Workforce Development and the Chronically Unemployed

Summary and Key Findings

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Webinar Goals

- Present the major themes and findings identified across the roundtables
- Highlight issues and opportunities for local action
- Gather input on the Federal Reserve's activities and resources
Overview of Roundtables

- Recent trends in unemployment and labor markets have elevated workforce development issues

- The Kansas City Fed held 5 roundtables to:
  - Gain understanding of local issues and programs
  - Engage new partners
  - Deepen shared understanding of issues among local leaders

- 5 roundtables with nearly 100 participants held in District

- Common format and questions to guide discussions

Summary of Discussions

- Unemployed workers have varied characteristics and barriers
  - Need to clearly define clients and needs
  - Difference between long-term unemployed, chronically unemployed and career changers
  - Chronically unemployed often require higher level of service
Summary of Discussions

- Perceptions and consequences of risk are increasing
  - Screening more stringent to reduce employer liabilities
  - Credit checks more common – and more people are affected
  - Perception of risk often greater than reality
  - Policies and programs needed to mitigate or reassess risk

Summary of Discussions

- Training and education needs to be accessible and relevant
  - Faster paced, more flexible programs and delivery needed
  - Employer input critical in training design
  - Strong interest in career pathways and stackable certificate options
  - Public schools need to be more focused on workforce outcomes
  - Flexible and alternative funding needed to support nontraditional training
Summary of Discussions

- Strong and expanded partnerships needed
  - Partners need to be expanded – educators, employers, economic developers, labor unions, insurance companies, legal system
  - Effective communication needed about workforce contributions
  - Greater networking opportunities desired

Summary of Discussions

- Incentives and work supports matter
  - Cliff effect often barrier to advancement
  - Clients need better understanding of available work supports
    - Unemployment insurance
    - Earned Income Credit
    - Financial education
Summary of Discussions

- Job creation is a needed complement
  - Available jobs required for good workforce outcomes
  - Economic development incentives should leverage local hires

Summary of Discussions

- Banks and workforce development organizations have shared interests
  - Community Reinvestment Act goals and workforce development programs need to be clarified and strengthened
  - Bankers and workforce professionals need more awareness of each other’s goals, activities and opportunities for partnership
  - Banks currently support activities generally related to workforce development – opportunity for more direct engagement
  - Workforce programs need to actively develop relationships with banks. Many banks said they had never been approached on this issue.
Review of Findings

1. Need to define client characteristics and needs.
2. Chronically unemployed require greater services.
3. Perceptions of risk need to be addressed.
4. Public benefits and work supports need appropriate means tests to provide incentives.
5. Greater focus on flexible skills training, career pathways and stackable certificates needed.
6. Opportunities for engaging banks in new ways through use of CRA incentives.
7. Strong interest in on-going regional networking opportunities.

Responses

Future of Workforce Development Conference
workforce.kcfd.org
Kansas City / Sept. 19-20
- Need to define client characteristics and needs.
- Chronically unemployed require greater services.
- Perceptions of risk need to be addressed.
- Strong interest in on-going regional networking opportunities.

Workforce Roundtables
Semi-annual in District offices
Developed with local workforce leaders
- Strong interest in on-going regional networking opportunities.

Strengthen Use of CRA
Presentations and resources for both bankers and workforce professionals
- Opportunities for engaging banks in new ways through use of CRA incentives.
Responses

‘Putting Your Paycheck to Work’
Financial education resources for workforce professionals and their clients

• Chronically unemployed require greater services.
• Perceptions of risk need to be addressed.
• Greater focus on flexible skills training, career pathways and stackable certificates needed.

Connect Workforce and Asset-Building Programs
Assess connections at state level and increase exposure.

• Perceptions of risk need to be addressed.
• Public benefits and work supports need appropriate means tests to provide incentives.
• Strong interest in on-going regional networking opportunities.

Contact

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