College¹³**

- **Synopsis:** This associate transfer degree program is meant to serve students interested in helping professions; students have the option of choosing a general or chemical dependency track. The curriculum is designed to teach critical analysis and problem-solving skills and offers experiential learning opportunities. This program includes a supervised 330-hour community-based field practicum.
- **Length of program:** This program typically takes two academic years to complete.
- **Includes coursework on:** substance use, case management, crisis intervention, DEI, ethics, grief and loss, group counseling, interviewing, introduction to human services, math, mental health, policy, practicum, psychology/human development, suicide prevention, system navigation and writing.
- **Estimated cost:** \$10,000-\$11,000 for in-state tuition.
- **Associate of Arts in Behavioral Sciences: Social Work, San Diego City College¹⁴**
 - **Synopsis:** This associate degree program is designed to prepare students for entry-level work in applied and paraprofessional occupations in the social services field and/or to transfer to four-year colleges. It isn't specific to the homeless services field but includes coursework preparing students for positions like a case manager aid, social work aid and community outreach worker.
 - **Length of program:** This program typically takes two academic years to complete.
 - **Includes coursework in:** biology, counseling, economics, introduction to human services, math, psychology/human development and sociology.
 - **Estimated cost:** \$2,000 for residents of California.

Advocacy trainings for people with lived experience of homelessness

Featured in this section are several advocacy programs for people with lived experience. Participants who complete these programs often describe that beyond the practical skills they learn, they feel a renewed sense of agency, empowerment and personal growth. Potential outcomes for learners in these advocacy programs include becoming community leaders, advisors, housing services staff and engaging in public speaking or organizing efforts. Their involvement in advocacy ensures that the voices of those who have been homeless are central in shaping policies and services that truly address the challenges they face. These programs are not intended to be comprehensive trainings for a frontline service worker to enter the workforce but are an avenue for personal and professional development, a pairing or building block to work in homeless or other social and human services.

- **Speak Up!, Corporation for Supportive Housing¹⁵**

- Speak Up! is a curriculum designed to help empower people with lived experience of homelessness to become community leaders. Over the course of a year, formerly homeless individuals attend monthly classes on housing policy, advocacy, storytelling and personal narrative development. They also receive coaching on public speaking and get opportunities to advocate to local and national levels of leadership. The program is popular in California, specifically Los Angeles, but there have been Speak Up! programs in other states as well, including one recently launched in Indianapolis, Indiana. CSH offers this program virtually or in-person, but the in-person option is more common. The training lasts between six and twelve months.
- **Lived Experience Training Academy (LETA)**, National Coalition for the Homeless¹⁶
 - LETA curriculum was designed and developed by Dr. Rajni Shankar-Brown with the assistance of people throughout the United States who were currently or formerly experiencing homelessness in focus group interviews. LETA has the dual purpose of creating graduates who are candidates for advisory roles and employment in homeless services. Completion of the program results in a professional certificate from Stetson University.
 - Includes the following courses: communication, coalition building, conflict resolution, financial wellbeing, history of homelessness, inclusive leadership, organizing & advocacy, public policy contextualization, technology literacy and wellness & self-care.
- **Residents Organizing for Change (ROC)**, Neighborhood Partnerships, Oregon¹⁷
 - ROC is a statewide organizing agency for residents of affordable housing, frontline staff and those in need of housing. ROC focuses on affordable housing advocacy by training members to testify and share their stories with policy makers. As a program of Neighborhood Partnerships and the Oregon Housing Alliance, ROC members typically advocate during the Oregon legislative session.
 - ROC has sister organizations in California (Residents United Network, RUN) and Washington State (Resident Action Project, RAP).
- **Street Roots Ambassador Program**, Street Roots, Portland¹⁸
- Born out of the COVID-19 pandemic, Street Roots ambassadors are vendors (people who were currently experiencing or had experienced homelessness or extreme poverty) who supported their fellow houseless neighbors with important public health information and other essential services during the pandemic.
 - The Ambassadors have been engaged to conduct surveys with people experiencing homelessness for Portland State University. They continue to conduct outreach as well as engage in “civic circles,” facilitated conversations with community groups.

Other models

- **The Homeless Leadership Academy**, Florida Coalition to End Homelessness¹⁹
- The Homeless Leadership Academy is an initiative through the Florida Coalition to End Homelessness. It was developed with the strong backing of several Florida Continuum of Care leaders and funded through allocation from the Coalition's local Continuum of Care's Youth Homeless System Improvement grant. This grant originated from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It was designed through the support of AmeriCorps Florida and will be managed by AmeriCorps VISTA members in the future through the Coalition. The program was created with a focus on bringing youth aged 16-24 with lived experience through their program and into five-to-ten-month long service work placements but anyone with lived experience can take their online trainings.
 - Includes coursework in: introduction to homelessness, introduction to Housing First, cultural competency and responsiveness, Mental Health First Aid, harm reduction, homelessness problem solving (diversion), Data Matters: HMIS, determining and documenting homelessness and housing 101.

Virtual trainings

Virtual training centers offer access to people no matter where they are located allowing flexibility. Some but not all trainings include certification of completion.

- **The Alliance Center for Capacity Building (the Center)**, National Alliance to End Homelessness²⁰
 - The Center operates through the National Alliance to End Homelessness, which is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization focused on preventing and ending homelessness through advocacy, research, and policy development. They offer some training in-person but also have numerous courses that are online and self-paced. The courses range from a focus on the Housing First Approach, history of homelessness, outreach, system design, rapid re-housing, emergency shelter, and diversion and problem-solving strategy training.
 - Includes trainings online in: improving street outreach as a community, racial equity, rapid re-housing, trauma-informed care in homeless response, using data to analyze racial disparities in the homelessness system, historic and ongoing structural racism, Understanding How We Got Here: How Historic and Ongoing Structural Racism Create Racial Disparities, Housing First, harm reduction, cultural humility and effective emergency shelter.
- **Homeless and Housing Resource Center (HHRC)**, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)²¹
 - The HHRC was developed through a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the U.S. Department of

Health and Human Services and is operated by Policy Research, Inc. The HHRC offers free, self-paced, online courses that focus on evidence-based approaches to housing and treatment models for people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness who also have mental illness, emotional disturbance, substance use disorders and/or co-occurring disorders. The courses are accredited and count toward continuing education units with the National Association of Social Workers.

- Includes courses in: hoarding disorder, trauma-informed outreach and engagement, supporting people who use methamphetamine, whole-person care for opioid use disorder, serious mental illness and homelessness, treatment models and engagement, housing models, housing navigation, and engagement.
- **Supportive Housing Training Center**, Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)²²
 - The Supportive Housing Training Center is developed and managed by CSH. CSH is a nonprofit organization that promotes supportive housing as a solution for addressing homelessness. The training center offers free, on-demand virtual trainings, in addition to live virtual and in-person trainings for a fee. Recently, the Supportive Housing Training Center was accredited by the International Accreditors for Education and Training (IACET), meaning that most live webinars in the Supportive Housing Training Center now qualify for Continuing Education Units (CEUs).
 - Includes courses in: behavioral health, property management and development, healthcare, supervision, supportive services trauma-informed approaches, harm reduction, promoting housing stability through active engagement, and navigating service coordination in supportive housing.
- **Homeless Training Center**, Homeless Training²³
 - The Homeless Training Center offers online de-escalation training for staff who interact with individuals experiencing homelessness. The Homeless Training Center offers both pre-recorded and live training courses. The trainings offered do not count towards a certification or other credential.
 - Included courses in: de-escalation, mental illness, substance abuse, policing and homelessness, supporting your fellow co-workers, dealing with prejudice, sexual harassment, exclusions, homelessness and youth, and hoarding.
- **C4 Innovations**²⁴
 - C4 Innovations came out of a project called the Homelessness Resource Center, a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration initiative. Their focus is on promoting equitable access to recovery, wellness, and housing stability for marginalized people. They emphasize racial equity and utilize person-centered, trauma-informed, and recovery-oriented

approaches to improve the quality of care and support for diverse communities. Their online learning platform offers live and on-demand self-paced courses in a number of different topics related to homeless services.

- Includes courses in: LGBTQ client engagement, case management best practices, intimate partner violence and homelessness, housing focused outreach, and equity and inclusion: navigating systemic marginalization.
- **HUD Exchange²⁵**
 - The HUD Exchange is a website of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and offers thousands of trainings, both video recordings and self-paced modules, with a focus on compliance with and technical assistance for federal programs, funding streams and software systems. The website also has trainings and webinar recordings on system-level strategies for topics like supporting an aging population with their housing needs. The intended audience for many of these trainings seems to be housing system administrators or people making strategic service decisions at an organizational leadership level. The library is vast, meaning that there may be trainings that are useful for incoming frontline staff, but these trainings can be difficult to sort, and given that they go back as far as 2008, there are likely trainings that are no longer relevant to current best practices.
 - Includes courses in: Fair housing law compliance, strategies to advance housing first, principles of street outreach, application and administration of public housing vouchers and implementation of myriad other federal programs.

In summary, our national scan turned up three different types of models to train people in homeless services: advocacy programs, college programs and virtual training platforms. None appear to be exactly what this project is seeking to identify: a broadly accessible and comprehensive training for frontline workers to begin work in housing and homeless services settings. However, there is potential to scale up some of these existing training platforms to serve our community in the near term. These models found around our country also illuminate some best practices as we decide the best pathway for our region.

If we were to take all these national models, pull out pieces from each and build something in the greater Portland area, it might look like this:

- Use the findings from engagement with **national experts, local leaders, funders, local and national program implementers and people with lived experience** to hear what curriculums, environments and supports are necessary for people to go from training to the frontline work.
- Include training or course offerings on **Mental Health First Aid, Housing First, harm reduction, equity and inclusion, data, history and policy in context, case management, trauma-informed care, and introduction to human development.**

- Create partnerships that allow for **experiential learning** in shelters and on the streets with outreach workers and other frontline spaces.
- **Address barriers with accessible training:** translation and interpretation, childcare, various instructional methods and free or low-cost options, computer skills training, among other strategies to increase accessibility.
- **Peer mentorship** after completion of the program to create connection and support networks.
- Options for **supportive services for students/trainees** during and after completion of the program.
- **Resume and job search support**, strengthened by Supportive Housing Services organization partners that ensure living wage jobs.
- **Post-grad opportunities** for additional trainings beyond the baseline certification courses.

Potential implementation strategy one: scale up on-demand trainings

Concept

As outlined above, there are several organizations that offer on-demand trainings in fundamentals of homeless services, which may be a quick pathway to ensuring providers have what they need now as we consider additional options.

To ensure that our efforts are not duplicative:

- Identify the current trainings that are occurring locally that match provider needs.
- Coordinate, leverage, and invest in these trainings, to make them more readily accessible to frontline-service workers.

Trainings in this strategy are inclusive of the variety of trainings that are available to frontline-service workers, including skills like CPR but also training in trauma-informed care.

Implementation

- Conduct a landscape analysis of the current trainings available in the region.
- Compare/contrast what is currently available against provider need.
- Engage in efforts to increase the accessibility of these trainings.
- Offer immediate access to on-demand trainings

Benefits

- Fastest option
- Honors the work of frontline service providers

Detriments

- Possibility of needed trainings not being available.
- Not as wholistic for the employee.
- On-demand trainings are virtual only
- On-demand makes it challenging for connecting with an instructor

SECTION SIX: LOCAL RESEARCH

As outlined above, a fundamental goal of this research project was to identify if a training or certification program exists in greater Portland that provides the baseline skills housing service workers need early in their careers, or if there are programs with elements that could collectively support that type of a certification.

To answer this question, we performed a landscape analysis of existing human services related education and training programs in greater Portland. Our first stage of research focused heavily on local post-secondary education institutions and their offerings. Colleges and universities, including community colleges, have many preexisting structures and resources that the housing service worker certification could benefit from, like existing curriculum and curriculum development expertise, student supports, faculty, legitimized certificates and degrees, and more. We acknowledge institutions of higher education have historically been white-dominant and marginalized communities and backgrounds have experienced barriers like cost, time commitment, lack of learning-style accommodation, lack of disability accommodation, lack of cultural accommodation and more. In Appendix D, you can find a breakdown of each of the region's community college student demographics and Portland State University's Center for Executive and Professional Education (CEPE), as well as supports that they offer their students. Our second stage of analysis focused more heavily on opportunities outside of post-secondary education, in part, to remediate barriers to people from marginalized backgrounds, including racial, economic, religious, and cultural. Through this landscape analysis, we found several pathways to specialized training or earning a certification as a human services professional:

- **Current trainings being offered by the counties and other partners** to prepare front-line housing service workers.
- **Post-secondary education programs** hosted at community colleges or four-year universities containing coursework around human services that eventually lead to a degree or certificate. This includes a broad overview of certificate programs, associate degrees and non-credit options. We've intentionally left out master's level programs given the prerequisite education and cost necessary to attain these degrees.

- **State certification models** for community and behavioral healthcare jobs. Participants engage in state-approved training programs and then seek certification with the State of Oregon.
- **Internships** embedded in most of the identified programs creating on-the-job learning opportunities for participants.
- **Apprenticeships** in the State of Oregon providing paid training opportunities mostly in the trades, and potentially in human services.
- How **workforce board** organizations support many of these programs and what they have to offer in terms of workforce development.

There is overlap between many of these systems. For example, in some cases, the community college degree or certificate programs can meet the prerequisites for the state certifications and regulations. Simultaneously, workforce boards could be funding training programs that meet the prerequisites for the state behavioral health certifications. Below you will find the programs listed, a general overview of their requirements and the commonalities and outliers.

Current training offerings from counties and other community partners

A core value of this research project is to identify existing, scalable training for frontline workers to avoid duplicating training services already being provided. An important avenue for this is identifying what trainings Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties are currently offering to their frontline service providers, as well as what service providers are offering to their staff members, a summary of which can be found below.

Clackamas County requires all contracted housing and homeless services providers to complete training in the following areas:

- The Housing First Responder training, which is mandatory for all providers, covers a variety of essential topics, including motivational interviewing, helping workers engage effectively with clients; working with individuals in crisis, a crucial skill for managing high-stress situations; homelessness diversion, to assist individuals in avoiding or exiting homelessness; and domestic violence (DV) training, to ensure workers can support survivors appropriately. The program also includes system mapping, enabling staff to navigate and understand available services, and de-escalation techniques, which are vital for handling tense or challenging interactions.
- Clackamas County offers training in Regional Long-Term Rent Assistance (RLRA), giving staff the knowledge needed to support clients in securing stable housing.
- Case conferencing training provides a platform for workers to collaborate and discuss complex cases, ensuring the best outcomes for those they serve.
- Additional opportunities include training in:
 - HMIS
 - Assertive engagement

- Fair Housing
- Mental Health First Aid
- Mandatory Reporting

Multnomah County has taken the following actions to provide training to their housing and homeless services providers:

- Specialized assertive engagement trainers are available to provide training four times a month, at no cost to community partners. These sessions are particularly valuable for enhancing communication and building trust with clients.
- The county has appointed a training coordinator to manage and streamline the training process, ensuring that staff have access to the most relevant and up-to-date resources.
- For those working with survivors of domestic and sexual violence, a Domestic & Sexual Violence Program Specialist is available to offer focused training in these critical areas.
- Recognizing the importance of proactive learning, Multnomah County offers enhanced training opportunities that are tailored to address emerging needs in the housing services field.
- The Coordinated Entry/Access program has a free podcast resource, allowing staff to engage with training material in a flexible, on-the-go format.²⁶
- The county's Continuum of Care training is available on-demand, giving workers access to valuable content whenever it fits their schedules.
- Multnomah County also offers several live trainings and training modules: assertive engagement, fair housing basics, equal access to housing, domestic violence survivors, and more.

Washington County has taken the following steps in their efforts to provide adequate training to their housing and homeless services providers/staff:

- On-demand training through Power DMS, a learning management software program. This platform provides flexibility for workers to engage with training content at their own pace, ensuring that staff can continue learning and growing without disrupting their daily responsibilities.
- Washington county is offering provider training that focuses on increasing culturally responsive service provision, helping staff better understand and meet the diverse needs of the community they serve.
- A learning series is also available to contracted providers, offering deep dives into important topics and providing an opportunity for professional growth.
- To complement live and interactive training, Washington County has made pre-recorded trainings available on their YouTube channel. These videos cover essential

topics like housing navigation, regional long-term rent assistance, domestic violence, and resiliency/self-care.

- For broader community engagement, the Housing and Supportive Services Network (HSSN) holds monthly meetings that are open to all. These meetings foster collaboration, encourage the sharing of best practices, and create a space for providers to connect and learn from one another.

Additionally, frontline housing and homeless service providers are delivering various trainings to their workers. Some of these trainings are part of broader, client-facing models, like Rent Well, a tenant education program for Oregon and Washington residents.²⁷ Rent Well supports individuals, often those who have experienced homelessness or an eviction, to gain the tools they need to succeed in rental housing.

Agencies provide other trainings to frontline workers to support them with the skills or tools they need to succeed. As mentioned in the introduction, while these trainings are essential for frontline workers, it is often incumbent on the agency to provide it, whether in-house or through a third party. It can be challenging for providers to access these trainings regularly enough to support their incoming staff with timely information.

As part of the outreach for this project, Metro's regional capacity team surveyed 32 different providers to understand how their training offerings aligned with the proposed HSWC curriculum. The results of that survey can be found in Appendix C. We recognize this is a limited scope and survey and did not ask certain questions like whether the agencies would prefer to have these trainings hosted elsewhere, or whether they would be willing to scale up their trainings for other providers in the region to access.

Identifying an implementation strategy to scale up these existing trainings would require significant additional research and potential partnership with a third-party agency specialized in analyzing regional trainings, like a workforce board.

Post-secondary education programs

In the section below, we outline the post-secondary education programs containing coursework in human services, leading to certificates or degrees, that are available in the greater Portland area. Under each program there is a synopsis, required coursework and a cost estimation. The cost estimations do not include financial aid, which can have a significant impact on the cost of a program. Students can enroll in community college programs without a high school diploma or GED, but they do need one or the other to apply for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

To be clear, the housing service worker certification research project and any implementation recommendations that come from this research are not intended to replace the quality work the region's post-secondary education institutions are doing to train and certify the next generation of social workers and service providers. Rather, the focus is on ensuring that there is a robust continuum of frontline housing and homeless service

workers who have the skills and tools they need to succeed early in their careers through low-barrier, low-cost pathways.

Chart 6.1: Summary of all regional, human-services post-secondary education programs and their cost

Institution	Certificate	Length of program	Cost
Clackamas Community College	Alcohol and Drug Counselor Career Pathway Certificate of Completion	3 months	\$2,400
Clackamas Community College	Human Services Generalist Certificate of Completion	9 months	\$6,255
Mt. Hood Community College	Behavioral Health Care Specialist Certificate	9 months	\$12,700
Mt. Hood Community College	Youth Worker Certificate	1 year	\$6,200
Portland Community College	Foundations in Human Services Career Pathway Certificate	3 months	\$2,200
Institution	Associate degree	Length of program	Cost
Clackamas Community College	Human Services Generalist Associate of Applied Science	2 years	\$12,700
Mt. Hood Community College	Mental Health Social Service and Addiction Counseling Associate of Applied Science	2 years	\$12,700
Portland Community College	Family and Human Services Associate Degree	2 years	\$12,000
Institution	Bachelor's degree	Length of program	Cost
George Fox, Pacific, Portland State, University of Portland, and Warner Pacific	Bachelor of Social Work	4 years	\$47,500-\$227,000

Community college programs

The three community colleges in greater Portland (Clackamas Community College, Mt. Hood Community College and Portland Community College) offer the following human services adjacent certificate and degree programs. These programs can be offered in-person, online or in a hybrid learning environment. Some are advertised or encouraged as precursors to state certifications like the Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor which are described in detail in a later section.

If a person is enrolled at a community college in either a certificate or associate degree program, they have access to the college's student support resources. Clackamas Community College, Mt. Hood Community College and Portland Community College all have designated staff for helping students struggling with their basic needs (housing, hunger, childcare and more). They also all have career planning assistance, tutoring and veteran centers.

You'll notice that several of the below institutions offer both Career Pathway Certificates and associate degree programs on the same topic. Enrolling in a certificate program instead

of an associate program can reduce costs by skipping general education requirements and shortening the time commitment.²⁸ Certificate programs are quicker and cheaper than associate programs, but associate programs can serve as a prerequisite for other certifications and as a springboard for a bachelor's degree. All programs are certified by the state of Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Committee (HECC).

- **Alcohol and Drug Counselor Career Pathway Certificate of Completion**, Clackamas Community College²⁹
 - **Synopsis:** Completion of this program is meant to prepare the student for the Mental Health and Addiction Certification Board of Oregon (MHACBO) Certified Drug and Alcohol Counselor (CADC) exam and provides a foundation for a career in substance abuse treatment.
 - **Length of program:** This program can be completed in as little as one term, or three to four months, depending on how many credits the student takes each term.
 - **Includes coursework on:** substance use, diagnosis and treatment of substance abuse, ethics, group counseling, infectious disease and interviewing.
 - **Estimated cost:** Tuition is around \$2,400 for the entire program.
- **Human Services Generalist Certificate of Completion**, Clackamas Community College³⁰
 - **Synopsis:** This certificate will prepare individuals to work on the front lines of social services, empowering individuals and families facing challenges. They may provide direct services, advocate for clients' rights and needs and connect them with essential community social service resources.
 - **Length of program:** This program can be completed in as little as one academic year, or nine months.
 - **Includes coursework on:** community resources, ethics, family systems, general interviewing skills in human services, introduction to human services, math, practicum, practicum seminar and writing.
 - **Estimated cost:** Tuition is around \$6,255 for the entire program.
- **Human Services Generalist Associate of Applied Science**, Clackamas Community College³¹
 - **Synopsis:** Clackamas Community College's Human Services Generalist associates degree aims to prepare individuals to work on the front lines of social services. This might mean providing direct services, advocating for clients' rights and needs, and connecting them with essential community resources.

- **Length of program:** This program typically takes two academic years to complete.
- **Includes coursework on:** substance use, case management, child abuse, community resources, CPR/first aid, ethics, family systems, group counseling, interviewing, intimate partner violence, introduction to human services, math, medical terminology, motivational interviewing, practicum, practicum seminar, psychology/human development, sexual abuse, social systems, trauma-informed care and writing.
- **Estimated cost:** Tuition costs around \$12,700 for the entire program.
- **Behavioral Health Care Specialist Certificate, Mt. Hood Community College³²**
 - **Synopsis:** Completion of this certificate is designed for graduates to obtain entry level behavioral health care jobs, specifically mental health care, social services and addiction counseling.
 - **Length of program:** This program can be completed in one academic year (three quarters), or 9 months.
 - **Includes coursework on:** substance use, case management, diagnosis and treatment of clinical disorders, interviewing, introduction to human services, motivational interviewing, practicum, practicum seminar and writing.
 - **Estimated cost:** Tuition is around \$4,300 for the entire certificate.
- **Youth Worker Certificate, Mt. Hood Community College³³**
 - **Synopsis:** The Youth Worker program is designed for those want to work with at-risk youth. Youth workers provide support, outreach, interventions and conflict resolution to children and young adults.
 - **Length of program:** This program can be completed in four quarters, one year, spanning over two academic years.
 - **Includes coursework on:** substance use, career planning, CPR/first aid, diagnosis and treatment of clinical and personality disorders, group counseling, interviewing, introduction to human services, juvenile justice, math, motivational interviewing, practicum, practicum seminar, psychology/human development and writing.
 - **Cost estimate:** Tuition is around \$6,200 for the entire program.
- **Mental Health, Social Service, and Addiction Counseling Associate of Applied Science, Mt. Hood Community College³⁴**
 - **Synopsis:** The Mental Health, Social Service, and Addiction Counseling program aims to prepare students to work with the emotional, social, and physical needs of clients in settings that include mental health agencies, social service, substance use treatment, corrections, residential facilities,

schools, youth work, gerontology (working with the elderly) and more. Upon completing this program, students are eligible to take the test to receive their Certified Drug and Alcohol Counselor (CADAC) certification.

- **Length of program:** This program typically takes two academic years to complete.
- **Includes coursework on:** substance use, career planning, case management, counseling, diagnosis and treatment of clinical and personality disorders, group counseling, interviewing, introduction to human services, math, motivational interviewing, practicum, practicum seminar, psychology/human development, social justice and writing.
- **Estimated cost:** Tuition costs around \$12,700 for the entire program.
- **Foundations in Human Services Career Pathway Certificate, Portland Community College³⁵**
 - **Synopsis:** PCC's Family and Human Services program prepares individuals for entry-level human service work in a diversity of environments under the direction of professionals including social workers, educators, counselors, psychologists, and other specialists.
 - **Length of program:** This program can be completed in as little as one term, or 3 months.
 - **Includes coursework on:** direct service, family systems, introduction to human services, mental health first aid, social systems and suicide prevention.
 - **Cost estimates:** Tuition is around \$2,200 for the entire certificate.
- **Family and Human Services Associate Degree, Portland Community College³⁶**
 - **Synopsis:** Portland Community College's Family and Human Services program prepares individuals for entry-level human service work in a range of environments under the direction of social workers, educators, counselors, psychologists, and other specialists.
 - **Length of program:** This program typically takes two academic years to complete.
 - **Includes coursework on:** substance use, aging, case management, counseling, direct service, family systems, introduction to human services, mental health first aid, multicultural practices, policy, practicum, practicum seminar, psychology/human development, social systems and suicide prevention.
 - **Estimated cost:** Tuition costs around \$12,000 for the entire program.

In summary, there are eight community college programs including Career Pathway Certificates and associate degrees related to human services in greater Portland. They have overlapping areas of study including coursework on substance use, introduction to human

services, group counseling, interviewing, ethics, diagnosis and treatment of mental health disorders, writing and mental health first aid.

Our research indicates that nearly every education program and certification require a practicum and a practicum seminar. A practicum or internship is on-the-job learning where a student is placed at an agency, usually with intentional supervision by a staff member, and given a set of entry-level tasks to introduce them to the work. The seminar class that usually accompanies these practicums is a place for students to debrief their placements and apply the concepts they've been learning to their field experiences with the guidance of an instructor. This indicates that getting direct service experience at the type of organizations program graduates may work at in the future is a core value of these programs.

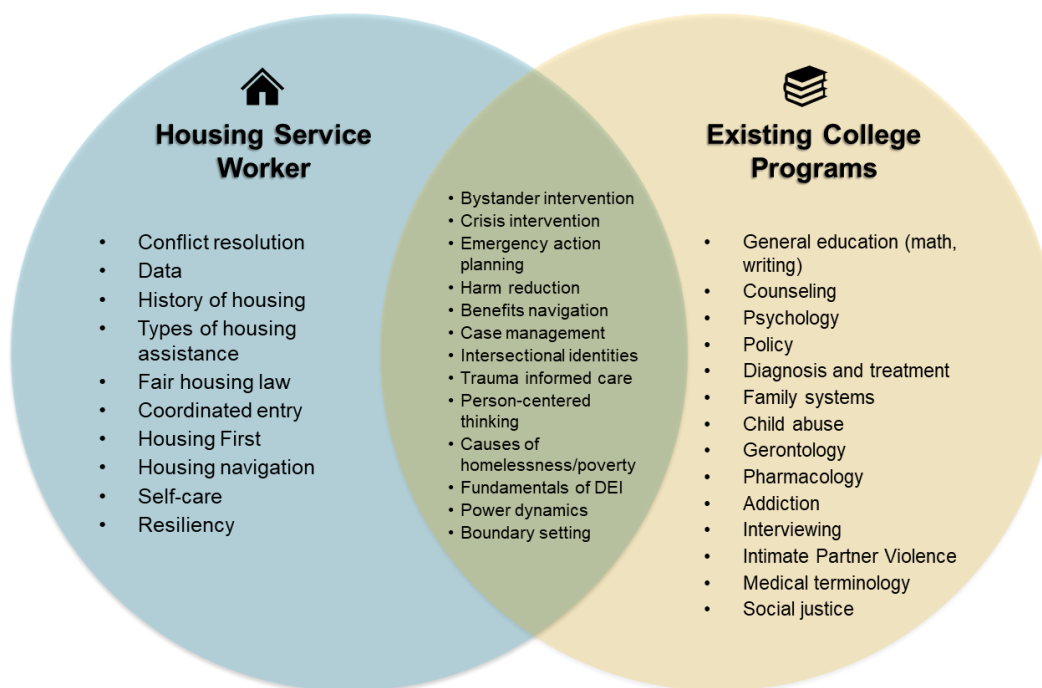
There are variances between the programs based on subject matter. For example, Mt. Hood Community College's Youth Worker Certificate has unique coursework on the juvenile justice system. Clackamas Community College's Alcohol and Drug Counselor Career Pathway Certificate of Completion requires an Infectious Diseases and Harm Reduction class, coursework uniquely related to substance use disorders.

We have identified that the degree programs across community colleges are unique in composition, though their content may be related, none are exactly similar. Take for example Clackamas Community College's Human Services Generalist Certificate of Completion and Portland Community College's Foundations in Human Services Career Pathway Certificate. Both have similar anticipated outcomes but require separate classes with only some overlap (coursework on family systems, an introduction to human services, and substance use). In our meetings with community colleges, we learned this might be the result of each college having to create their own curriculum and have it approved by the HECC, rather than simply having the ability to share curriculum across community colleges.

There are several learning areas included in the certificate programs above that could be included in a housing service case worker certification curriculum. For example, mental health first aid, basics of case management, suicide prevention and motivational interviewing. However, there are learning areas desired for this program that are not included in the certificate programs, including but not limited to basics of housing system navigation; data; diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) topics specific to housing; and trauma-informed care and self-care topics specific to housing. The overlapping courses could provide a strong foundation for quickly developing and deploying a housing service worker certification at a community college. Existing courses could potentially be customized with a housing and homeless specific lens.

Chart 6.2: Housing service worker certification vs. post-secondary education curriculum

The graphic below highlights a comparison of existing courses offered by college programs in the region and courses included in a hypothetical housing service worker certification program. The coursework on the left is unique to the housing service worker certification, as identified in the “Survey findings” section, the coursework on the right is unique to existing college programs and the coursework in the middle demonstrates the overlap between the two.



Bachelor's degrees

Below are all the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) programs in the region. Like the community colleges, each of these four-year universities offers student support resources. They all have programs for academic support (tutoring, writing help, coaching), career planning, multicultural and international students, behavioral and mental health support, physical health support, and support for students with disabilities. Due to its size and to being a public institution, Portland State University, seems to offer the most resources to students. They have a basic needs navigator and a range of basic needs services. The private institutions do not appear to offer the same support. Beyond basic needs, Portland State University also has various programs targeting vulnerable student populations, like a program supporting students returning to school from incarceration. However, students at its Center for Executive and Professional Education, or CEPE, do not have access to the same levels of academic or student support.

The estimated costs listed for each Bachelor of Social Work program do not include financial aid. These programs are expensive, but often made much more affordable by income-based financial aid.

- **Bachelor of Social Work, George Fox University³⁷**
 - **Synopsis:** George Fox University's Bachelor of Social Work prepares individuals to work in a wide range of public and private social work and social welfare settings ranging from healthcare and child welfare to ministry and criminal justice.
 - **Length of program:** This is a traditional bachelor's degree program that takes four academic years to complete at minimum.
 - **Includes coursework on:** family systems, introduction to human services, math, multicultural practices, policy, practicum, practicum seminar, psychology/human development, research methods, social justice, social systems and sociology.
 - **Estimated cost:** \$168,000 for tuition to complete the program.
- **Bachelor of Social Work, Pacific University³⁸**
 - **Synopsis:** Pacific University's Bachelor of Social Work is designed to prepare individuals to provide culturally sensitive generalist social work principles; advance the well-being of people; promote social and economic justice; and enhance the social functioning of individuals, families, groups organizations, and communities.
 - **Length of program:** This is a traditional bachelor's degree program that takes four academic years to complete at minimum.
 - **Includes coursework on:** case management, direct service, interviewing, introduction to human services, policy, practicum, practicum seminar, psychology/human development, research methods and sociology.
 - **Estimated cost:** \$225,496 for tuition
- **Bachelor of Social Work, Portland State University³⁹**
 - **Synopsis:** Portland State University's Bachelor of Social Work program prepares students to become entry-level professional generalist social workers who will work in a variety of settings and communities.
 - **Length of program:** This is a traditional bachelor's degree program that takes four academic years to complete at minimum.
 - **Includes coursework on:** introduction to human services, policy, practicum, psychology/human development, research methods and social justice.
 - **Estimated cost:** \$47,436 for tuition to complete the program.
- **Bachelor of Social Work, University of Portland⁴⁰**
 - **Synopsis:** The University of Portland's Bachelor of Social Work prepares graduates for generalist, entry-level social work in a wide possible range of

workplaces: public agencies, private businesses, hospitals, clinics, schools, nursing homes, private practices, police departments, courts, and more.

- **Length of program:** This is a traditional bachelor's degree program that takes four academic years to complete at minimum.
- **Includes coursework on:** counseling, direct service, interviewing, policy, practicum, practicum seminar, psychology/human development, research methods, social justice and sociology.
- **Estimated cost:** \$227,200 for tuition to complete the program.
- **Bachelor of Social Work, Warner Pacific University⁴¹**
 - **Synopsis:** Warner Pacific University's Bachelor of Social Work trains individuals to work with those in need by empowering people to make healthy changes. In addition to fostering change with individuals, students will learn how to foster change in their communities at large, enhancing and improving social systems for the better.
 - **Length of program:** This is a traditional bachelor's degree program that takes four academic years to complete at minimum.
 - **Includes coursework on:** substance use, counseling, direct service, introduction to human services, human trafficking, multicultural practices, policy, practicum, practicum seminar, psychology/human development, and research methods.
 - **Estimated cost:** \$85,040 for tuition to complete the program.

The bachelor's degree programs all require general education courses in addition to the major-specific courses listed above. Their course requirements are similar to the associate degree programs, though they offer more coursework in policy, sociology, research and social justice. While the certificates and associate programs might prepare students for entry level direct services, the bachelor's degree programs have more content geared toward system analysis and research.

Bachelor's degree programs can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars without financial aid. For the above BSW programs, Portland State offers the lowest cost option at around \$50,000 for in-state tuition. University of Portland and Pacific University are at the top end of the range at around \$225,000, with a net cost of around \$135,000 after income-based financial aid is applied. The costs associated with bachelor's degree programs do not align with our goal of creating a free or low cost, low-barrier training program.

We did not include master's level programs, namely Master of Social Work (MSW) programs, in this research. As mentioned in the introduction, our primary goal with this program is to identify near immediate, affordable and accessible pathways for helping new frontline workers access the skills and training they need to be successful early in their career. Given the cost associated with a master's degree program, and the progressive

layers of education (a bachelor's degree being a pre-requisite), we deemed it out of scope for the purposes of this research.

Though the costs and time associated with earning a BSW are counter-intuitive to our housing service worker certification project of developing and supporting new frontline housing and homeless service workers in ways that are accessible as possible, the BSW programs in our region are an important cornerstone of the workforce development. Many BSW students go on to earn their MSW, especially at schools like Portland State University where both programs are available. Many students go on to become therapists or counselors, or other members of the behavioral healthcare workforce. One BSW program director shared that they see alumni entering the field and being promoted quickly to supervisor or manager-level positions. This combined with education in policy and other systems-level social change create excellent public servants or human service professionals, though they may not stay on the front-line very long. This also points to the need for future iterations of the HSWC program to focus on training and supporting the next generation of supervisors and leaders in housing and homeless service work.

In summary, there are various human services degree and certificate programs offered through local higher education institutions. Mt. Hood Community College, Clackamas Community College and Portland Community College all offer certificates and associate degree programs related to human services. George Fox University, Pacific University, Portland State University, University of Portland and Warner Pacific University all offer bachelor's degree programs for social work. These programs contain coursework that might overlap with a housing service worker certification in areas like substance use, recovery, mental health, basics of case management, multicultural practices and trauma-informed care. All the above programs are missing coursework essential to a housing service caseworker like housing navigation, housing specific case management, client benefit navigation, data and housing specific diversity, equity and inclusion.

Potential implementation strategy option two: identify/supplement already existing post-secondary education programs

Concept

Using research outlined above, identify academic programs in the region that have a similar scope to the theoretical courses outlined in section four for a housing service worker curriculum (HSWC), supplementing housing related material into the curriculum where appropriate.

Implementation

- Identify academic programs in the region that have a similar scope to HSWC (e.g. PCC's Foundations in Human Services Career Pathways Certificate).
- Review course descriptions and identify existing curriculum content.
- Compare/contrast already existing curriculum content with what providers have identified to be priority training areas.

- Supplement existing courses with additional content/classes, focused primarily on the HSWC project. (e.g. Basics of Housing System Navigation)

Benefits

- Faster than developing a brand-new curriculum and getting a certification approved by the state, which can be a lengthy process for accredited programs.
- Results in college credit.
- Participants would have access to the institution's student support services.

Detriments

- The program would be set at each college or university and not easily replicable across colleges.
- Difficult to pair with an internship program.
- There is significant desired coursework in the HSWC that is not included in the post-secondary programs outlined above and that would need to be added on, potentially extending the course without credit.

Non-credit higher education options

In addition to the certificate and degree programs offered by our local community and four-year colleges, there are non-credit training and educational options offered. Our research found several local non-credit training options through colleges:

- Non-credit Training Certificates (NCTCs)
- Continuing Education Units (CEUs)
- Micro-credentials
- Academic Continuing Education Courses (ACE)
- Portland State University's Center for Executive and Professional Education (CEPE)

Chart 6.3: Types of non-credit learning

Non-credit program type	Description
Non-Credit Training Certificate (NCTC)	Program hosted at a community college that provides necessary training for an industry, usually manufacturing or healthcare, which must be approved by the State of Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Committee (HECC). Minimum of 18 hours of training and up to 210 hours. NCTCs could be replicated across different community colleges.

Continuing Education Units (CEUs)	Used to upgrade a person's competency in their profession when they're established in their work. Required by certain occupations on a recurring schedule.
Academic Continuing Education courses (ACEs)	Industry-specific courses designed for adults as a career pathway into a field.
Micro-credentials	Awards given to learners after they complete a series of courses (often 2-3). Micro-credentials are highly variable depending on the institution and customizable. They do not require state approval, can be incorporated into other non-credit programs and could be replicated across community colleges.
The Center for Executive and Professional Education (CEPE)	A local, non-credit department at Portland State University offering tailored professional education courses and curriculum development.

A **Non-Credit Training Certificate (NCTC)** provides an opportunity for an individual to gain necessary training through a community college's Career and Technical Education department. They are offered at every community college in the region and are typically used by the manufacturing industry to help employees learn how to operate certain machinery. The certification could be either a single course or series of courses, with a minimum of 18 hours and a maximum of 210 hours of training per certification. For example, all the desired trainings in the HSWC could be hosted in a single NCTC between 18-210 hours of training, or there could be standalone NCTCs for each of the subject areas of between 18-210 hours each.

Each NCTC program must be approved by the state of Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Committee. This approval process is generally faster than standing up a new for-credit program, and the program could, theoretically, be replicated at multiple community colleges in the state. In the process of developing this research paper, Metro's Regional Capacity Team met separately with representatives from the Career and Technical Education programs of all three of our local community colleges (Mt. Hood Community College, Portland Community College and Clackamas Community College) and a representative from HECC. While the group noted that, to their knowledge, a social service focused NCTC had not been created before in Oregon, there was interest in exploring the possibility of developing an HSWC-like curriculum that could be shared amongst the community colleges in the greater Portland area, and perhaps, across the state.⁴²

Continuing Education Units are nationally recognized programs for ongoing, non-credit education. Requests for CEUs can originate from an individual, organization, or professional association.⁴³ They are used to upgrade a person's competency in their occupation. Some professions require CEUs to ensure their staff are up to date on industry standards and best practices.⁴⁴

Academic Continuing Education Courses (ACE) are very similar to CEUs, in that they are industry-specific and are designed as a career pathway into a certain sector/field. However, the main difference between ACEs and CEUs is the target audience. While CEUs are designed for individuals already in their field, ACEs are meant for students who have yet to obtain a position in their sector but have some educational background. Therefore, the key difference between the two non-credit programs is that CEUs are geared towards career advancement while ACEs are designed for career entry.⁴⁵

Micro-Credentials award a student with credentials after the completion of a series (often 2 to 3 courses) of related coursework. Micro-credentials are often unique to each institution of higher education and allow each student to meet a milestone prior to the completion of a certificate program. An ACE, CEU, or NCTC program can be built around a series of micro-credentials, with certificates of achievement awarded upon the completion of a certain amount of the micro-credentials offered in the program. Depending on program design, micro-credentials may allow the learner to tailor their training to their specific needs, so learners could pick and choose which skills they would like to learn more about.⁴⁶

An example of a current micro-credential is PCC's Mental Health First Aid program.⁴⁷ In this program, students can choose 3 out of 4 of the available courses to enroll in. Once all three courses are complete, the student will have earned the Mental Health First Aid micro-credential.

In discussing potential post-secondary education implementation strategies with Portland Community College, Metro's regional capacity team was advised that a micro-credential would be the most effective place to start. Should the program take a post-secondary education route, micro-credentials are flexible, able to be designed and implemented by the schools themselves without state approval. Once micro-credential coursework is perfected, they can become the building blocks for an NCTC or other certification.⁴⁸

The Center for Executive and Professional Education (CEPE) at Portland State University offers non-credit professional education courses tailored to the needs of the target audience. These curricula can take the form of certificate programs or direct training with organizations. CEPE offers in-house curriculum development services, with coursework being built in partnership with the contracting organization.⁴⁹

In summary, there are two non-credit options found at colleges in the region, one specific non-credit option found at Portland State University (CEPE) as well as NCTCs at each community college. Moreover, there are several additional standalone strategies including continuing education units or micro-credentials. These non-credit avenues could be pathways for a housing service worker training, but do not currently exist in that capacity. An NCTC, micro-credential program or CEPE could be a viable fit for a housing service worker certification program. An ACE could focus on helping to certify new providers, but a CEU is focused on ongoing education versus initial education. Micro-credentials could be a building block option for any of these potential strategies.

Potential implementation strategy three: non-credit training program

Concept

While an NCTC has never been created for the social service workforce before in our region, our conversations with the workforce departments at our local community colleges, as well as the State of Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Committee (which approves NCTCs) were promising with interest being expressed in potentially pursuing this strategy and replicating similar programming at multiple community colleges.

The advantage of leveraging a micro-credential model is that it would not require state approval and would therefore be a simple way to develop and refine a new training program. With that in mind, it would likely make the most sense to start with a micro-credential model that may later be converted into an NCTC.

The process would likely follow these steps:

- Contract with the Professional Development and Training Department at either Clackamas Community College (CCC), Mount Hood Community College (MHCC), or Portland Community College (PCC) to develop a curriculum based on our service worker framework.
- Once developed, the HSWC curriculum will be piloted as a micro-credential program that later could be converted into either a Non-Credit Training Certificate program (for those who are not yet working in the field) or a Continuing and Technical Education program (for those already employed in the field and desiring additional training).

Implementation

This implementation strategy may include developing several micro-credentials with each focusing on one topic area from the curriculum.

- Our research has highlighted the importance of developing a foundations course that is a pre-requisite for the specialized courses. This will allow all students who are new to the field to understand the baseline skills needed to perform their scope of work, before diving into more specialized topics, which may be continued education.
- Beyond a foundations course, additional courses could be developed, including leadership training for frontline workers who are promoted to supervisors.

Benefits

- A shared curriculum could be replicated across multiple community colleges (though that has not been done before).

- The development of micro-credentials and NCTCs are very user driven, allowing the HSWC curriculum to be built with provider input, being responsive to the needs of organizations in the region.
- Faster to develop/launch than an accredited program.
- Credentials can be applied toward traditional academic degrees through a "credit for prior learning" process, which exists at all local community colleges.
- Micro-credential or NCTC courses can be offered at whatever frequency is needed rather than on a semester or quarter system as is typical for institutions of higher learning.
- Program can begin while waiting for accreditation approval from the state of Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Committee (NCTC). Micro-credentials do not require state approval.

Detriments

- The student/employee usually would not receive college credit.
- For NCTC's, there is a lengthy process to develop a curriculum and then become state certified (in our discussions, we heard that it's still much faster than developing a new, accredited program—micro-credentials do not require state approval).
- Pairing an NCTC with an internship program can be administratively complicated, however it's much more flexible with a micro-credential.
- Each NCTC program is unique to the institution of higher learning (though could be more easily replicated than an accredited program).
- An NCTC has not yet been created for the social service system and hasn't been replicated across community colleges (but there is interest in trying it based on our conversations.)

Potential implementation strategy four: PSU's Center for Executive and Professional Education (CEPE)

Concept

The Center for Executive and Professional Education (CEPE) at PSU offers non-credit professional education courses tailored to the needs of the target audience. These curricula can take the form of certificate programs or direct training with organizations. CEPE offers in-house curriculum development services, with coursework being built in partnership with the contracting organization.

Implementation

Contract with PSU's Center for Executive and Professional Education (CEPE) to engage in HSWC curriculum development.

Once the HSWC curriculum is developed, launch the program within CEPE at PSU. There are four primary models that can be implemented:

- Certificate of achievement for the completion of a course,
- Micro-credentialing, where each student will receive a credential for each course they take, culminating in a certificate of achievement,
- Licensing the curriculum, and granting individuals access to the material through a code, or
- Badging, where students receive badges for successful skill attainment.

Benefits

- Faster to develop/launch than an accredited program.

Detriments

- The student/employee would not receive college-credit.
- Standalone program at PSU so likely couldn't be replicated at other institutions of higher education.

Behavioral and community healthcare models

There are existing structures for industry certifications in Oregon involving certifying bodies and approved training programs. Regionally, we see this structure in healthcare and behavioral healthcare. This section explores the Oregon Health Authority's Traditional Health Worker certification process and the certifications offered by the Mental Health and Addictions Counseling Board of Oregon (MHACBO).

Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Traditional Health Worker (THW) certifications

According to OHA, THWs are "trusted individuals from their local communities who may also share socioeconomic ties and lived life experiences with health plan members. THWs have historically provided person and community-centered care by bridging communities and the health systems that serve them, increasing the appropriate use of care by connecting people with health systems, advocating for health plan members, supporting an individual's care and treatment, and empowering individuals to be agents in improving their own health."⁵⁰

THWs typically work in the community or in a clinic, sometimes under the direction of a licensed healthcare provider. For a THW's services to be billable to Medicaid, the individual needs one of the below certifications.⁵¹ The services of a THW are free to Oregon Health Plan (OHP) recipients. A patient can ask for THW support at any place they get support for their health including the doctor's office, dentist office or school.⁵²

There are five types of THW: Community Health Worker (CHW), Peer Support Specialist (PSS), Peer Wellness Specialist (PWS), Personal Health Navigator (PHN) and Birth Doula.

We've omitted Birth Doula from the research below due to its narrow scope and distant relation to a housing service worker. For each THW certification, the recipient needs a degree or to have completed an approved training program. The state of Oregon has a list of approved training programs and a policy listing the required trainings and/or coursework for each type of certification. Approved trainings can be created, approved and offered by academic institutions like community colleges or community-based organizations (CBOs) and nonprofits.

- **Community Health Worker (CHW)**⁵³

- **Synopsis:** A CHW may provide culturally specific education, information, programming, navigation, peer counseling and first aid to a community. To the extent possible, the CHW will share ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status and life experiences with the community they serve.
- **Requires coursework on:** case management, communication, community engagement, community resources, conflict resolution, crisis intervention, data, ethics, group counseling, health, infectious diseases, mandatory reporter, motivational interviewing, multicultural practices, psychology/human development, self-care, suicide prevention, system navigation, teaching, trauma-informed care and work readiness.

- **Peer Support Specialist (PSS)**⁵⁴

- **Synopsis:** A PSS provides services to another individual who shares a similar life experience with the peer support specialist (addiction to addiction, mental health condition to mental health condition, family member of an individual with a mental health condition to family member of an individual with a mental health condition). They can provide a variety of supportive services including but not limited to employment assistance, mentoring, goal-setting and housing navigation.
- **There are four sub-categories of PSS:** Family Support Specialist, Youth Support Specialist, Recovery Peer and Mental Health Peer.
- **Requires coursework on:** addiction, case management, communication, community engagement, community resources, conflict resolution, crisis intervention, data, ethics, health, infectious diseases, mandatory reporter, motivational interviewing, multicultural practices, psychology/human development, self-care, suicide prevention, system navigation, trauma-informed care and work readiness.

- **Peer Wellness Specialist (PWS)**⁵⁵

- **Synopsis:** A PWS is like a PSS, providing peer-delivered services. The main difference is that a PWS is specially trained to help a participant with physical health navigation. A PWS can provide support, resources and system navigation for mental health disorders, substance use disorders, and general wellness.

- **Requires coursework on:** substance use, case management, communication, community engagement, community resources, conflict resolution, crisis intervention, data, ethics, group facilitation, health, chronic diseases, mandatory reporter, motivational interviewing, multicultural practices, psychology/human development, self-care, suicide prevention, system navigation, trauma-informed care and work readiness.
- **Personal Health Navigator (PHN)⁵⁶**
 - **Synopsis:** A PHN provides information, assistance, tools and support to enable a patient to make the best health care decisions in the patient's particular circumstances and in light of the patient's needs, lifestyle, combination of conditions and desired outcomes.
 - **Requires coursework on:** case management, communication, community engagement, community resources, conflict resolution, data, ethics, health, infectious diseases, mandatory reporter, motivational interviewing, multicultural practices, psychology/human development, self-care, suicide prevention, system navigation, trauma-informed care and work readiness.
 - As of March 2023, there are no existing trainings for the Personal Health Navigator certification. The only way to become certified is by applying for credit for prior education and work experience.⁵⁷

The required training areas for the four Oregon Health Authority certifications above are very similar, you will see their required coursework for each certification almost entirely overlap: case management, trauma-informed care, health, community engagement, and more.

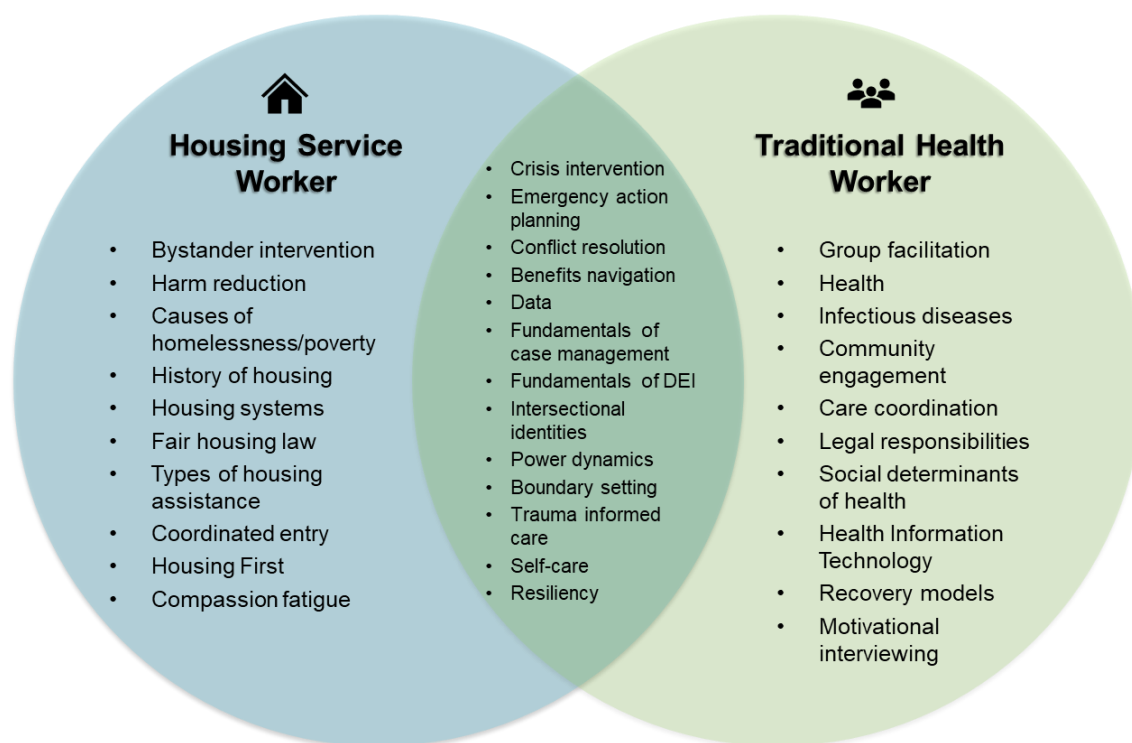
Variances between the four Oregon Health Authority certifications include the Community Health Worker certificate being more geared towards large-scale community change and including coursework around teaching and group counseling. The Peer Support certifications include coursework on substance use, while the others do not, or at least not to the same degree.

There are training areas required by the THW certifications that would overlap with housing service worker certification training requirements: multicultural practices, conflict resolution, trauma-informed care and others. However, these certifications are deeply tied to the healthcare system and Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs).

Even if there are similar required learning areas, the **THW trainings come with a healthcare lens while the HSWC requires a housing lens**. For example, the state requires THWs to be trained on data collection and types of data, but the healthcare and housing systems use separate information systems. A data training for one sector will miss important points for another.

Chart 6.4: Housing service worker certification vs. Traditional Health Worker

The graphic below highlights a comparison of the required training curriculum for OHA's Traditional Health Worker roles and the hypothetical housing service worker certification program. The coursework on the left is unique to the housing service worker certification, as identified in the "Survey findings" section, the coursework on the right is unique to existing OHA's Traditional Health worker curriculum, and the coursework in the middle demonstrates the overlap between the two.



Generally, like the college-based training programs outlined earlier, the THWs are missing required learning on housing navigation and diversity, equity and inclusion topics specific to housing. Overall, the THW training requirements appear to have more overlap with a housing service worker certification than the colleges.

Mental Health and Addiction Certification Board of Oregon (MHACBO) certifications

MHACBO is a private non-profit sanctioned by the state to provide a variety of behavioral health certifications. The primary purpose of MHACBO certification is "assurance that behavioral health workers have met minimum standards of competence, are ethically accountable to the general public at-large, and have contemporary knowledge evidenced through continuing education."⁵⁸

Some MHACBO certifications require a degree, some only require the completion of an approved training program. For most of the certifications, there is a degree path and a non-degree path—this allows people with ample experience but no degree to apply for certification without needing to get a degree in things they have learned on the job. Every MHACBO certification but one requires a professional psychometric exam which are either

nationally or internationally recognized. This is a traditional test that usually needs to be proctored. Psychometric exams can assist certification-seekers with learning and memorizing information specific to their training while they study for their exam.

There are five different types of MHACBO certifications and all but one of them have multiple levels. The requirements for each level vary slightly by certification type, but most require some combination of a degree, supervised hours in the field, continuing education in the field and/or a professional psychometric exam. The advantages of a higher-level certificate may include a higher earning potential, broader opportunities for potential employment, and lack of supervision requirements and therefore the potential to run a private practice.

- **Qualified Mental Health Associate I and II (QMHA) and Qualified Mental Health Professional (QMHP)⁵⁹**
 - **Synopsis:** The QMHA certification is for individuals working at state approved mental health programs who are seeking employment at state approved mental health programs.
 - The QMHP certification is a level above QMHA II, requiring all the same coursework and a master's degree.
 - Oregonians working in behavioral healthcare or tangential fields may identify as a QMHA without the MHACBO certification. If they meet the minimum qualifications as defined by Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 309-019-0125, they are considered a QMHA. These include a bachelor's degree in a behavioral science field, or a combination of three or more years of relevant work, education or training experience. They must have the MHACBO certification if they are seeking employment at a state certified clinic.
 - **Requires coursework on:** substance use, case management, communication, counseling, health, introduction to human services, practicum, practicum seminar, psychology/human development, sociology, teaching, care coordination and jurisprudence.
- **Certified Drug and Alcohol Counselor I, II and III (CADC)⁶⁰**
 - **Synopsis:** The Certified Drug and Alcohol Counselor certificate is for anyone seeking employment as a substance abuse counselor in a variety of different settings including mental health centers, community health centers, prisons, and private practices.
 - **Requires coursework on:** substance use, counseling, diagnosis and treatment of mental health disorders, ethics, infectious diseases and multicultural practices.
- **Certified Gambling Addiction Counselor I and II (CGAC)⁶¹**

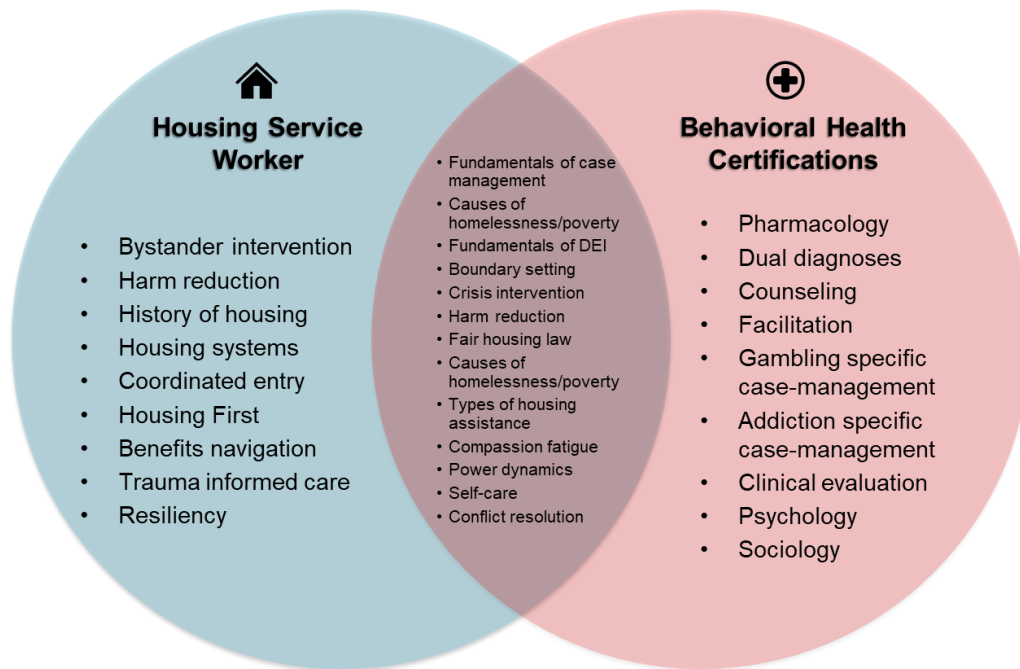
- **Synopsis:** For anyone seeking employment in a problem gambling treatment program.
- **Requires coursework on:** case management, counseling, crisis intervention, diagnosis and treatment of mental health disorders, ethics, financial planning, gambling specific case management and multicultural practices.
- **Certified Prevention Specialist (CPS)⁶²**
 - **Synopsis:** Similar in coursework to a CADC, but more focused on the prevention of substance abuse and other issues through education, outreach and community building.
 - **Requires coursework on:** substance use, community engagement, ethics, multicultural practices, teaching and work readiness.
- **Certified Recovery Mentor I and II (CRM)⁶³**
 - **Synopsis:** For anyone seeking employment as a substance abuse recovery mentor. CRMs must also complete a peer training program.
 - **Requires coursework on:** substance use, case management, communication, community engagement, community resources, conflict resolution, crisis intervention, data, ethics, health, infectious diseases, mandatory reporting, motivational interviewing, multicultural practices, psychology/human development, self-care, suicide prevention, system navigation, trauma-informed care and work readiness.

Though none of the above certifications except the QMHA require a practicum as part of their coursework, they all require supervised hours of experience in the field which equates to an internship or practicum. Certification candidates can complete their supervised hours in an approved addiction treatment center as a paid employee, volunteer and/or student. If they choose a degree path to obtain certification, there will be a practicum built into their degree program than will contribute towards their certification hours.⁶⁴

The five certifications from MHACBO have some overlapping learning requirements with the housing service worker certification: addiction, recovery, case management and multicultural practice. The MHACBO certifications are, understandably, geared towards addiction and behavioral health. There are learning areas desired from the HSWC not covered by any of the MHACBO certifications. The most related MHACBO certification is the Certified Recovery Mentor (CRM), a peer role. The CRM certification requires more case management training while the other certifications are more geared towards identifying and treating an acute and active addiction. This includes course material on community resources, system navigation, conflict resolution and motivational interviewing.

Chart 6.5: Housing service worker certification vs. Mental Health and Addiction Certification Board of Oregon

The graphic below highlights a comparison of required learning by the MHACBO behavioral health certifications courses included in a hypothetical housing service worker certification program. The coursework on the left is unique to the housing service worker certification, as identified in the “Survey findings” section, the coursework on the right is unique to the behavioral health training requirements. The coursework in the middle demonstrates the overlap between the two.



In summary, there are several state-level certifications for community and behavioral health workers. These certifications are offered, respectively, by the Oregon Health Authority and the Mental Health and Addictions Counseling Board of Oregon. Organizations can create trainings for the Traditional Health Worker roles and get them approved by OHA while MHACBO certifications mostly rely on degrees or prior work experience. Both sets of certifications require learning in areas related to what a housing service worker might need to know, but neither offer housing-specific education requirements. Workforce needs for community health, behavioral health, drug and alcohol addiction are being met in our community by these certifications demonstrating a model, but there is no certification specific to housing that meets a similar need.

Potential implementation strategy five: creating a new certifying body

The existing state certification models we’ve outlined above could potentially be replicated to create housing service worker specific credentials.

There were or are several contributing factors that led to the existence of the OHA Traditional Health Worker certifications and the MHACBO certifications: nationwide industry demand, state legislation, local support, a desire to bill Medicaid and Medicare and standard certification creation processes. Pursuing the strategy of creating a new certifying body for the HSWC curriculum would require a combination of:

- 1) **A broadly recognized industry need:** In the case of the Traditional Health Workers and MHACBO certifications, the need for behavioral healthcare workers had been steadily increasing for five decades. The behavioral healthcare workforce had been primarily composed of workers with advanced degrees and significant post-secondary education yet there were job functions that could be performed with less education by a pool of untapped workers without advanced degrees, including people in recovery. This led to states creating their own regulatory or certification processes for the behavioral healthcare workforce.
- 2) **Legislation:** For both the THW and MHACBO certifications, legislation was introduced at the state level to establish and regulate each set of certifications. In the 2013 Oregon legislative session, House Bill 3407 (HB 3407) established training and education requirements for Traditional Health Workers.⁶⁵ Similarly, starting in 2013, there have been a string of administrative rules, Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR), regulating the minimum qualifications and competencies for the certifications offered by MHACBO, Qualified Mental Health Associates (QMHA) and Qualified Mental Health Professionals (QMHP).
- 3) **Local political support:** While an industry need and legislation were both ingredients in the recipe for this state-wide certification model, there was also local political support for these initiatives. This is demonstrated by the widespread support for HB 3407 (2013) when it was in committee, as evidenced by the public testimony offered.⁶⁶ Local elected officials, community members and organizations in healthcare, behavioral healthcare, social services, advocacy and culturally specific services submitted testimony in support of the bill.
- 4) **A desire to bill Medicare/Medicaid:** Both the THW certifications and MHACBO certifications meet Medicaid and/or Medicare guidelines which allow agencies to bill Medicaid and Medicare for the services their certified staff offer. HB 3407 (2013) established regulation for THWs that their standards, “must meet requirements of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to qualify for federal financial participation.”⁶⁷
- 5) **Standard processes for creating a certification:** In the United States, especially in healthcare fields, you generally establish a certification by doing a role delineation analysis, creating competencies and then creating a psychometric exam. The role delineation analysis creates a legally defensible need and blueprint for the certification, the competencies set a standard for the certification and the psychometric exam exists to prove a person’s competencies in regard to the certification.⁶⁸

Advantages:

- Organizations could create and administer their own training programs. This would increase regional accessibility, allow for each training program to be uniquely tailored (especially for culturally specific organizations) and allows for grassroots training development instead of top-down.
- The certification system could be uniquely crafted to fit the exact needs of the homeless services system rather than the healthcare system.

Challenges:

- This has not been done and would require significant buy-in from training providers and the development of a new certifying body and certification standards.

In summary, for each of these credential strategies to be created, there was a nationwide industry need, state legislation, widespread support from impacted parties, and the added benefit of funding from Medicare/Medicaid. Pursuing this strategy of a new certification board for HSWC would likely require a similar combination of factors. This strategy is likely not a viable, near-term option for the HSWC program.

Potential implementation strategy six: creating a new training module within the existing system

We know that organizations providing housing and homeless services in the region are already utilizing THW certifications and behavioral healthcare certifications through MHACBO. **A potential strategy would be building out a training curriculum in line with housing service worker certification that fits under these certifications, either in the initial training or as a continuing education unit (CEU) for individuals pursuing their required twenty hours of training for recertification every three years.**

Where this is happening:

- Central City Concern is a large agency in the region tackling homelessness through integrated support. They offer housing, healthcare, employment, recovery and culturally specific services. Because their scope extends to healthcare and recovery, you can find staff with MHACBO certifications: CRMs, CDACs and QMHAs. They ran a Certified Recovery Mentor training in the past.⁶⁹
- There are also agencies across the region certifying Community Health Workers (Urban League of Portland, Latino Network and more).

In conversations with Metro, Mental Health and Addiction Association of Oregon staff indicated they were interested in pursuing housing-specific curriculum for their Peer Wellness Specialist training, which often trains individuals who will work with people in need of housing. In theory most peer training should have some elements of housing-related training; this would be a more robust, focused and coordinated approach to this.

How this could work:

To use the existing certification model, housing-specific curriculum would need to be introduced. This could look like creating housing-specific curriculum to supplement the initial training. This housing-specific curriculum would cover the HSWC training areas identified by jurisdictions and providers not already covered by existing behavioral/community healthcare certification trainings. It could also look like developing a housing-specific CEU for recertification. As mentioned above, every three years, individuals with these certifications must complete twenty hours of additional training to keep their certifications active.

OHA has a rubric by which they grade applications for new Traditional Health Worker training programs. All peer trainings are approved through OHA, including the trainings for the Certified Recovery Mentor (MHACBO). An agency could create a peer training, or use an existing peer training, containing all the required coursework for a Peer Support Specialist or Peer Wellness Specialist respectively, and add the created housing and homeless services curriculum. This could also apply to the Community Health Worker training, which is not a peer training but follows the same rules of approval.

This would likely be the most viable strategy to pair professionals with these behavioral and community health certifications and incorporate training outlined in the HSWC curriculum.

Advantages:

- Because staff at organizations with Supportive Housing Services contracts are sometimes already certified as Traditional Health Workers or behavioral healthcare workers under MHACBO, **some local agencies already have familiarity with the process and billing Medicaid.**
- **This model would build on what already exists** by adding a housing-specific curriculum instead of creating an entirely new program.
- People participating in Peer Support Specialist and Peer Wellness Specialist trainings already have broad lived experience with mental health and/or substance use recovery meaning they have **ample experience with and dedication** to the community they're serving.

Challenges:

- Focusing directly on the Peer Support and Peer Wellness certifications, peers would need to have **direct lived experience of a mental health and/or substance use condition.** This can include having a family member or close friend with lived experience. This would limit the audience that could receive this training and deliver services. HSWC is intended to more broadly build a workforce channel for the housing and homeless services sector.
- For those same peer-based certifications, pursuing this model could be a **mission drift** for the agencies offering the training, especially if we explore expanding beyond peers. It could also be mission drift for the certifying agencies if housing is considered too far outside the realm of healthcare and behavioral healthcare.

- **Funding** could become more complicated due to multiple funding sources.

Potential implementation strategy seven: certifying housing staff through existing pathways to bill Medicaid

We know that agencies providing housing services in the region are already training and certifying Traditional Health Workers: mostly Community Health Workers, Peer Support Specialists and Peer Wellness Specialists. These agencies all provide services beyond housing, usually healthcare and/or addiction support services in addition to housing services. A potential strategy for workers in the region to access additional funding would be to certify eligible housing service workers as Traditional Health Workers. This could work in tandem with the strategy outlined directly above about creating training models in the existing system. We will focus primarily on Community Health Workers for this example.

Where this is happening:

- Community-based organizations like Urban League of Portland and Latino Network have created and certified their own Community Health Worker trainings through OHA.⁷⁰
 - Both agencies provide wrap-around services to their participants including housing support.
 - Both agencies have tailored their CHW trainings to be culturally specific to the communities they serve, Urban League of Portland to Black individuals and families, and Latino Network to Latino individuals and families. For example, Urban League of Portland has tailored their CHW training to account for and mitigate historical barriers for Black people in accessing healthcare and Latino Network offers their CHW training in Spanish.
- OCHIN is leading another ongoing effort to increase the number of CHWs in community-based organizations.⁷¹
 - Their project is funded by a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant with goals of addressing gaps in public health, building a workforce that can support mitigation of social determinants of health and building a workforce that can support communities in public health emergencies.
 - They are currently recruiting community-based organizations to host CHW trainees as interns. The benefits for participating agencies might be improved quality of care for their participants and a new channel for employee recruitment.

Advantages:

- Having staff certified as Community Health Workers can **improve professional skills** like facilitation, community-building capabilities, cultural responsiveness and

navigation of Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) and the health services available through them.

- CHW certification also allows an agency to either **bill Medicaid** or procure a fee-for-services contract with a CCO creating an additional funding stream.

Challenges:

- Depending on a CHW's employer, access to healthcare for their participants can vary in ease. CHWs employed by a CCO often have more access and information to the healthcare system than their counterparts employed by community-based organizations.
- Often there is disagreement on what is a billable service. This can create issues with budgeting for community-based organizations.
- There is also the issue of wage increases. A Community Health Worker certification is not tied to a pay scale or wage increase.

In summary, there are advantages to integrating CHW training and CHW staff into community-based organizations providing housing: it can improve the quality-of-care participants receive, especially culturally specific care and healthcare navigation; and there is an opportunity to braid funding with Medicaid. The variability of the role depending on the employing agency and the administrative complexity of billing Medicaid could prove challenging and a barrier to this initiative.

Internships

Nearly every existing training and certification program identified in this paper requires some type of on-the-job training. These include internships, practicums and supervised clinical hours. In the event that the housing service worker certification program is offered to job-seekers rather than current employees, we recommend internships as part of the program.

Internship regulations:

- The only regulations existing around interns are from the United States Department of Labor regulating their pay.⁷²
- Interns can be either paid or unpaid. If an intern will be an unpaid volunteer, or if an intern will be paid less than federal minimum wage, there is guidance issued by the Department of Labor to ensure they are properly classified, protected and not doing the work of a regular employee.
 - Some of these guidelines include the internship being tied to a formal education program, being limited in duration and the intern and employer clearly understanding that there is no expectation of compensation.

Generally, unpaid internships are becoming unfavorable. This sentiment is coming from labor and education associations and by the people seeking internships. Paying interns in

the HSWC program is most closely aligned with our goal of creating a low-barrier, low-cost or free training program.

Benefits of a paid internship:

- An opportunity for participants to **apply what they've learned** in a virtual or in-person training to **real-life situations**.
- Provide an opportunity for **prospective housing service workers to explore the career and discern if it's a job they would like to do longer term**. Housing and homeless services can be a high intensity field often involving trauma and second-hand trauma. It can be an emotionally demanding career, especially for people with lived experience of housing instability who risk re-traumatization. Internships can help people explore whether a career in housing services is sustainable for them or not.
- **Create more opportunities for women, people of color and other marginalized groups** who are currently underrepresented in paid internships.⁷³

Creating an organized internship program can also create a direct flow of new employees for an agency. For example, Worksystems, Inc., one of our local workforce boards, helps fund and organize an internship program for Peer Support Specialists in the region. Central City Concern is one of the internship placement sites. A staff person from Central City Concern cited that they had hired 70% of participants in a recent internship cohort, and over half of them were people of color.⁷⁴ Creating a channel of qualified and interested future employees via an internship can be invaluable to an organization. It can also benefit the system as a whole, as interns may become service workers at housing service agencies across the region.

Internship models look different from program to program or institution to institution. Some are highly coordinated endeavors involving multiple partners while some rely on the student to secure the internship location and act as a liaison between the education program and the 'employer.'

Here are a few models of internship programs:

- College internship programs in for-credit programs
 - As you've read, most of the education programs identified in this document require an internship. At community colleges and four-year universities, academic programs usually have formal or informal connections with employers that offer internships at agencies doing work in line with their degree or certification programs. Usually, a student spends a term (quarter, semester, or more) in their internship and receives college credit, but is generally not paid. There is usually a seminar class that students take simultaneously where they meet with other classmates in internships and a facilitator. These seminar classes reflect on the students' experiences by applying concepts learned in the classroom to the real-life scenarios students are encountering.

- Workforce board coordination
 - Local workforce boards oversee workforce development in a myriad of ways, including by organizing internships and apprenticeships. The workforce board agency contracts with service providers to create paid internship positions.
- Legacy agencies providing volunteer coordination
 - The federal Americorps program was established in 1993 to encourage national service work. Modeled off the Peace Corps, Americorps is federally funded and is typically a one-year program that provides volunteers a limited monthly stipend for living expenses and, upon completion of the program, an education award to be used toward student loan payments or future education opportunities. Americorps members serve at nonprofits and those agencies can host Americorps members independently or through a placement agency. In Oregon, there are more than 4,500 Americorps members working in nonprofits, schools and religious institutions. As an example in the Portland area, Jesuit Volunteer Corps (JVC) Northwest—based in Milwaukie, Oregon—is a direct recipient of an Americorps grant, and places more than 100 volunteers in 15 communities across the Pacific Northwest every year with 16 placed in greater Portland. The mission of JVC Northwest is rooted in Catholic social justice. Additionally, other faith-based programs like Tivnu (a “gap year program” for Jewish high school graduates), and Quaker Voluntary Service (a Quaker faith-based service program) put volunteers to work on Portland-area nonprofits every year. Collectively, these organizations not only contribute to capacity needs at nonprofits from year to year, they also support with workforce pipeline development, with some agencies hiring former volunteers into full time work when their volunteer term is complete.

In summary, internships are an essential component of any pre-professional training program. Offering a paid internship opportunity as part of the HSWC could help participants determine whether they’d like to pursue a career in housing services, help participants apply theoretical learning to real-life situations, and help agencies create an employment pipeline.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are formal, paid training programs regulated through the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries, or BOLI.⁷⁵ There are five key components to apprenticeships:

1. They are industry controlled, meaning apprenticeships are created and controlled by companies and people in the field.
2. There is on-the-job training with mentoring.
3. There is classroom instruction that accompanies the on-the-job learning.
4. There are structured wage increases for apprentices.

5. A nationally recognized credential must be awarded to apprentices at the completion of their program.

Most of the apprenticeships approved by BOLI are in the trade industries, like the process set up for training and certifying electricians. There are, however, several in healthcare and several in human services including Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor, Child Care Development Specialist, Qualified Mental Health Associate. As outlined above, individuals wanting to become Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselors can also access this training through community college certificate and degree programs, as well as an apprenticeship. This approach does argue for some flexibility and various access points to training to ensure that individuals who want to access these opportunities can do so in ways that meet their needs.

There are numerous federal and state policies regulating apprenticeships. The first step to creating an apprentice program is identifying a nationally recognized occupation the program will train for. There is a national registry for recognized occupations called O*NET.⁷⁶ Each recognized occupation has associated education, skill and competencies and is assigned a Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) code.⁷⁷ Housing service careers are not recognized yet by the state or the federal government on the O*NET registry and are therefore not currently eligible for apprenticeships. This is just the first in a series of complicated regulations that the state requires of all apprenticeship programs. However, locally, there has been success with a BOLI certified apprenticeship program. Clackamas Workforce Partnership, an agency outlined below, has created a health and human services apprenticeship in partnership with the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) Self-Sufficiency program. This could potentially extend beyond the anchor public partner to community-based organizations and other agencies

Workforce boards

For most of the last 100 years, the United States has had some sort of active workforce development legislation. Most recently, this legislation is the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) passed in 2014. The governor of each state is mandated by the WIOA to create a state workforce development board and accompanying local or regional workforce development boards. Each board must have representation from elected leaders, business, labor, economic development, education and community leaders. The majority of the board members must work in the private sector.

This section outlines the offerings of greater Portland's two workforce boards, the funding pathways partnering with a workforce board could potentially unlock in developing an HSWC curriculum and the unique offerings both local workforce boards bring that could potentially support the sustainability of a developed program.⁷⁸

Workforce boards in greater Portland

The role of each **state workforce board** is to oversee the development and ongoing improvement of their workforce development system. This can include strategic planning, organizing and supporting the local workforce boards, creating accountability measures for

the core programs required by the WIOA, creating best practices, coordinating career centers and creating a unified state plan.

The role of a **local workforce board** is to oversee workforce development services including the management of one-stop career centers or American Job Centers, which are required by the WIOA. In Oregon, these centers are called WorkSource centers. Additionally local workforce boards might develop policies or create workforce development programs and services that are then delivered through local partners. Local workforce boards are the link between a region's workers and the needs of employers.

The greater Portland area is covered by two local workforce boards. Both are 501(c)3 non-profit organizations. **Clackamas Workforce Partnership (CWP)** covers Clackamas County while **Worksystems, Inc. (WSI)** covers Multnomah and Washington Counties. The local workforce boards provide services to the community through access to state and federal funding, the WorkSource centers, a network of community-based organizations offering career coaching, and by collating existing trainings and creating new training programs. More information on each of these offerings is outlined below.

Participant funding

When a participant engages with a career planner or career coach (more details on the process below), whether it be at WorkSource or a partnering agency, that participant can potentially access WIOA funds to pay for their training services (in part or in full). These funds are delivered via an **Individual Training Account (ITA)**. The ITA is a payment agreement established on behalf of a participant with a training provider.⁷⁹ For an ITA to be used, the training program selected by the participant needs to appear on the **Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)**. Each state is tasked with managing an ETPL. In Oregon, the Higher Education Coordination Commission (HECC) manages the ETPL. The Higher Education Coordination Commission also provides the final approval step for all new accredited or certification programs at community colleges, except micro-credentials, which can be developed and launched independently.

Local workforce boards may choose, but are not required, to create a local training provider list (LTPL) with additional eligibility criteria. If they choose to do so, they must create a policy for the Office of Workforce Investments (OWI) detailing the process and procedure for the list, including a grievance policy. The local workforce boards, CWP and WSI do not have an LTPL, instead opting to use the state-approved ETPL.

There are three types of training programs the ETPL allows: programs offered by a higher education institution, apprenticeships, or public and private organizations hosting programs providing occupational skills training. Beyond that, there are several eligibility requirements for training programs seeking ETPL status:

- The training program must be for a high-demand occupation. High-demand occupation is defined as having more openings than the median number of total openings statewide.

- The program must be licensed by the state as applicable. For example, if a nursing training program is seeking approval, it needs to be approved by the Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN). If the program is a community college degree program or non-credit training certificate, it needs to be approved by the Higher Education Coordination Commission.
- The program must lead to a federally or locally recognized credential.

Otherwise, there are logistics required by the ETPL application like a program description, cost to a participant, information on accessibility, description of support for barriers to employment and information on any partnerships with business.

Once a training program is on the ETPL, local workforce boards can choose to fund participants in those programs.

Potential funding intersections

The ETPL process overlaps with many of the other identified strategies in this paper. For example, the Mental Health and Addiction Association of Oregon has a Peer Wellness Specialist training. This training is approved by the Oregon Health Authority as a Traditional Health Worker training. It is also approved on the ETPL meaning students who enroll in MHAAO's Peer Wellness Specialist training can have their tuition costs covered by WIOA funding through CWP or WSI. It's also possible for Non-Credit Training Certificate programs or micro-credential programs at community colleges to be approved on the ETPL meaning participants enrolled may qualify for a full or partial subsidy through the participant's ITA.

There are reporting requirements associated with ITA spending. Local workforce boards can also choose to limit their spending to priority programs, usually programs for the highest demand occupations. For example, in greater Portland, CWP and WSI's spending is currently limited to the following industries: healthcare, advanced manufacturing, clean energy, early childhood education, construction and a few more specific target occupations.

Offering: one-stop career centers

The workforce boards' primary investments are the WorkSource centers which, in greater Portland, can be found in Beaverton, Tigard, Oregon City, Gresham, Northeast Portland and Southeast Portland. These centers are also known as American Job Centers or one-stop centers. A person can walk into a WorkSource building and access computers, career planning assistance, referrals to other stabilizing resources, workshops, trainings and more. Every one-stop center nationwide, including WorkSource, has a list designated by the WIOA of required partners and programs that are to be offered at each site. This list includes programs for youth, adults, seniors, veterans, Native Americans, migrant farm workers, families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), people who have been laid off or are unemployed, formerly incarcerated people, people seeking careers in the trades and other postsecondary technical programs.

- If the housing service worker certification is developed as a program at a community college and then approved for the ETPL, students who visit WorkSource centers for career assistance could identify the HSWC as a program they are

interested in pursuing. As mentioned above, WIOA funds could potentially be used to help fund that participant's ITA for the HSWC.

Offering: career coaching network

Another mechanism for service delivery is the career coaching network. Career coaches associated with workforce development boards can be found at the WorkSource centers and embedded in other local organizations. While embedded at other agencies, career coaches are supported and fully or partially funded by workforce boards. They can be funded by other entities which usually results in a career coach being solely focused on getting participants employed within that entity or field. The idea behind a career coach is to ensure that there is a professional solely dedicated to supporting a client's career goals. Often, general case managers are focused on the various other needs of the client from housing to healthcare, whereas a career coach focuses on supporting individuals with the tools they need to succeed in a career, including accessing the tools and resources to achieve their goals, increase their skill sets and secure higher wage employment. Coordination between these types of support staff is encouraged and best practice.

- In one example of this model, **Clackamas Workforce Partnership partners with Ant Farm**, a local nonprofit, to serve rural residents. Through this partnership, participants engaged with a CWP career coach can also leverage the housing resources Ant Farm offers. There is also a unique opportunity to build relationships with rural companies for work experience.
- In another example, **Worksystems, Inc. has career coaches embedded at local Portland-area nonprofits Our Just Future and Latino Network**. Individuals engaged in the career coach network who need support with childcare (provided by Latino Network) or housing navigation (provided by Our Just Future) are able to access those services as part of the support package a career coach brings.⁸⁰
- In another example in Washington County is **Health Careers NW**. Health Careers NW is a program established by Worksystems, Inc. using the Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG). The HPOG is authorized by the Affordable Care Act. Health Careers NW supports workforce development in healthcare by providing career coaching, career exploration, training and job placement assistance to our region. HPOG provides these services to low-income households: those on TANF, SNAP and/or Medicaid. Career coaches for Health Careers NW are placed around the region at organizations that might be serving those on TANF, SNAP and/or Medicaid: WorkSource centers, DHS and other agencies providing public assistance.

If leveraged with the development of the HSWC program, a career coaching network might support the HSWC program by:

- Helping participants gain general job skills.
- Increasing enrollment in the HSWC program.

- Supporting the success of the participant in the HSWC program and then in finding work.

Offering: training programs

An additional method workforce boards use to deliver services is **creating new training programs**. In partnership with subject matter experts and other impacted parties, they can create training programs tailored to a certain industry or need. For example, in 2023, in partnership with Multnomah County shelter providers, Worksystems, Inc. built a Shelter Worker Training curriculum, and an accompanying training requirement log combined with competency standards. The curriculum Worksystems, Inc. and the providers developed covered many training areas desired by the HSWC, as identified earlier in this paper. For example, lessons in the curriculum included crisis management and intervention; Narcan administration; self-care; assertive engagement; understanding poverty and homelessness; diversity, equity and inclusion training; ethics and boundaries; trauma-informed care and more. This training was never scaled up and Worksystems, Inc. identified insufficient wages as a primary reason it was not sustainable.

Workforce boards are tasked with the bird's eye view of employment trends, industry workforce needs and economic influences on job seekers and employers. It is with this lens that the Shelter Worker Training was deemed unsustainable. For a workforce training program to be successful, there need to be wage gains associated with the increasingly specialized skills that come from the training. In the case of the Shelter Worker Training, participants were committing to hours and days of training with the end goal being employment at a shelter. It's common for the entry-level shelter jobs to pay at or around minimum wage which potential training participants could earn at a different job with little to no prerequisite training. The workforce boards believe that the success of a housing service worker program will hinge on compensation that is consistent with the skillset and requirements of the workers, and consistent through the entire housing system.

In addition to creating new training programs, **workforce boards can organize and collate existing trainings** so that they are widely accessible to job seekers. For example, Clackamas Workforce Partnership works with Goodwill Industries of the Columbia Willamette to provide career readiness trainings at the WorkSource Clackamas site. Goodwill provided a Google Suite training and a resume building training in October 2024.

Offering: internships

As was mentioned above, local workforce board agencies can organize internship programs by contracting with service providers to create paid internship slots. This relieves administrative and financial burdens on the service providers.

There are many examples of this currently happening in the region, one of which is Washington County's Housing Careers program.⁸¹ In the 2022-2023 fiscal year, Washington County launched a capacity building program for community members with lived experience of homelessness. The Housing Careers program provided participants with training and internship opportunities in housing services, the internships coordinated and

funded by Worksystems, Inc. The program has been successful in filling a workforce gap in Washington County and has now even expanded to provide general career coaching for careers outside of housing services. This would be an important program to learn from if an HSWC implementation strategy engages a workforce board.

In summary, workforce boards like Clackamas Workforce Partnership and Worksystems, Inc. are conveners, overseeing their regional workforce pipelines. This can include identifying and addressing other challenges to the workforce like childcare, housing and transit. Local workforce boards deliver workforce development services via their WorkSource centers and community-based partners. They can also create and maintain career coaching networks, new training programs, and collections of collated trainings, and they may be able to unlock federal workforce funds to help offset the cost of program enrollment for individual participants. They have been successful in coordinating and funding internship programs across the three counties. Any one of these methods could be used individually or in partnership with another to create and deliver the Housing Services Worker Certification program. A major advantage of partnering with our workforce boards is their ability to conceptualize and help with workforce pipeline at a high-level, including recruitment and retention.

SECTION SEVEN: CONCLUSION

Prompted by the Metro Tri-County Planning Body setting a goal around regional training development, and many providers sharing their struggles with finding adequate training for frontline staff, Metro housing department's regional capacity team set out to answer whether or not there is an existing training program that can provide housing service workers the skills they need to perform their job duties successfully.

We started off by surveying jurisdictions and service providers to learn what trainings they deemed necessary for entry-level homeless service staff and identified five main training areas: substance use recovery and mental health; basics of housing case management; basics of housing navigation; diversity, equity and inclusion; and trauma-informed care and self-care. We then conducted a national scan of existing programs that we might learn from or be able to duplicate. From there, we conducted a local scan of existing human services trainings, post-secondary educational offerings, behavioral and community healthcare certifications, internships, apprenticeships and workforce boards to identify whether a training program currently existed that encompassed all the training needs identified in the initial survey.

This research demonstrated there is currently no existing program offering all the necessary courses suggested by providers and jurisdictions. The potential implementation strategies for each area that may be pursued to develop this curriculum are included in their relevant sections and in Appendix A below.

At a high level, these implementation strategies encompass options within post-secondary education and outside of post-secondary education and include:

- Identifying and supplementing an already-existing higher education program
- Creating a non-credit training program at a higher education institution
- Scaling up existing trainings that are already being offered outside of higher education
- Creating a new certification system akin to the existing behavioral and community healthcare certificates
- Creating a new training module or CEU within the existing behavioral and community healthcare certificate training programs

Along with these potential implementation strategies, our research leads us to conclude that any implementation strategy should include the following:

- **Provider co-creation and feedback** is vital in ensuring the program is relevant and supportive. Any program development that happens can be informed by the expertise of subject matter experts already operating in our region.
- **Workforce boards** are uniquely positioned to support workforce development and have already been partnering with local agencies on human-services-related career pathways. Partnering with Clackamas Workforce Partnership and Worksystems, Inc. to help design and/or administer the HSWC workforce development components would be advantageous.
- Paid **internships** are a cornerstone of most pre-professional training programs. They provide opportunities for participants to apply what they've learned in real-life scenarios, choose if the profession is right for them and can create a pool of potential employees for agencies. Along with the advantages outlined above, workforce boards can help build out internship programs.
- As has been highlighted in the National Alliance to End Homelessness study and the insight shared by our workforce board partners, **living wages** are a core component of ensuring adequate staffing on the frontlines of homeless services. Wage increases are not directly related to the Tri-County Planning Body's training goal, we support the larger Tri-County Planning Body goal to support employee recruitment and retention.

Given that our research has demonstrated that there is no direct program that covers all the necessary areas, the opportunity ahead requires considering what factors from the programs we researched are advantageous to include in or influence a new training program.

This research will inform recommendations to Metro's Tri-County Planning Body for future opportunities and strategies to regionalize training.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: POTENTIAL STRATEGIES TO PURSUE

Based on the research above, along with a series of community engagement meeting with experts in higher education and workforce development we have identified several strategies we could consider pursuing in developing a housing service worker certification. These strategies are included throughout the paper in their relevant sections and are repeated here for ease of reference.

National strategies

Potential implementation strategy one: scale up on-demand trainings

Concept

As outlined above, there are several organizations that offer on-demand trainings in fundamentals of homeless services, which may be a quick strategy to ensuring providers have what they need now as we consider additional options.

To ensure that our efforts are not duplicative:

- Identify the current trainings that are occurring locally that match provider needs.
- Coordinate, leverage, and invest in these trainings, to make them more readily accessible to frontline-service workers.

Trainings in this strategy are inclusive of the variety of trainings that are available to frontline-service workers, including skills like CPR but also training in trauma-informed care.

Implementation

- Conduct a landscape analysis of the current trainings available in the region.
- Compare/contrast what is currently available against provider need.
- Engage in efforts to increase the accessibility of these trainings.
- Offer immediate access to on-demand trainings

Benefits

- Fastest option
- Honors the work for frontline service providers

Detriments

- Possibility of needed trainings not being available.
- Not as wholistic for the employee.
- On-demand trainings are virtual only
- On-demand makes it challenging for connecting with an instructor

Post-secondary education strategies

This section of the paper outlines the various strategies our research identified that may be pursuable at institutions of post-secondary education, along with what implementation would look like, and our estimation of benefits and detriments. These strategy options were identified by both hard research, and anecdotal conversations with interested parties at institutions of post-secondary education.

The strategies identified below are:

1. Identify/supplement already existing programs at an institution of higher education
2. Develop a Non-Credit Training Certificate (NCTC) or micro-credential program at a community college's professional development and training department.
3. Stand up a program at PSU's Center for Executive and Professional Education (CEPE)

Potential implementation strategy two: identify/supplement already existing post-secondary education programs

Concept

Using research outlined above, identify academic programs in the region that have a similar scope to the theoretical courses outlined in section four for a housing service worker certification (HSWC), supplementing housing related material into the curriculum where appropriate.

Implementation

- Identify academic programs in the region that have a similar scope to HSWC. (e.g. PCC's Foundations in Human Services Career Pathways Certificate).
- Review course descriptions and identify existing curriculum content.
- Compare/contrast already existing curriculum content with what providers have identified to be priority training areas.
- Supplement existing courses with additional content/classes, focused primarily on the HSWC project. (e.g. Basics of Housing System Navigation)

Benefits

- Faster than developing a brand-new curriculum and getting a certification approved by the state, which can be a lengthy process for accredited programs.
- Results in college credit.

- Participants would have access to the institution's student support services.

Detriments

- The program would be set at each college or university and not easily replicable across colleges (programs that are transcribed at institutions of higher education must stay at those institutions).
- Difficult to pair with an internship program.
- There is significant desired coursework in the HSWC that is not included in the post-secondary programs outlined above and that would need to be added on, potentially extending the course without credit.

Potential implementation strategy three: non-credit training program

Concept

While an NCTC has never been created for the social service workforce before in our region, our conversations with the workforce departments at our local community colleges, as well as the State of Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Committee (which approves NCTCs) were promising with interest being expressed in potentially pursuing this strategy and replicating similar programming at multiple community colleges.

The advantage of leveraging a micro-credential model is that it would not require state approval and would therefore be a simple way to develop and refine a new training program. With that in mind, it would likely make the most sense to start with a micro-credential model that may later be converted into an NCTC.

The process would likely follow these steps:

- Contract with the Professional Development and Training Department at either Mount Hood Community College (MHCC), Portland Community College (PCC), or Clackamas Community College (CCC) to develop a curriculum based on our service worker framework.
- Once developed, the HSWC curriculum will be piloted as a micro-credential program that later could be converted into either a Non-Credit Training Certificate program (for those who are not yet working in the field) or a Continuing and Technical Education program (for those already employed in the field and desiring additional training).

Implementation

This implementation strategy may include developing several micro-credentials with each focusing on one topic area from the curriculum.

- Our research has highlighted the importance of developing a foundations course that is a pre-requisite for the specialized courses. This will allow all students who are new to the field to understand the baseline skills needed to perform their scope

of work, before diving into more specialized topics, which may be continued education.

- Beyond a foundations course, eventually scaling up to leadership training for frontline workers who are promoted to supervisors

Benefits

- A shared curriculum could be replicated across multiple community colleges (though that has not been done before).
- The development of micro-credentials and NCTCs are very user driven, allowing the HSWC curriculum to be built with provider input, being responsive to the needs of organizations in the region.
- Faster to develop/launch than an accredited program.
- Credentials can be applied toward traditional academic degrees through a "credit for prior learning" process, which exists at all local community colleges.
- Micro-credential or NCTC courses can be offered at whatever frequency is needed rather than on a semester or quarter system as is typical for institutions of higher learning.
- Program can begin while waiting for accreditation approval from the state of Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Committee (NCTC). Micro-credentials do not require state approval.

Detriments

- The student/employee usually would not receive college credit.
 - For NCTC's, there is a lengthy process to develop a curriculum and then become state certified (in our discussions, we heard that it's still much faster than developing a new, accredited program—micro-credentials do not require state approval).
 - Pairing an NCTC with an internship program can be administratively complicated, however it's much more flexible with a micro-credential.
 - Each NCTC program is unique to the institution of higher learning (though could be more easily replicated than an accredited program).
 - An NCTC has not yet been created for the social service system and hasn't been replicated across community colleges (but there is interest in trying it based on our conversations.)
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Potential implementation strategy four: PSU's Center for Executive and Professional Education (CEPE)

Concept

The Center for Executive and Professional Education (CEPE) at PSU offers non-credit professional education courses tailored to the needs of the target audience. These curricula can take the form of certificate programs or direct training with organizations. CEPE offers in-house curriculum development services, with coursework being built in partnership with the contracting organization.

Implementation

Contract with PSU's Center for Executive and Professional Education (CEPE) to engage in HSWC curriculum development.

Once the HSWC curriculum is developed, launch the program within CEPE at PSU. There are four primary models that can be implemented:

- Certificate of achievement for the completion of a course,
- Micro-credentialing, where each student will receive a credential for each course they take, culminating in a certificate of achievement,
- Licensing the curriculum, and granting individuals access to the material through a code, or
- Badging, where students receive badges for successful skill attainment.

Benefits

- Faster to develop/launch than an accredited program.

Detriments

- The student/employee would not receive college-credit.
- Standalone program at PSU so likely couldn't be replicated at other institutions of higher education.

Potential strategies with state certification models

Potential implementation strategy five: creating a new certifying body

Using training models regulated by the state as blueprints, like Oregon Health Authority's Traditional Health Workers and the behavioral health certifications licensed by the Mental Health and Addiction Certification Board of Oregon, create a new certifying body to approve trainings created and delivered by community-based organizations.

Implementation

- Create or assign a new body to oversee regulation of the HSWC training and/or certification.
- Create a rubric for training program approval.
- Recruit agencies to create and deliver HSWC training.
- Participants enroll in HSWC trainings at respective agencies.

Benefits

- More flexibility with training requirements and curriculum development

Detriments

The circumstances in place that made each existing state certification model successful are difficult to replicate. Any attempt to do so would be a heavy lift. These include:

- Establishing a nationwide industry need for the certification.
- Creating and passing state legislation to regulate training requirements.
- Widespread, local political support.
- Built in conjunction with Medicaid guidelines allowing for Medicaid funding.

Potential implementation strategy six: creating a new training module within the existing system

Concept

Utilize an existing training and certification strategy for a housing service worker certification.

Implementation

- Identify an existing training and certification program under the state certification models (most likely a Peer Wellness Specialist, Peer Support Specialist, Certified Recovery Mentor and/or Community Health Worker).
- Work with approved training provider(s) to add a housing-specific addendum to their existing training, which may include a housing-specific continuing education unit.
- Approve training with the Oregon Health Authority if necessary (applicable to PWS, PSS, CRM and CHW).
- Enroll participants in training programs.

Benefits

- Utilizing a preexisting training program can reduce the amount of labor and time required to start a HSWC.
- Agencies are already providing high-quality training that overlaps with the HSWC requirements.
- Medicaid funds available to bill or through a fee-for-service contact.

Detriments

- Because the existing models are geared towards the behavioral health community, most of the applicable existing training programs are specifically for peer-delivered services (except for the Community Health Worker, listed above). The existing system requires peer training programs to be categorized either as a mental health or addiction program. This means all participants would need lived experience of either a mental health condition and/or substance use. Even if there were a way around that, participants would need lived experience of homelessness or housing instability in the peer model.
- Because the existing programs are geared toward behavioral and community health, they may contain elements that are irrelevant or out-of-scope for a housing service worker.
- Agencies might not have an incentive to add housing into their curriculum, including the state who oversees training program approval. It might be considered “mission drift.”
- There could be challenges with incorporating Medicaid funding.

Potential implementation strategy seven: certifying housing staff through existing pathways to bill Medicaid

Concept

Support Peer Support Specialist, Peer Wellness Specialist, Certified Recover Mentor and/or Community Health Worker certification amongst housing service workers without any changes to the curriculum.

Implementation

- Identify existing training programs for each certification and/or create new ones for housing service workers to take.
- Bill Medicaid for allowable services.
- Consider intertwining this strategy with strategy 6, adding specific housing curriculum to the existing training programs.

Benefits

- Having staff certified as Community Health Workers can **improve professional skills** like facilitation, community-building capabilities, cultural responsiveness and navigation of Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) and the health services available through them.
- CHW certification also allows an agency to either **bill Medicaid** or procure a fee-for-services contract with a CCO creating an additional funding stream.

Detriments:

- Challenges arise with the current model of Community Health Workers, too. Depending on a CHW’s employer, access to healthcare for their participants can be

vary in ease. CHWs employed by a CCO often have more access and information to the healthcare system than their counterparts employed by community-based organizations.

- Often there is disagreement on what is a billable service. This can create issues with budgeting for community-based organizations. There is also the issue of wage increases. A Community Health Worker certification is not tied to a pay scale or wage increase.

APPENDIX B: RACIAL EQUITY LENS REPORT

See Appendix C in “Tri-County Planning Body, Training Goal, Regional Implementation Strategy.”

APPENDIX C: HOUSING SERVICE WORKER CERTIFICATION AND RESEARCH PROJECT TRAINING SURVEY RESULTS

See Appendix A in "Tri-County Planning Body, Training Goal, Regional Implementation Strategy."

APPENDIX D

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DEMOGRAPHICS

Racial demographic	Clackamas Community College	Mt. Hood Community College	Portland Community college	Portland State University	2020 Census (Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties combined)
White	45.0%	50.0%	52.0%	49.5%	66.7%
BIPOC	22.0%	-	40.0%	40.1%	32.7%
Latino	14.0%	14.0%	19.0%	18.6%	13.7%
Asian	4.0%	7.0%	8.0%	8.8%	8.2%
Black or African American	2.0%	4.0%	5.0%	4.3%	3.3%
Native American	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.5%	0.6%
Multicultural/ multi-ethnic	4.0%	4.0%	6.0%	6.3%	6.4%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	-	1.0%	1.0%	0.6%	0.5%
Other	-	-	-	4.8%	0.6%
Unknown	31.0%	19.0%	8.0%	-	-

COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT SUPPORTS

	Clackamas Community College	Mt. Hood Community College	Portland Community College	Portland State University's Center for Executive and Professional Education*
Academic help/tutoring	x	x	x	
Basic needs/benefits support	x	x	x	
Career planning	x	x	x	
Counseling	x	x	x	
Disability resources	x		x	
Language support			x	
LGBTQIA+ support			x	
Multicultural resources	x		x	
Undocumented student resources		x	x	
Veterans' resources	x	x	x	
Food pantry	x		x	
Women's resources		x	x	

*Student's enrolled with CEPE don't pay student fees, and therefore don't have access to the student support services available at PSU.

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- ¹ See National Alliance to End Homelessness (December, 2023) "[Working in Homeless Services: A Survey of the Field](#)" for more information on how wages in housing services affect workers, specifically pages 2-9.
- ² See National Alliance to End Homelessness (2024) "[Race-ing to Thrive: Homeless Service Workforce Survey Reveals Low Salaries \(and Other Challenges\) More Greatly Impact People of Color](#)" for more information on impacts on staff of color.
- ³ See the Joint Office of Homeless Services (2023, August) "[Classification, Compensation and Benefits Study](#)" for more information on wages of local housing service workers, specifically pages 32 and 33.
- ⁴ See National Alliance to End Homelessness (2024, November) "[Increasingly Unsustainable: Unpartnered Homeless Services Workers Struggle to Make Ends Meet](#)" for more information on unpartnered/unmarried housing service workers.
- ⁵ See McKinsey & Company (2023, May) "[Making government an even better place for women to work](#)" for general information on women in the public sector.
- ⁶ See The Oregonian's 2024 article, "[Homelessness is increasing faster than Portland-area counties are moving people into housing](#)" for more information on the local challenges of housing services staffing.
- ⁷ See National Alliance to End Homelessness (2024) "[Race-ing to Thrive: Homeless Service Workforce Survey Reveals Low Salaries \(and Other Challenges\) More Greatly Impact People of Color](#)" for more information on impacts on staff of color.
- ⁸ To read more on Multnomah County's workforce stabilization grants, visit multco.us/news/news-release-10-million-workforce-stabilization-grants-deployed-61-homelessness-service.
- ⁹ The Joint Office of Homeless Services' racial equity lens tool can be found here: johs.us/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/JOHS-RELT-questions-for-CBAC_0.pdf
- ¹⁰ Find more information on San Diego City College's PEER program at sdcity.edu/life-at-city/peer.aspx. Information about their PEER program also comes from conversations between Metro and SDCC on August 2, 2024 and September 9, 2024.
- ¹¹ Visit Santa Monica College at smc.edu/academics/academic-departments/business/homeless-services-work.php to learn more about their Homeless Service Work Certificate. Information about their program comes also from a conversation between Metro and SMC on July 26, 2024.
- ¹² Visit Seattle Central College at educationhumanservices.seattlecentral.edu/programs/care-navigation-and-coordination to learn more about their Care Navigation and Coordination program.
- ¹³ Visit Seattle Central College at educationhumanservices.seattlecentral.edu/programs/social-and-human-services/social-human-services-aas-t to learn more about their Social and Human Services program.
- ¹⁴ Visit San Diego City College at sdcity.edu/academics/schools-programs/behavioral-social-science/socialwork.aspx to learn more about their associate program in social work. Information about this program was also gained during conversations between Metro and San Diego City College on August 2, 2024 and September 9, 2024.
- ¹⁵ Learn more about Speak Up! on the Corporation for Supportive Housing website: csh.org/csh-solutions/speak-up/
- ¹⁶ Learn more about the Lived Experience Training Academy (LETA) on the National Coalition for the Homeless website: nationalhomeless.org/leta/
- ¹⁷ Learn more about Residents Organizing for Change on the Neighborhood Partnerships here: neighborhoodpartnerships.org/residents-organizing-for-change
- ¹⁸ Learn more about the Street Roots Ambassador Program on their website: streetroots.org/ambassadors
- ¹⁹ Information on the Florida Coalition for the Homeless program, the Homeless Leadership Academy, can be found at fchonline1.nicepage.io/Leadership-Academy.html. Information was also gained from a conversation between Metro and Florida Coalition for the Homeless on August 9, 2024.
- ²⁰ More information on the Alliance Center for Capacity Building by the National Alliance to End Homelessness can be found at endhomelessness.org/ending-homelessness/what-we-do/training-overview/.
- ²¹ Visit SAMHSA's website for more information on their Homeless and Housing Resource Center: samhsa.gov/resource/tta/homeless-housing-resource-center-hhrc
- ²² Visit csh.org/csh-solutions/training-ta-consulting/training-center/ for more information on the Corporation for Supportive Housing's training center.
- ²³ Visit homelesstraining.com/ to learn more.
- ²⁴ Visit c4innovates.com/ for more information on their Homeless Resource Center.
- ²⁵ Visit hudexchange.info/trainings/ for more information on HUD's training resources and to access their trainings.
- ²⁶ sites.libsyn.com/451038/site/coordinated-access-moving-from-unhoused-to-housed-in-portland
- ²⁷ Visit rentwell.org/ for more information on Rent Well.

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- ²⁸ To learn more, visit boisestate.edu/online/2024/02/15/certificate-vs-associate-degree-what-is-the-difference/.
- ²⁹ To learn more about the Alcohol and Drug Counselor Career Pathway Certificate of Completion at Clackamas Community College, visit clackamas.edu/academics/degrees-certificates/alcohol-and-drug-counselor-career-pathway.
- ³⁰ To learn more about the Human Services Generalist Certificate of Completion at Clackamas Community College, visit clackamas.edu/academics/degrees-certificates/human-services-generalist-certificate.
- ³¹ To learn more about the Human Services Generalist Associate Degree at Clackamas Community College, visit cms-prod.clackamas.edu/academics/degrees-certificates/human-services-generalist.
- ³² Visit catalog.mhcc.edu/programs-majors/mental-health-social-service-addiction-counseling-behavioral-health-care-specialist-certificate/ for more information on Mt. Hood Community College's Behavioral Health Care Specialist program.
- ³³ Visit catalog.mhcc.edu/programs-majors/mental-health-social-service-addiction-counseling-youth-worker-certificate/ to learn about Mt. Hood Community College's Youth Worker Certificate program.
- ³⁴ Visit <https://catalog.mhcc.edu/programs-majors/mental-health-social-service-addiction-counseling-degree/> to learn more about Mt. Hood Community College's Mental Health, Social Service and Addiction Counseling associate degree program.
- ³⁵ Visit pcc.edu/programs/family-human-services/pathway-foundations-human-services/ to learn more about Portland Community College's Foundations in Human Services Career Pathway Certificate.
- ³⁶ Visit pcc.edu/programs/family-human-services/aas-family-human-services/ to learn more about Portland Community College's Foundations in Human Services associate degree program.
- ³⁷ Visit <https://www.georgefox.edu/college-admissions/academics/major/social-work.html> to learn more about George Fox University's Bachelor of Social Work major.
- ³⁸ Visit pacificu.edu/social-work-bsw to learn more about Pacific University's Bachelor of Social Work program.
- ³⁹ Visit pdx.edu/academics/programs/undergraduate/bsw-social-work to learn more about Portland State University's Bachelor of Social Work program.
- ⁴⁰ Visit college.up.edu/socialwork/undergraduate-programs/social-work-ba.html to learn more about the Bachelor of Social Work program at the University of Portland.
- ⁴¹ Visit warnerpacific.edu/academics/degrees-and-majors-minors/social-work/ to learn more about the Bachelor of Social Work program at Warner Pacific University.
- ⁴² To learn more about Non-credit Training Certificates, review the 2023 Oregon Community College Policy and Process Book by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (page 116). www.oregon.gov/highered/about/community-colleges-workforce-development/Documents/Academic-Approval Information was also gathered about NCTCs from meetings with the HECC (August 14, 2024), Portland Community College (August 8, 2024) and Mt. Hood Community College (July 31, 2024).
- ⁴³ From Portland Community College: catalog.pcc.edu/handbook/c101-continuingeducationunits/
- ⁴⁴ Ibid.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid.
- ⁴⁷ Portland Community College's Mental Health First Aid program: www.pcc.edu/professional/professional-development/behavioral-health/
- ⁴⁸ Information gathered in a meeting with Portland Community College's CLIMB Center on February 19, 2025.
- ⁴⁹ To learn more about the Center for Executive and Professional Education, you can visit their website: www.pdx.edu/professional-education/ Information about CEPE was also gathered in meetings on August 12 2024.
- ⁵⁰ Visit the Oregon Health Authority's website to learn more: www.oregon.gov/oha/ei/pages/about-traditional-health-workers.aspx
- ⁵¹ To learn more about Medicaid billing methods for Traditional Health Workers, visit the Oregon Health Authority's website here: www.oregon.gov/oha/ei/pages/info-health-systems-providers-thws.aspx
- ⁵² To learn more about Traditional Health Workers, visit yamhillcco.org/community-programs/traditional-health-workers/.
- ⁵³ Visit <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/EI/Pages/About-Traditional-Health-Workers.aspx> to see a list of and descriptions for each Traditional Health Worker type.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵⁵ Ibid.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid.
- ⁵⁷ Page 2 of this publication from Trillium Community Health Plan describes the current lack of PHN training and how one might become certified:

trilliumohp.com/content/dam/centene/trillium/ProviderResources/ProviderForms/MCA%202051223%20Steps%20CPH%20Navigator.pdf

⁵⁸ To learn more about MHACBO's role, visit their website: www.mhacbo.org/en/contact-us/about.

⁵⁹ To see a list of the MHACBO certifications and information on how to obtain them, visit www.mhacbo.org/en/certifications/.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Information gathered from addiction-counselor.org/how-to-become/oregon/.

⁶⁵ House Bill 3407 webpage: olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2013R1/Measures/Overview/HB3407

⁶⁶ House Bill 3407 testimony webpage: olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2013R1/Measures/Testimony/HB3407

⁶⁷ Text for House Bill 3407:

olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2013R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB3407/Enrolled

⁶⁸ Information gathered from Eric Martin, Director of Policy and Legislation at the Mental Health and Addiction Certification Board of Oregon. Meeting date: August 19, 2024.

⁶⁹ Information about Central City Concern's Certified Recovery Mentor training was discussed on October 7, 2024 with Sarah Holland of Central City Concern. The program was funded by Worksystems, Inc. and involved a paid internship.

⁷⁰ You can find a list of approved Traditional Health Worker trainings on the Oregon Health Authority's website here: www.oregon.gov/oha/EI/Pages/THW-Training-Programs.aspx

⁷¹ Learn more about OCHIN's work to increase the number of Community Health Workers in the state here: ochin.org/news/ochin-receives-nearly-3-million-workforce-development-grant-to-support-community-health-workers-training-program/

⁷² To learn more about the United States Department of Labor requirements for internships, refer to this fact sheet: www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/71-flsa-internships

⁷³ Visit www.nacweb.org/about-us/advocacy/position-statements/position-statement-us-internships for more information.

⁷⁴ Information from Sarah Holland of Central City Concern; October 7, 2024.

⁷⁵ www.oregon.gov/boli/apprenticeship/pages/default.aspx

⁷⁶ Visit onetonline.org to browse the recognized occupations in the U.S. that qualify for apprenticeships.

⁷⁷ Read [oregon.gov/boli/apprenticeship/Documents/RegisteringGuide_2020_08.pdf](https://www.oregon.gov/boli/apprenticeship/Documents/RegisteringGuide_2020_08.pdf) to learn more about the requirements for starting an apprenticeship in Oregon. You can find information specific to recognized occupations on pages 15 and 16.

⁷⁸ Information about our regional workforce board agencies can be found at <https://www.clackamasworkforce.org/> and <https://worksystems.org/>. Other related information was gained during conversations with Clackamas Workforce Partnership and Worksystems, Inc. on August 16, 2024 and October 2, 2024.

⁷⁹ ecfr.gov/current/title-20/chapter-V/part-680/subpart-C

⁸⁰ Learned in conversation with workforce board partners on August 16, 2024.

⁸¹ Read more about Washington County's Housing Careers in their 2022-2023 annual report (page 6): washingtoncountyor.gov/housing/documents/washco-shs-annual-report-2023-digitalpdf/download?inline or their 2023-2024 annual report: oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2024/11/12/washington-county-supportive-housing-services-annual-report-FY23-24-20241101.pdf, specifically pages 12 and 15. You can also find a write up on the program from Metro here: oregonmetro.gov/news/washington-county-launches-housing-careers-pilot-program