



RESEARCH REPORT

# Helping Public Housing Residents Find Jobs and Build Careers

## Evaluation Findings from New York City's Jobs-Plus Expansion

Josh Leopold

Theresa Anderson

Marla McDaniel

Christopher Hayes

sade adeeyo

with Rob Pitingolo

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# NYC Opportunity Response to Urban Institute Evaluation of Jobs-Plus

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**The Urban Institute's evaluation of Jobs-Plus—a place-based, workforce development initiative for public housing communities—adds to existing evidence of the model's success by documenting significant benefits for participating individuals, while reinforcing earlier findings on the difficulty of successful program implementation.**

The Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity (NYC Opportunity) launched the first City-funded Jobs-Plus site with its agency partners in 2009, based on strong evidence of success from a federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) pilot by the same name implemented in six other US cities. A rigorous evaluation of that initiative showed that residents of targeted housing developments where Jobs-Plus was fully implemented increased their earnings by 16 percent. These gains persisted over seven years, including three years after the pilot ended.<sup>1</sup> NYC Opportunity's implementation of Jobs-Plus in NYC aimed to expand on this evidence, adapting the model for a substantially different economic and policy context.

Jobs-Plus serves residents of specific New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments. The model has three core components: (1) on-site employment services, (2) financial education, rent-based, and other incentives that help "make work pay," and (3) community support for work that organizes neighbors to promote work and serve as a support network to overcome barriers. Sites are operated by community-based providers that have contracts with NYC's Human Resources Administration (HRA). A "Jobs-Plus Collaborative" of NYCHA, HRA, NYC Opportunity, and the Department of Consumer Affairs' Office of Financial Empowerment oversees the program with funding support from the NYC Young Men's Initiative and other public sources.

This evaluation from the Urban Institute contributes to existing research by examining recent successes and challenges of the implementation of Jobs-Plus in NYC, including potential effects on earnings and employment for both individual residents and entire public housing communities. Key findings include:

- Jobs-Plus significantly increased participating residents' average earnings and employment;
- there were no substantial development-level impacts on work and earnings—though this is driven at least in part by data constraints; and
- participants appreciated the personalized approach of Jobs-Plus, including the dedication of program staff and availability of one-on-one assistance.

This report presents recommendations to address some of these challenges and possibly improve development-level effects. The Jobs-Plus Collaborative took these recommendations under advisement when making recent changes to the program design. In its next phase, Jobs-Plus will serve more NYCHA communities and each site will move toward equalizing the number of people served. The program will also alter the structure of milestone payments to prioritize Career Pathways principles, and will include new mental health supports to equip staff with additional tools to better serve members.

Qualitative data collection included interviews with program staff, site visits to three sites that demonstrated early successes or innovative practices, and focus groups with participants, or “members” as they are called for Jobs-Plus. The quantitative analysis combined HRA administrative data on Jobs-Plus members and NYCHA administrative data on public housing developments' entire on-lease populations with New York State Department of Labor wage records from 2007 through 2015.

To assess individual-level impacts, Urban used a methodology that compared quarterly earnings and employment status of Jobs-Plus members who had been enrolled in the program for one year to members who had not yet enrolled, while controlling for variables including demographics, prior work history, and job readiness. Development-level impacts were assessed by comparing outcomes for all working-age, nondisabled residents of the public housing developments where Jobs-Plus was implemented—regardless of their engagement with the program—with residents of similar developments without Jobs-Plus. This analysis aimed to evaluate whether Jobs-Plus had large enough direct impacts on members and indirect effects on other residents to elevate outcomes for entire developments.

Findings from these analyses are largely positive. Members reported that, compared to other available workforce development programming, they appreciated the flexible and comprehensive services offered, programming was oriented to their communities, and staff exhibited an unusual level of care and responsiveness. The quantitative individual-level analysis showed that one year of membership increased members' average quarterly earnings by \$497 (to \$2,034 from \$1,537) and their

average employment rate by 12 percentage points (to 28.7 percent from 16.7 percent). These are sizable increases.

In contrast with findings from the original HUD pilot and this study's findings of large, positive impacts on individual members, observed development-level effects were either not statistically significant or were very small. However, available data limits this analysis to residents who were on-lease with NYCHA, leaving out a significant number of Jobs-Plus members who were either off-lease public housing residents or not residents of public housing. The analysis suggests the size of developments served may also contribute to the lack of impact findings—NYC's targeted developments are larger than the HUD pilot's and the share of households reached by Jobs-Plus services is correspondingly lower. The three Jobs-Plus sites that did show small impacts on work and/or earnings were also those with the highest shares of households reached by Jobs-Plus services.

These combined findings reinforce the strong evidence base for Jobs-Plus while also reinforcing challenges documented in prior evaluations.<sup>2</sup> They depict an evidence-based program model that remains promising but that is also difficult to implement effectively at the scale needed for NYC's public housing communities.

In addition to using these findings to inform the future of Jobs-Plus implementation locally, NYC Opportunity will widely disseminate this research to inform practitioners and policymakers working with Jobs-Plus and other place-based initiatives that advance equity.

Daniel Edelman  
Senior Advisor, Programs and Evaluation

Jean-Marie Callan  
Deputy Director of Programs and Evaluation

Kate Dempsey  
Director of Strategy and Operations

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> James A. Riccio, "Sustained Earnings Gains for Residents in a Public Housing Jobs Program: Seven-Year Findings from the Jobs-Plus Demonstration," MDRC, January 2010, [www.mdrc.org/publication/sustained-earnings-gains-residents-public-housing-jobs-program](http://www.mdrc.org/publication/sustained-earnings-gains-residents-public-housing-jobs-program).

<sup>2</sup> David M. Greenberg, Aurelia Aceves, Victoria Quiroz-Becerra, David H. Greenberg, and Ari Oppenheim, *The Second Generation of Jobs-Plus Programs: Implementation Lessons from San Antonio and the Bronx*, MDRC, October 2015, [www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/CEO-SIF\\_Jobs-Plus\\_2015\\_FR.pdf](http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/CEO-SIF_Jobs-Plus_2015_FR.pdf).

# Executive Summary

This report summarizes the findings from New York City’s implementation of the Jobs-Plus Community Revitalization Initiative for Public Housing Residents (Jobs-Plus) program, designed to boost employment and earnings for public housing residents. The evaluation combined interviews and focus groups with staff and participants with analysis of data on Jobs-Plus participation, public housing residency, and quarterly earnings before and after implementation. The evaluation found that Jobs-Plus increased employment and earnings for participants. We attribute this to the program’s ability to provide personal, culturally competent employment services and cultivate a network of employers interested in hiring Jobs-Plus participants. The program also intended to increase employment and earnings for all residents living in its targeted public housing developments. Our evaluation found mixed evidence that the program slightly improved employment rates for residents of the targeted developments and found no evidence that it improved earnings. We attribute this lack of impact primarily to two factors. First, the Jobs-Plus providers might not have assisted a high enough proportion of residents to change overall trends within the developments. Second, our evaluation could not capture the program’s impact on the many participants who lived in the targeted developments but were not officially listed on the lease and were thus not included in our data.

## New York City’s Expansion of Jobs-Plus

Jobs-Plus is a multipronged program designed to increase employment and earnings for public housing residents. The original Jobs-Plus model was conceived in the mid-1990s as a collaboration between the federal government, the Rockefeller Foundation, and MDRC to address low employment and limited economic mobility in public housing. The original Jobs-Plus demonstration ran from 1998 to 2013 in public housing developments in six communities throughout the country. MDRC’s evaluation of the original demonstration showed that the program increased employment and earnings in communities that implemented the model (Bloom 2010). Based on these promising findings, New York City was the first place to create its own version of Jobs-Plus following the original demonstration.<sup>3</sup> The expansion targeted New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments starting with Jefferson Houses in 2009 and adding eight new sites between 2011 and 2014. The New York City Mayor’s Office for Economic Opportunity contracted with the Urban Institute to study the city’s expansion of Jobs-Plus, focusing on seven sites added between 2013 and 2014 in partnership with the Young Men’s Initiative.<sup>4</sup>



## The Jobs-Plus Model and Targeted Service Population

Both the original Jobs-Plus model and the New York City expansion have three main components: (1) employment-related services, (2) strategies for promoting work within the community (“community support for work”), and (3) financial services and incentives to reward work (“make work pay”). By increasing access to employment-related services, providing financial incentives to work, and promoting a culture of work within targeted public housing developments, Jobs-Plus is designed not only to help participating members, but to boost employment and earnings for the entire working-age population within the developments. New York’s expansion, however, differed in critical ways from the original Jobs-Plus demonstration. New York’s model included a more robust financial coaching component and performance-based contracts, but Jobs-Plus providers were also asked to serve much larger public housing developments, and the housing authority had less flexibility to alter the rent calculation of public housing residents to reduce financial disincentives to work.

## Study Design

The Urban Institute evaluation focused on the following research questions:

- Has Jobs-Plus shown employment and earnings gains for program participants?
- Has Jobs-Plus affected employment and earnings for all working-age, nondisabled adults living in the targeted public housing developments at implementation?
- What might contribute to Jobs-Plus’s successes or challenges in accomplishing its goals? What lessons can we draw from the expansion?

Our evaluation used a mixed-methods approach to answer these questions. The qualitative study sought to understand how New York City providers implemented the Jobs-Plus model and the factors that may have contributed to the program’s successes and challenges. It involved three phases of data collection: (1) spring and summer 2015, (2) fall 2015, and (3) winter 2018. In the first phase, we conducted telephone interviews with Jobs-Plus leadership and staff and New York City agency partners. In the second phase, we visited three Jobs-Plus locations that demonstrated early implementation success or developed innovative practices for reaching members or engaging the broader community. We interviewed provider and city staff working directly within the Jobs-Plus program and NYCHA property managers and administrative staff. We also held focus groups with Jobs-Plus members at the three sites. In the third phase, we followed up with city program administrators and

leadership at each Jobs-Plus provider for updates and clarifications about services and procedures since our first round of interviews in 2015.

The quantitative study assessed the impacts of Jobs-Plus on employment and earnings **for all people who enrolled in the Jobs-Plus program** (referred to throughout this report as Jobs-Plus members). For this analysis, we merged program data with the New York State Department of Labor's wage record system. We followed employment and earnings trajectories of Jobs-Plus members from the first quarter of 2007, two years before the implementation of the first New York Jobs-Plus site, through the third quarter of 2015.

The quantitative study also analyzed the impacts of Jobs-Plus on employment and earnings for people living in a public housing development at the time of program implementation. For this analysis, we selected two comparison public housing developments for each of the 18 Jobs-Plus targeted developments, matching developments based on size, structure, resident characteristics, and location. We compared quarterly employment rates and average earnings from the first quarter of 2007 to the third quarter of 2016 between working-age, nondisabled residents of Jobs-Plus targeted developments and similar developments without Jobs-Plus. This analysis merged NYCHA data on public housing tenants with earnings records for those tenants. It thus **includes only "official residents,"** or people who were listed on the households' lease with NYCHA.

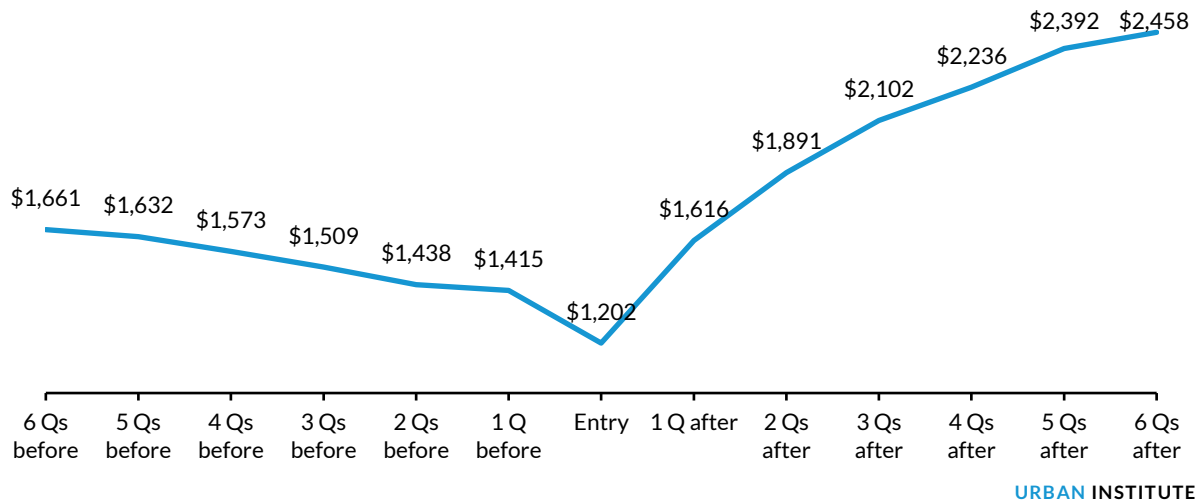
## Jobs-Plus's Impacts on Members

Jobs-Plus providers succeeded in recruiting nearly 11,000 members in their first years of program implementation. Members' average quarterly earnings increase substantially right after joining Jobs-Plus and continue to increase over time (figure ES.1). Our study did not include a comparison group of individuals that were like Jobs-Plus members but lacked access to the program. Without a comparison group, it is difficult to attribute these increases as direct effects of the program. We did, however, take advantage of natural differences in when members entered the program to better estimate program impacts while controlling for other factors, including demographic characteristics, time, location, employment history, and economic trends. We found that one year of Jobs-Plus participation increased employment rates by 12 percentage points (to 28.7 percent from 16.7 percent) and increased average quarterly earnings by \$497 (to \$2,034 from \$1,537).

FIGURE ES.1

**Average Quarterly Earnings by Time before, at, and after Jobs-Plus Program Entry**

2015 dollars



**Source:** New York State Department of Labor wage record system data from Q3 2007 to Q3 2015 for Jobs-Plus members.

**Note:** Q = quarter.

Our evaluation found no major shifts in the industry sectors members worked in before and after Jobs-Plus enrollment. Members were most likely to work in retail, administrative services, health care, social services, and food and hospitality industries. In 2016, as part of the mayor's office's implementation of the citywide Career Pathways initiative, Jobs-Plus providers shifted some of their focus from immediate job placement to helping people find careers. Our data on members' industries of employment ended in 2015, too early to assess the impact of this shift.

## How Jobs-Plus Members Felt about the Program

Our quantitative results show that members' employment and earnings increased after enrolling in Jobs-Plus, but the data do not tell us why or how. The qualitative findings provide a window into how members feel about the program and how it has helped them. Staff and members said that Jobs-Plus is different from other jobs programs, that members feel safe in the offices, and that staff feel like family. Members appreciate the services offered, the community-oriented atmosphere, and the staff's genuine interest in helping members achieve their potential, challenging them to work hard. Members perceived that staff "want to help" and described the office as a community. Staff members know the members' names and the names of their family members. "It's like an episode of *Cheers*," one member remarked.

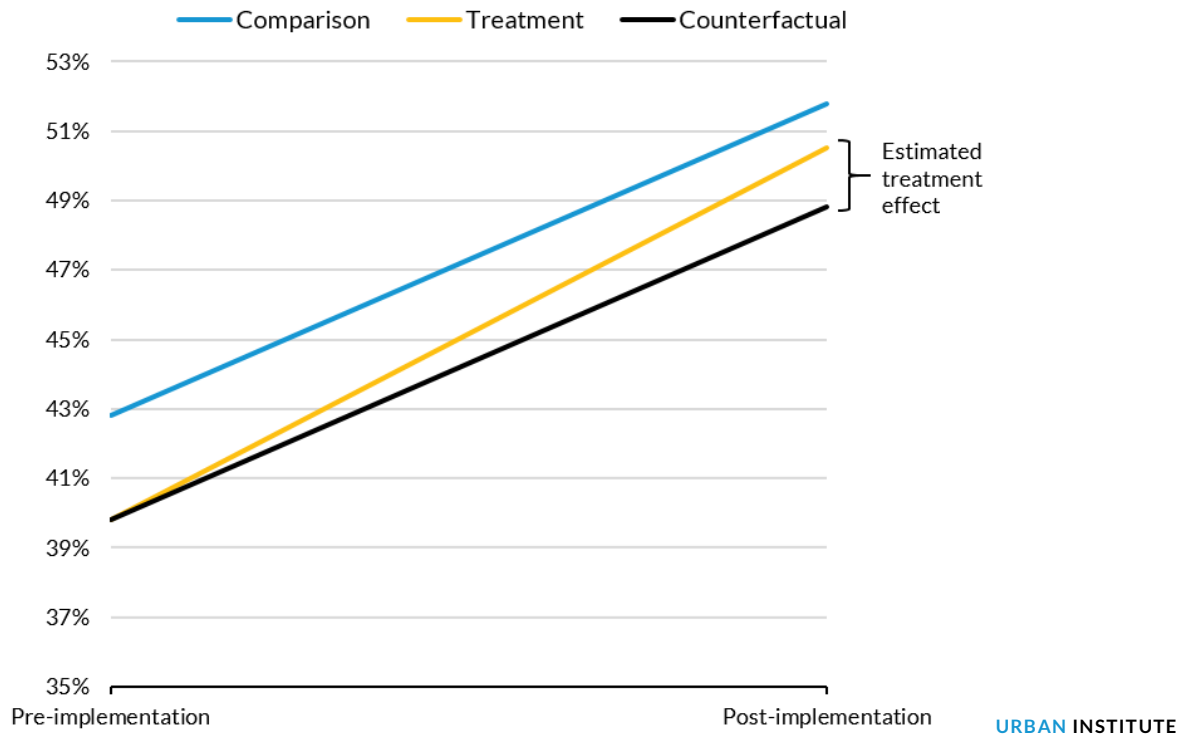
# Jobs-Plus's Effect on Public Housing Residents in Targeted Developments

Our analysis finds limited evidence on the demonstration's success in boosting employment and earnings for all working-age, nondisabled adults in its targeted public housing developments. We ran two models to test the impact of Jobs-Plus implementation on earnings and employment rates for residents of the targeted developments: (1) difference-in-differences and (2) comparative interrupted time series. Our difference-in-differences model estimated the impact of Jobs-Plus implementation on average employment rates and earnings before and after Jobs-Plus implementation. The model found that Jobs-Plus increased employment rates by 1.7 percentage points on average for residents of the targeted developments relative to the counterfactual of what would have happened in the absence of the program (figure ES.2) and increased average quarterly earnings by \$42 on average (figure ES.3). The increase in employment rates was statistically significant. The increase in earnings was not. The comparative interrupted time series model found that Jobs-Plus implementation had a slightly negative, but statistically insignificant, effect on quarterly trends in employment and earnings for residents of the targeted developments relative to trends for residents of the comparison developments.

New York City's Jobs-Plus targeted developments were much larger than the original Jobs-Plus demonstration sites. New York's developments had more than 14,500 public housing units in all, and the average Jobs-Plus provider had more than 2,000 public housing units in its service area. For comparison, the original demonstration sites averaged about 560 units per provider. The size of the targeted developments might have limited Jobs-Plus providers' ability to generate positive impacts for all official public housing residents. In addition, program data suggest that up to half of Jobs-Plus members were not official residents of the targeted developments, meaning they were not listed on the households' lease with NYCHA. It is possible that Jobs-Plus's effects would have been different if we could have included these unofficial residents in our analysis.

FIGURE ES.2

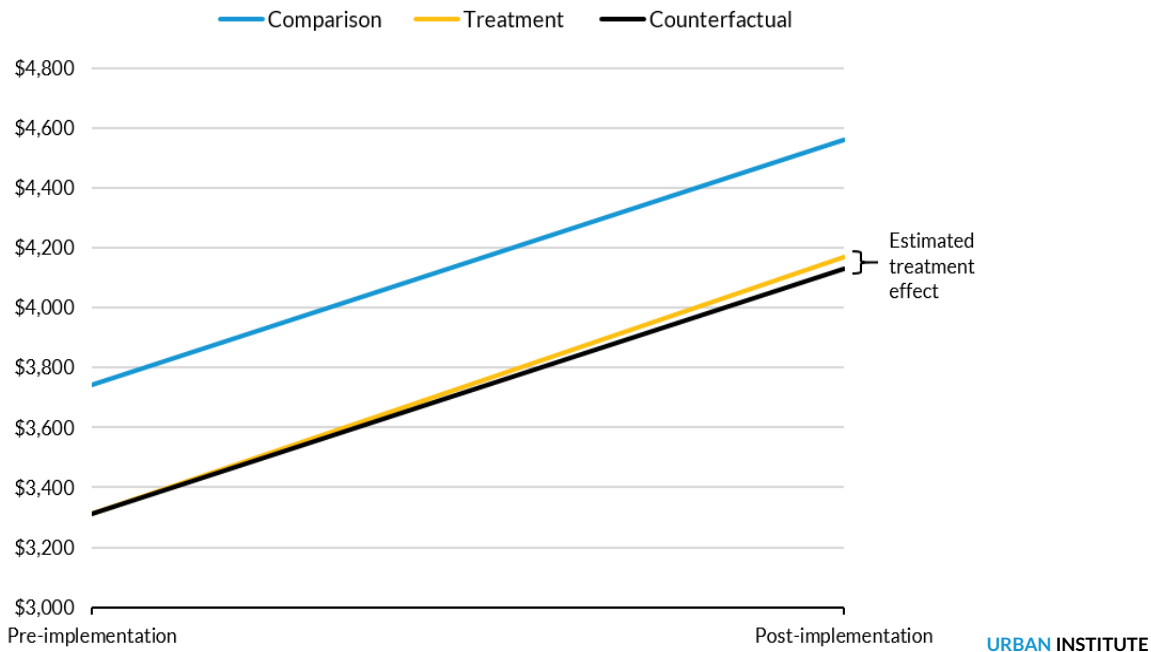
Regression Results on Impact of Jobs-Plus on Employment for On-Lease Residents of Targeted Developments: Difference in Differences



Source: New York City Housing Authority tenant data for 2015.

FIGURE ES.3

**Regression Results on Impact of Jobs-Plus on Earnings for On-Lease Residents of Targeted Developments: Difference in Differences**



Source: New York City Housing Authority tenant data for 2015.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Our evaluation tested New York City's effectiveness in implementing the Jobs-Plus model and adapting it to meet the unique nature of New York City public housing. Replicating the impacts of evidence-based programs in a different context can be challenging. This may be especially true for Jobs-Plus, a complex program that requires successfully implementing not only employment services, but also tackling the barriers to work, real or perceived, facing public housing residents. In the original demonstration, it took three years before the employment and earnings of residents in Jobs-Plus developments showed significant improvement over residents of comparison developments. These positive trends emerged only in the subset of communities that successfully implemented the model (Riccio 2010).

New York's Jobs-Plus expansion was successful in recruiting nearly 11,000 members in its first three years of implementation and producing positive outcomes for those members, showing the potential for workforce programs located in underserved areas that provide flexible services with dedicated, culturally competent staff. Unlike the original demonstration, however, New York did not see positive development-wide impacts on employment and earnings for all residents within its targeted

public housing developments. Several factors might have diluted Jobs-Plus's observed impact on the developments it targeted. First, NYCHA lacked the authority the original demonstration sites had to alter the basic rent calculation for public housing residents, which limited its ability to "make work pay" by reducing their financial disincentives to increase earnings, specifically that 30 cents of each additional dollar they earn is taxed as increased rent. While NYCHA tried to more aggressively promote the use of the Earned Income Disregard as a financial incentive to work, this was a more limited and difficult to administer rent reform than the alternate rent subsidies the original Moving to Work sites offered. The concern that increased work would lead to increased rents may explain why a large portion of Jobs-Plus members were not official, on-lease residents of the targeted developments. Relatedly, the large proportion of off-lease Jobs-Plus members limited our analysis because we could measure the impact of Jobs-Plus only on official public housing residents. We recommend a follow-up analysis of development-wide impacts with a design that would capture the program's effect on unofficial residents. Finally, the targeted developments in New York City were larger than the developments in the original demonstration, but the resources of the Jobs-Plus programs were not commensurately larger. This, coupled with the time frame of this evaluation, which covers only the first three years of implementation for most sites, made it difficult for providers to engage a sufficient share of on-lease residents to positively affect overall employment and earnings.

# Helping Public Housing Residents Find Jobs and Build Careers

## Background

The Jobs-Plus Revitalization Initiative for Public Housing Families (Jobs-Plus) is a multipronged program designed to increase employment and earnings for public housing residents. Jobs-Plus started in the 1990s as a US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) initiative in six communities throughout the country. The original evaluation showed that the program did in fact increase employment and earnings in communities that fully implemented the Jobs-Plus model (Bloom, Riccio, and Verma 2005).

Based on these promising findings, New York City created its own version of Jobs-Plus. The expansion began at Jefferson Houses in 2009 and eight new sites were added between 2011 and 2014. The decision to implement Jobs-Plus was motivated by data showing that most working-age, nondisabled public housing residents were not employed, and residents had low participation rates in city workforce development programs.

As part of the expansion, the New York City Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity (NYC Opportunity) contracted with the Urban Institute to study the effects of Jobs-Plus for seven of the expansion sites. The evaluation focuses on Jefferson Houses and the six sites that were implemented in 2013 in partnership with the Young Men's Initiative. This evaluation report describes how Jobs-Plus was implemented among the expansion sites and analyzes the program's effects on employment outcomes for program participants and for all residents living in the targeted public housing developments at implementation. It provides lessons about implementation challenges and considerations when expanding an evidence-based intervention.

## Components of Jobs-Plus

Jobs-Plus is an evidence-based program designed for public housing residents. The Jobs-Plus model has three components:

1. Employment-related services



2. Strategies for promoting work within the community (“community support for work”)
3. Financial services and incentives to reward work (“make work pay”)

The first component, employment-related services, is similar to those provided in other workforce development programs. By focusing services intensely on underserved public housing communities, the program is intended to provide multiple opportunities and avenues for staff to engage public housing residents. Participants (called “members”) receive services tailored to their needs and interests, including job search assistance, placement support, workshops, and life skills classes. The Jobs-Plus model also emphasizes relationship-building with members; flexible assistance to help with transportation, clothing, child care, and other work-related expenses; and outreach to local employers.

In its first few years, Jobs-Plus providers focused on helping members find jobs quickly and remain employed, without much attention to whether those jobs would advance members’ longer-term career interests. In spring 2016, Jobs-Plus provider contracts were amended to better align with the mayor’s citywide Career Pathways initiative, which encourages workforce development programs to help clients obtain education and work experiences to find the kinds of jobs that can lead to income mobility and upward career trajectories.<sup>5</sup>

The second component, community support for work, includes activities to recruit public housing residents into Jobs-Plus services, strengthen social ties among residents, and help them support each other as they find and maintain jobs. Community support for work is motivated by a philosophical aim of the Jobs-Plus model to positively affect all working-age residents of the public housing developments by saturating the communities where it operates and influencing all residents, not only those who engage in services. To saturate the developments, most eligible people should engage in services. The theory is that eventually all residents would hear the work promotion messages of Jobs-Plus staff and fellow residents either receiving services or hired to promote the program. The goal is to produce a “critical mass” of employed residents that foster a “normative environment focused on work throughout the participating developments” (Bloom, Riccio, and Verma 2005).

The third component, financial incentives, or “making work pay,” is unique to the challenges of assisted housing, where rents are set at 30 percent of monthly income. This federal requirement is sometimes criticized as an impediment (or “disincentive”) to work because the new income from work leads to an immediate rent increase and the more you earn, the more you pay in rent. Some studies have found a decrease in employment and earning associated with public housing, but the magnitude of the effect is unclear (Jacob and Ludwig 2012; Olsen et al. 2005; Shroder 2002).

The housing authorities in the original HUD Jobs-Plus demonstration sites were given special waiver authority through the Moving to Work demonstration to alter the rent subsidy structure to help make work pay for public housing residents. Public housing authorities could offer a flat rent that did not change, regardless of how much a family earned, but that increased in stages over time.<sup>6</sup> A second option was to reduce the share of income that residents were required to pay toward rent to below 30 percent.

Unlike the original Jobs-Plus demonstration sites, NYCHA is a traditional Public Housing Authority (PHA) without Moving to Work status. It thus lacked the waiver authority to alter the standard 30-percent-of-income rent subsidy structure. Instead, NYCHA focused on increasing residents' enrollment into the Earned Income Disallowance (EID) benefit. The EID temporarily shields residents from rent increases when they (1) move from unemployment to employment or (2) take part in job training, work placement, adult education, or other programs that encourage financial independence. Under these conditions, the EID temporarily keeps residents' rent the same even after increases in earned income. Under the EID, 100 percent of the increase in earned income is not counted, or is "disallowed," toward the rent calculation for the first 12 months, and 50 percent of the increase is not counted in the second year. The EID is a HUD policy that has existed for all public housing residents since the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998, but its complexity makes it difficult for PHAs to implement (Greenberg et al. 2015; Tessler et al. 2017). As part of the Jobs-Plus expansion, NYCHA tried to increase take-up of the EID among eligible households through training, advertisement, a streamlined application process, and one-on-one assistance from NYCHA and Jobs-Plus staff.

In addition to these core components from the original demonstration, the New York City expansion emphasizes intermediate financial, training, and support outcomes for members. These are called "880 outcomes" because the expectation is that providers help at least 880 members per site achieve at least one of the specified outcomes over a three-year period. Examples include completing a short-term vocational training, attaining a high school equivalency credential, obtaining the earned income tax credit, modifying a child support order, opening a safe and affordable bank account, and increasing one's credit score.

To support member financial goals, program administrators have also integrated the Office of Financial Empowerment's financial counseling model into the design, which includes a comprehensive financial education component with a financial coach at each Jobs-Plus location.<sup>7</sup> This evaluation focuses on employment and earnings outcomes and does not assess 880 or financial coaching outcomes.

## Jobs-Plus Expansion Rationale and Goals

New York City's decision to adopt and expand the Jobs-Plus program was motivated, in part, by the high proportion of low-income residents that lived in public housing and their struggles in the labor market. New York City has the most public housing of any US city, and its public housing residents experience high unemployment rates. According to NYCHA, more than 8 percent of apartments in the city were NYCHA public housing in 2017, and nearly 5 percent of the city's population were public housing residents. While NYCHA public housing residents are more likely to report earned income than public housing residents in other areas, their unemployment rates are far higher than the rest of the city.<sup>8</sup> Our analysis of the 2014 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey<sup>9</sup> found that the unemployment rate for NYCHA public housing residents was 22 percent, while the citywide unemployment rate was below 8 percent. The 2014 figures showed a mild improvement over the 2011 survey, when the unemployment rate was 24 percent. In both years, around 60 percent of those working were employed 35 hours or more per week. In addition to addressing these disparities in employment, city officials also hoped that Jobs-Plus could improve public safety. By offering young men employment opportunities in sought-after fields, the program would lessen the lure of gangs and illegal activities.

New York City first implemented Jobs-Plus in the Jefferson Houses public housing development in East Harlem in 2009. That site's strong performance encouraged the city to pursue implementation in a second location with funding from a competitive federal Social Innovation Fund grant. The city launched the program with an intensive process evaluation component in the Bronx in 2013. Based on early implementation successes from its two New York programs, NYC Opportunity expanded the program to seven more locations in partnership with the NYC Young Men's Initiative, which addresses disparities in education, health, and employment for young men of color. The New York City expansion was funded, in part, by the Young Men's Initiative after early data suggested that the model was popular with young people and producing positive outcomes.

The city expanded Jobs-Plus to accomplish the following goals:

- Increase economic opportunities for people who have traditionally been underserved by local workforce programs;
- Improve labor force participation and earnings for NYCHA residents in participating developments;
- Expand the use of the EID to make work pay for public housing residents; and
- Improve employment outcomes for young men of color.

# Evaluating the Jobs-Plus Expansion

NYC Opportunity and its partners funded an independent evaluation of the Jobs-Plus expansion to learn whether it is an effective and scalable place-based strategy for improving employment outcomes. The city wanted to evaluate the broader challenges and considerations when expanding a proven, place-based intervention in New York City.

NYC Opportunity hired Urban to conduct this evaluation. The evaluation sought to address three research questions:

- Has Jobs-Plus shown employment and earnings gains for program participants?
- Has Jobs-Plus increased employment and earnings for all working-age, nondisabled adults living in the targeted public housing developments?
- What might contribute to Jobs-Plus's successes or challenges in accomplishing its goals? What lessons can we draw from the expansion?

To answer these questions, we undertook a mixed-methods research approach that combined a process study with a quasi-experimental impact study. The process study relied on document review and qualitative data from interviews with Jobs-Plus staff and city agency officials involved in the program; focus groups with Jobs-Plus members; and analysis of program and administrative data to assess how the program was implemented and how its effects were perceived by key stakeholders. The impact study relied on quantitative data on the program's effects on employment and earnings.

## Study Design

The study included telephone and in-person qualitative interviews with program administrators, provider staff, Jobs-Plus members, and key stakeholders involved with the expansion from NYC Opportunity, the Young Men's Initiative, the city's Human Resources Administration (HRA), the Office of Financial Empowerment, and NYCHA. The purpose was to understand how different providers implemented the program, how members viewed the services, and how program operators dealt with challenges. The study also relied on quantitative analysis of Jobs-Plus member participation data and NYCHA resident demographic data linked with employment and earnings records from the New York State Department of Labor. The purpose was to track Jobs-Plus members' and other NYCHA residents' employment and earnings over time to measure the expansion's effects.

## QUALITATIVE COMPONENT

The qualitative study involved three phases. In the first phase, which took place in spring and summer 2015, the study team conducted phone interviews with key stakeholders and program leaders from eight expansion sites (including Brownsville, which was not part of the quantitative analysis) to understand how each site operated, how they recruited members, and how they customized their approach within Jobs-Plus parameters.

In the second phase, which took place in fall 2015, the research team visited three sites for two days each. The team selected locations that demonstrated early implementation success or had developed innovative practices to reach members or engage the broader community. While on-site, researchers spoke with Jobs-Plus provider staff, NYCHA staff, employers that worked with Jobs-Plus sites, and Jobs-Plus members to gather in-depth perspectives. The research team held focus groups at each site, one that was open to all members and one with young men of color (age 18-24) enrolled in Jobs-Plus.

In the third phase, which took place early in 2018, Urban researchers conducted a second round of phone interviews with leadership from each site and with HRA management staff. These interviews updated the team's understanding of Jobs-Plus implementation from the earlier qualitative data collection; provided information on new components, such as career pathways; and filled in knowledge gaps that emerged in initial data analysis and reporting.

## QUANTITATIVE COMPONENT

The quantitative research assessed the impact of Jobs-Plus for two sets of outcomes. First, it assessed the effects of participation on employment and earnings for members. Second, it assessed the program's effects on employment and earnings for all working-age, nondisabled people on the lease in Jobs-Plus developments when the program was first implemented. The primary data sources for the quantitative evaluation were program data from the Efforts to Outcomes database used by Jobs-Plus service providers, NYCHA data on public housing residents, and employment and earnings data from the New York State Department of Labor's (DOL's) wage record system (WRS).

To evaluate the program's effects on Jobs-Plus members, HRA submitted members' Social Security numbers (SSNs) to the state DOL, which matched the SSNs to the WRS and sent the evaluation team a dataset with members' employment history and quarterly earnings from the first quarter of 2007 (Q1 2007) through the third quarter of 2015 (Q3 2015). To protect members' confidentiality, members' SSNs were replaced by a random research ID in the analysis dataset. Our analysis excluded nearly 2,200 people who received Jobs-Plus services but did not sign the membership agreement and universal release form.

To evaluate the program's effects on employment and wages for all on-lease residents of the targeted developments, NYCHA sent DOL SSNs for all on-lease residents of the targeted developments and selected comparison developments. Again, DOL matched the records to its WRS and sent the evaluation team an analysis dataset with residents' quarterly employment and earnings records with the SSNs replaced by an automated research ID. The data on NYCHA residents covered each quarter from the first quarter of 2007 to through the third quarter of 2016 (Q1 2007 to Q3 2016).

## Organization of This Report

Our report blends together findings from our interviews with staff and participants and our analysis of program and administrative data. The next chapter describes the neighborhoods where Jobs-Plus providers were located, the methods they used to recruited members, and the characteristics of those members. We then provide a detailed description of how providers implemented each of the core components of the model. Next, we share results from our quantitative analysis of the impacts of Jobs-Plus participation on members' employment and earnings, noting differences in impacts between providers. We then return to the qualitative findings to help explain the impacts that emerged in the quantitative analysis. Following that, we briefly discuss the main industries that employed Jobs-Plus members and present qualitative findings on implementing the career pathways model to connect members to jobs and careers. Finally, we present quantitative analyses comparing employment among all working-age public housing residents on the lease in Jobs-Plus targeted developments at implementation to residents in similar developments without Jobs-Plus. We conclude by discussing our evaluation results through the framework of implementation science research on replicating and adapting evidence-based programs.

# Who Jobs-Plus Served and How Providers Reached Residents

Jobs-Plus providers took a broad approach to member outreach and recruitment that included hiring residents as community coaches to promote the program, social media campaigns, word of mouth, hosting and attending community events, and providing specialized services to meet local needs. Providers were effective in meeting Jobs-Plus’s goal of attracting people who “lacked meaningful connections to the labor market.” Most Jobs-Plus members were not employed at program entry and faced numerous individual and systemic barriers to finding and maintaining work. The use of social media and word-of-mouth recruitment might have contributed to many members from outside the targeted developments enrolling in the program, a practice that was later curtailed through policy changes by HRA. The large size of Jobs-Plus targeted public housing developments and the large proportion of Jobs-Plus members who were not included on their household’s lease with NYCHA led to providers serving a smaller proportion of official public housing residents compared with the original demonstration.

## Recruitment Strategies

Each Jobs-Plus provider had the same goal of recruiting 1,600 members in the first three years of implementation and 900 members in the following three years. New York City Jobs-Plus providers generally met or exceeded these targets. Between March 2013 and March 2018, approximately 16,000 people had enrolled in Jobs-Plus.

Providers viewed community coaches as one of the most effective resources to meet their recruitment targets. Community coaches are NYCHA residents hired in temporary positions to help promote Jobs-Plus in their developments. This direct engagement, which allows residents to hear their peers’ firsthand experiences with the program, engages hard-to-reach residents or people who need a trusted source of information before exploring the program’s benefits. But community coaches tend to attract residents with similar characteristics to themselves. Providers consider which demographic groups within the developments each coach can easily access and influence. Some providers try to hire a diverse set of coaches, while others hire community elders (i.e., older residents or people with strong roots in the community) who have broad influence across groups.

Providers use several strategies beyond deploying community coaches. All staff help with outreach, especially for big community events, and connect with residents in their housing developments. Knocking on doors is one of the most effective methods, but it can be time-intensive. Staff also set up tables in common areas, post flyers, and make rotary calls. Jobs-Plus sites host special events such as raffles, fairs, dinner-and-a-movie events, and balloon giveaways at the park. They set up booths at other community events and network with community organizations and institutions, such as tenant associations or community boards, community-based service organizations, and local libraries.

Other outreach efforts include social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram), employer fairs, and word of mouth. Word of mouth is one of the most powerful recruitment instruments, as successful members bring in friends and family members. Jobs-Plus providers also use prizes to reward current members who bring in referrals.

## Characteristics of Jobs-Plus Members

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the 10,995 people who had signed a Jobs-Plus membership agreement as of March 2016. Our analysis does not include the more than 2,100 people involved with Jobs-Plus who never signed a membership agreement. Jobs-Plus participants are formally enrolled in the program when they sign the membership agreement. Members agree to comply with all program requirements, including managing their time effectively, keeping their appointments, and remaining in regular contact with Jobs-Plus staff. Members also agree to participate in at least one community support for work event within 12 months and share their contact and program information with program partners and evaluators. Most nonmembers did not receive any Jobs-Plus services beyond the initial program intake.

The median age of Jobs-Plus members is 30; 28 percent are between 19 and 24, and 32 percent are between 25 and 34. Jobs-Plus members are predominantly black (59 percent) or Latinx (33 percent). Fifty-four percent are female. Fourteen percent are men of color ages 16 to 24, the target population for the Young Men's Initiative. Young men of color were overrepresented in Jobs-Plus (14 percent) compared with their representation among all NYCHA residents, where they make up 8 percent of the population.



TABLE 1

**Demographic Characteristics of Jobs-Plus Members**

	Number	Share
All participants <sup>a</sup>	10,995	100%
<b>Age</b>		
Median	30	
Younger than 16	14	<1%
16–18	231	2%
19–24	3,117	28%
25–34	3,470	32%
35–44	1,746	16%
45–54	1,463	13%
55–62	623	6%
63+	331	3%
<b>Race or ethnicity</b>		
Black	6,741	59%
White	144	1%
Latinx	3,615	33%
Other	765	7%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	5,883	54%
Male	5,112	46%

**Source:** Jobs-Plus member data from the Efforts to Outcomes database for all members entered in the system as of March 11, 2016, at seven provider sites (excluding Brownsville and South Bronx).

**Notes:** Black and white people are non-Hispanic. Estimates of household composition and number of dependents are excluded because missing rates were above 50 percent.

<sup>a</sup> The analysis excludes 2,181 people who had contact with Jobs-Plus programs but never signed a membership agreement.

Table 2 shows the educational attainment of Jobs-Plus members at program entry. One-third lacked a high school degree or equivalent. Most members had either only a high school diploma or equivalent (44 percent) or some college education without a degree (12 percent). Nine percent had completed an associate's degree, a bachelor's degree, or a master's degree. Lack of educational credentials is a major barrier for members. Staff have focused on helping many members access training, enroll in high school completion or college programs, or obtain formal credentials that would make them more competitive in the local labor market.

TABLE 2

**Highest Educational Attainment among Jobs-Plus Members**

<b>Highest educational attainment</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Share</b>
Less than high school diploma	3,552	32%
High school diploma or GED	4,868	44%
Vocational or technical school	276	3%
Some college	1,268	12%
Associate's degree or more	1,010	9%
Missing	21	< 1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,995</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Jobs-Plus member data from the Efforts to Outcomes database for all members entered in the system as of March 11, 2016, at seven provider sites (excluding Brownsville and South Bronx).

**Notes:** GED = high school equivalency credential. This analysis excludes Jobs-Plus members whose reported age was younger than 16.

## Characteristics of Jobs-Plus Targeted Developments

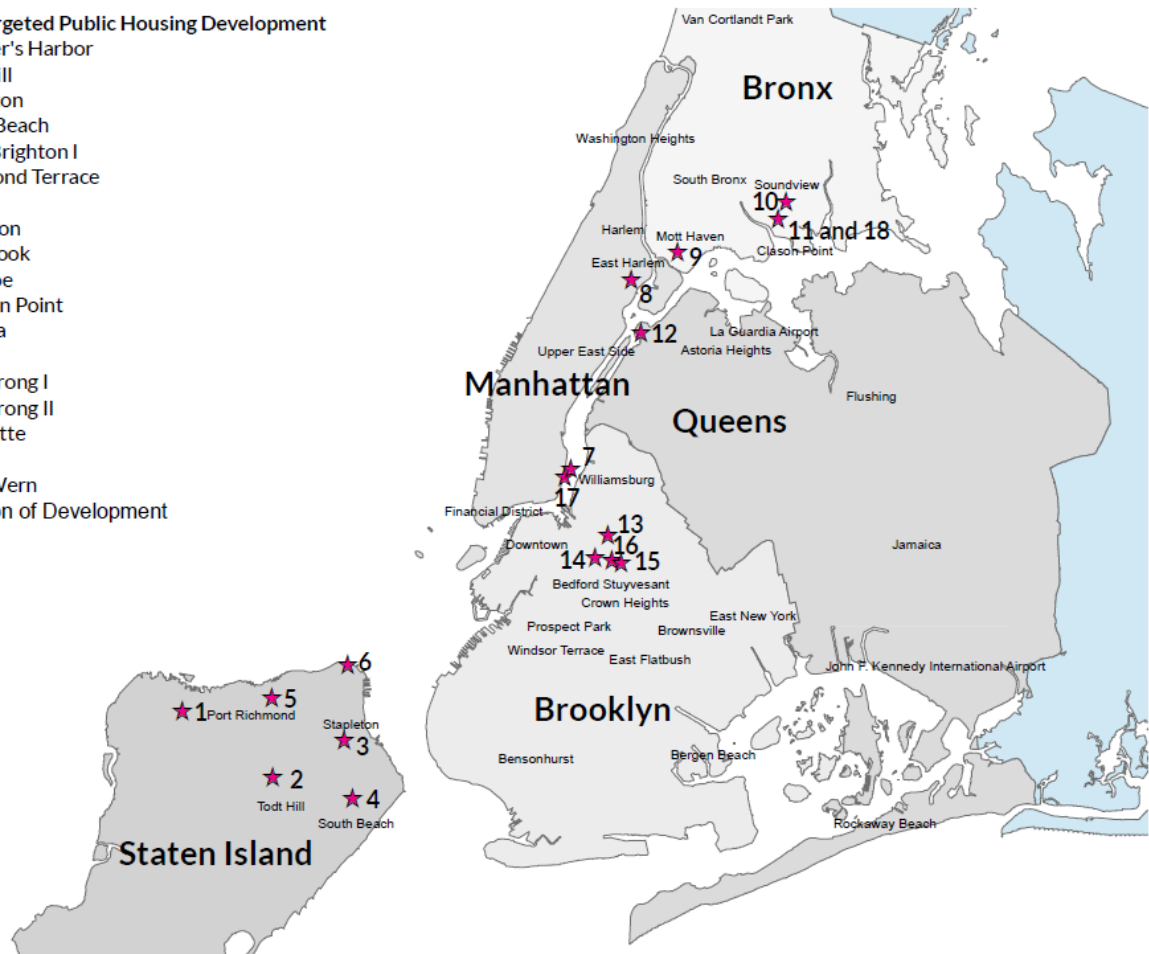
Figure 1 shows the locations of the Jobs-Plus targeted public housing developments. Each borough has at least one, and Staten Island has the most with six. New York City's Jobs-Plus providers targeted more and larger public housing developments than the original demonstration (table 3). The average New York City Jobs-Plus provider had 2,092 public housing units in its catchment area, more than triple the average number for the original demonstration sites (562). The total units in New York City providers' catchment areas ranged from 1,097 in Astoria to 3,190 in Bedford-Stuyvesant. Some providers are responsible for a single development, while others are responsible for up to six. Among the original demonstration sites only Los Angeles targeted more than one development and no provider had more than 1,000 units in its catchment area.

**FIGURE 1**

**Jobs-Plus Targeted Public Housing Developments in New York City**

**Jobs-Plus Targeted Public Housing Development**

- 1 Mariner's Harbor
- 2 Todt Hill
- 3 Stapleton
- 4 South Beach
- 5 West Brighton I
- 6 Richmond Terrace
- 7 Riis II
- 8 Jefferson
- 9 Mill Brook
- 10 Monroe
- 11 Classon Point
- 12 Astoria
- 13 Marcy
- 14 Armstrong I
- 15 Armstrong II
- 16 Lafayette
- 17 Wald
- 18 Sack Wern
- ★ Location of Development



**Sources:** New York City shapefile with neighborhood demarcations are from Zillow (see "Zillow Neighborhood Boundaries," Zillow, accessed June 14, 2018, <https://www.zillow.com/howto/api/neighborhood-boundaries.htm>). Jobs-Plus development locations were provided by the New York City Human Resources Administration.

TABLE 3

**New York City Jobs-Plus Service Providers' Targeted Units and Developments  
Compared with the Original Jobs-Plus Demonstration Sites**

Area served	Total units	Targeted developments	Units per development
<b>New York City expansion locations</b>			
Astoria	1,097	Astoria	1,097
Bedford-Stuyvesant	3,190	Armstrong I	367
		Armstrong II	247
		Marcy	877
		Lafayette	1,699
East Harlem	1,486	Jefferson	1,486
Lower East Side	2,424	Wald	1,849
		Riis II	575
Mott Haven	1,372	Mill Brook & Extension	1,372
Soundview	1,906	Clason Point Gardens	399
		Monroe	1,100
		Sack Wern	407
Staten Island	3,166	West Brighton I	484
		Mariners Harbor	600
		Richmond Terrace	482
		South Beach	420
		Stapleton	680
		Todt Hill	500
Average units	2,092	Average units	813
<b>Original Jobs-Plus demonstration sites</b>			
Average units	562	Average units	481

**Sources:** Information on total units in New York City target developments are from the New York City Housing Authority. Information on total units in the original Jobs-Plus demonstration sites are from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Pictures of Subsidized Housing database, file year 2010.

The difference in size might reflect the differing incentives faced by the original demonstration sites and the Jobs-Plus providers. In the original demonstration, providers were encouraged to “saturate” the developments by engaging as many working-age, nondisabled residents as possible within each development. New York City Jobs-Plus providers did not have a saturation goal. They were each trying to enroll 1,600 members in their first three years and 900 members in the following three years. In their applications for Jobs-Plus funding, providers identified the NYCHA developments they proposed to serve, presumably based on their own calculations of the catchment area they needed to meet these targets. Thus, although the original demonstration sites might have been motivated to target smaller developments to reach saturation, New York City providers were motivated to select larger developments to reach their enrollment targets.

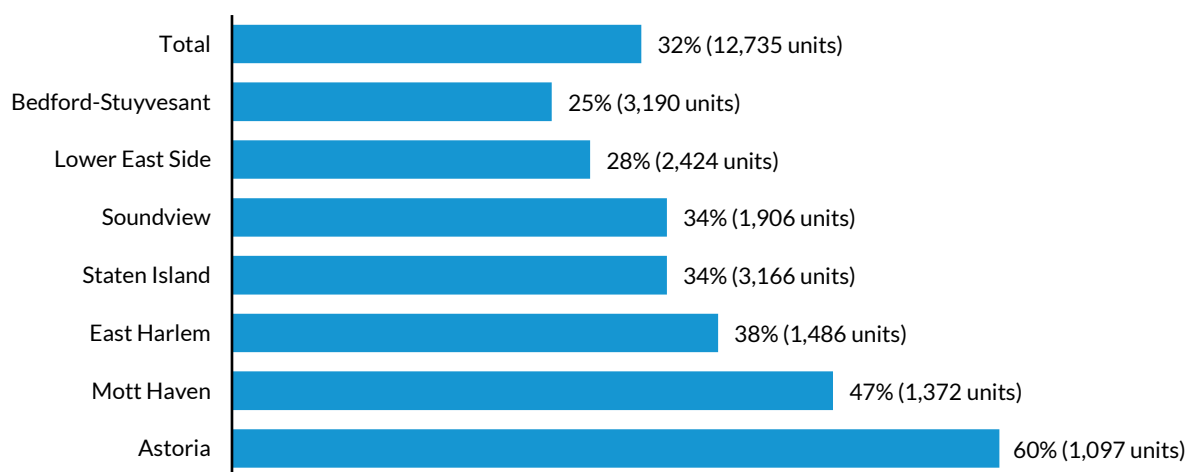
Although saturation was not an explicit goal of the New York City model, NYCHA, HRA, and NYC Opportunity tried to calculate what share of units in targeted public housing developments had at least one member enrolled at any point during implementation. Figure 2 shows the results of this analysis,

which relied on matching Jobs-Plus members to public housing developments based on their reported addresses in the Efforts to Outcomes database. It shows the share of units that have ever had an occupant join Jobs-Plus, though not the share of units with a Jobs-Plus member at a specific point.

As of early 2017, New York City's Jobs-Plus providers had recruited members from 32 percent of units in targeted developments. The original Jobs-Plus demonstration, which targeted fewer units, did not follow a membership model, so it was less clear which residents participated in the program. In its evaluation, MDRC used an "attachment rate" definition of saturation that calculated what share of households in the targeted developments either received the Jobs-Plus rent incentive or had at least one member who signed up for the program. MDRC estimated that Jobs-Plus reached 62 percent of eligible residents living in the targeted developments when the programs were implemented in 1998.

The saturation rates for each New York Jobs-Plus provider ranged from 25 to 60 percent. Astoria had a 60 percent saturation rate, the highest of any provider. Mott Haven was second highest at 47 percent, while the other providers were clustered between 25 and 38 percent. As might be expected, the Jobs-Plus providers that had only one targeted development (Astoria, East Harlem, and Mott Haven) had the highest saturation rates. These three providers also all had office space located inside the targeted developments, while Bedford-Stuyvesant, Soundview, and Staten Island had locations that were not within NYCHA properties, though generally within 0.25 miles of the targeted developments.

**FIGURE 2**  
**Targeted Development Saturation Rates by Jobs-Plus Location as of March 2017**



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**Source:** Match of reported addresses are from the Jobs-Plus Efforts to Outcomes database with a comprehensive list of New York City Housing Authority addresses in targeted public housing developments as of the first quarter of 2017.

**Note:** The Brownsville site was excluded from our analysis.

## Jobs-Plus Members Living outside Targeted Developments

Jobs-Plus was originally intended to be exclusively for public housing residents in the targeted developments. When news of the program spread, partially through social media postings by Jobs-Plus providers and word of mouth from members, Jobs-Plus started attracting people from outside the developments. Providers were reluctant to turn people away. The Human Resources Administration responded by allowing Jobs-Plus providers to have up to 10 percent of its clientele be members from outside the targeted public housing developments. Providers had difficulty tracking in real time what share of members were coming from outside the targeted developments, and by 2016, a larger portion of Jobs-Plus members were coming from outside the developments than was expected. Twenty-nine percent of members enrolled as of March 2016 reported that they either were not living in public housing (16 percent) or were living in a development not targeted for Jobs-Plus (13 percent) (table 4).

TABLE 4

**Jobs-Plus Members Living within Targeted Public Housing Developments**

	Number	Share
In Jobs-Plus targeted developments	7,726	71%
Not in public housing	1,788	16%
In public housing outside the targeted developments	1,478	13%
<b>Total members</b>	<b>10,992<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Jobs-Plus member data from the Efforts to Outcomes database for all members entered in the system as of March 11, 2016, at seven provider sites (excluding Brownsville and South Bronx).

<sup>a</sup> Three members were missing information on residency.

In 2016, HRA implemented new data tracking measures to enforce rules around enrollment of residents from targeted developments. It disenrolled members who lived outside the targeted developments so that Jobs-Plus providers could no longer enter them into their data systems. Staff could not access any of their information electronically or receive performance-based payments if these people achieved milestones such as job placements.<sup>10</sup> This change limited the number of members from outside the targeted developments, and providers began referring people from outside the targeted developments to other workforce programs that their parent organization provided.

## Jobs-Plus Members Who Are Not on the Lease

Table 5 breaks down the proportion of Jobs-Plus members from the targeted public housing developments that were on the lease (official residents) and off the lease (unofficial residents). About half of members residing in the targeted developments were officially on the lease, 24 percent were not on the lease, and 27 percent did not answer this question or were unsure of their lease status. Unlike

people coming from outside the targeted developments, unofficial residents were considered part of the targeted population. The program is intended to serve all people in the targeted developments capable of working, not only official residents. Many of the unofficial residents are the young men whom the Jobs-Plus programs were instructed to target. New York City has a well-documented history of unofficial public housing occupants. People might choose to live off the lease because they do not want their income to be included in the rent calculation, or they might not be eligible for public housing because they owe arrears to the housing authority or do not meet background requirements.<sup>11</sup> The high proportion of unofficial residents is a limitation of our evaluation because these residents are not included in NYCHA's data and we thus cannot determine what share of unofficial residents living in the targeted developments enrolled in Jobs-Plus and how their employment status and earnings compare with unofficial residents living in the comparison developments.

**TABLE 5**

**Jobs-Plus Members in Targeted Developments on a New York City Housing Authority Lease**

	Number	Share
On the lease (official)	3,819	49%
Not on the lease (unofficial)	1,821	24%
Not sure or missing	2,086	27%
<b>Total members in Jobs-Plus developments</b>	<b>7,726</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Jobs-Plus member data from the Efforts to Outcomes database for all members entered in the system as of March 11, 2016, at seven provider sites (excluding Brownsville and South Bronx).

Table 6 shows the demographic characteristics of Jobs-Plus members who were official (or on-lease) residents of the targeted developments and unofficial (or off-lease) residents of targeted developments. Official and unofficial residents were similar in every dimension except for gender: men are more likely than women to be off the lease. This is consistent with NYCHA's internal analyses showing that households in public housing tend to stop reporting men on their lease when they turn 24 or 25, possibly to avoid rent hikes when these men enter the labor force.<sup>12</sup>

TABLE 6

### Demographic Characteristics of Jobs-Plus Participants by Presence on Lease in a Jobs-Plus Development

	On Lease in Jobs-Plus Development		Not on Lease in Jobs-Plus Development		All Jobs-Plus Participants	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
All participants <sup>a</sup>	3,819	34	1,821	17	10,995	100
<b>Age</b>						
Younger than 16	6	<1	2	<1	14	<1
16–18	82	2	21	1	231	2
19–24	1,083	28	458	25	3,117	28
25–61	2,496	65	1,315	72	7,302	66
62+	152	4	25	1	331	3
<b>Race or ethnicity</b>						
Black	2,196	58	1,099	60	6,741	61
White	49	1	7	<1	144	1
Hispanic	1,310	34	604	33	3,615	33
Other	264	7	111	6	765	7
<b>Gender</b>						
Female	2,426	64	759	42	5,883	54
Male	1,393	36	1,062	58	5,112	46
<b>Part of Young Men's Initiative (i.e., 16-to-24-year-old black or Hispanic male)</b>						
Yes	513	13	223	12	1,575	14
No	3,306	87	1,598	88	9,420	86
<b>Education</b>						
Less than high school	1,276	33	631	35	3,552	32
High school degree or GED	1,561	41	843	46	4,868	44
Some college	502	13	179	10	1,268	12
College degree	384	10	123	7	1,010	9
Other	89	2	43	2	276	3
<b>Fast-track status</b>						
Fast track	1,037	27	408	25	2,977	27
Needs minor assistance	1,608	42	687	43	4,656	42
Needs extensive assistance	704	18	267	17	1,916	17
Missing or other	464	12	237	15	1,432	13

**Source:** Jobs-Plus member data from the Efforts to Outcomes database for all members entered in the system as of March 11, 2016.

**Notes:** Black and white people are non-Hispanic. GED = high school equivalency credential.

<sup>a</sup> This table excludes 2,181 people who had some contract with Jobs-Plus programs but never signed a membership agreement and 2,490 members whose residency status was missing in the database.

## Members' Employment Status at Program Entry

Most members had limited work histories and experienced significant individual and structural barriers to succeeding in the labor force. Table 7 shows Jobs-Plus members' employment status and employment history at program entry. Most members (70 percent) were not employed at program entry, but 76 percent reported having prior employment experience.



TABLE 7

**Employment Status among Jobs-Plus Members**

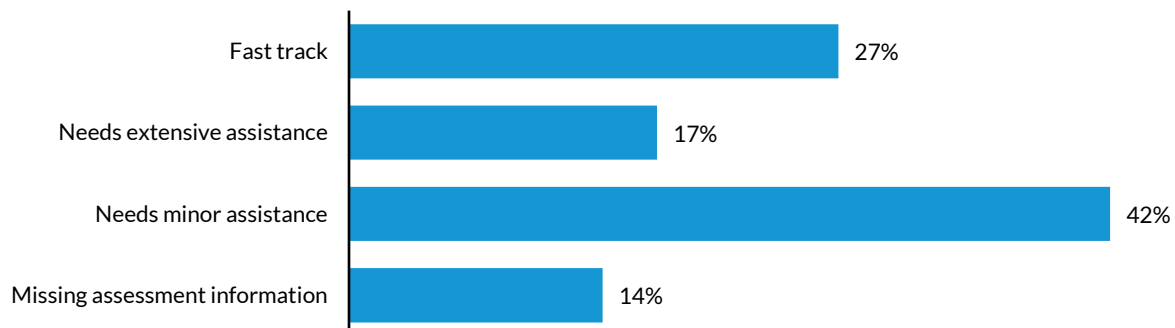
	Number	Share
<b>Employed at program entry</b>		
Yes	2,399	22%
No	7,672	70%
Missing	924	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,995</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Ever employed before program entry</b>		
Yes	8,327	76%
No	2,636	24%
Missing	32	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,995</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Jobs-Plus member data from the Efforts to Outcomes database for all members entered in the system as of March 11, 2016, at seven provider sites (excluding Brownsville and South Bronx).

**Note:** This analysis excludes Jobs-Plus participants whose reported age was younger than 16.

Jobs-Plus providers are required to complete a job-readiness evaluation with each member to assess their readiness for immediate jobs. The assessment goes through a checklist of employment-related skills and assets to determine what assistance members might need to help them find and maintain employment. Based on this assessment and their own judgment, providers then assign members a job-readiness status of (1) fast track (ready for immediate job placement), (2) needs minor assistance, or (3) needs extensive assistance. Figure 3 shows the jobs-readiness status of members at program entry. Forty-two percent needed minor assistance before job placement, 27 percent were fast-tracked for immediate placement, 17 percent needed extensive assistance, and 14 percent either did not receive an assessment or did not have the results entered in the program database.

FIGURE 3

**Share of Jobs-Plus Members in Each Evaluation Category**

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**Source:** Jobs-Plus member data from the Efforts to Outcomes database for all members entered in the system as of March 11, 2016, at seven provider sites (excluding Brownsville and South Bronx).

Table 8 shows the results of the job-readiness checklist items overall and by job-readiness status. The checklist helps providers tailor their assistance to equip members with the basic tools they need to complete a job search and maintain a job. The results show that many members appeared to need a great deal of assistance to be successful in the job market. Less than half of members reported having a reliable means of transportation for getting to work (42 percent), feeling comfortable answering basic interview questions (42 percent), having appropriate attire for a job interview (40 percent), or being able to fill out a job application (39 percent). If offered a job, 42 percent of members said they could manage the commute, and 35 percent reported having work-appropriate clothing. As expected, the fast-track group was the most likely to have the skills and assets included in the job-readiness checklist, and the group needing major assistance was the least likely for every item.

TABLE 8

## Challenges to Being Job Ready among Jobs-Plus Members

Member has...	N	Share of all members (%)	Share of fast-track members (%)	Share of members who need minor assistance (%)	Share of members who need major assistance (%)
a reliable means of communication	7,450	78	77	82	70
a working email address with an employer-appropriate username	5,822	61	74	64	34
a working voicemail with an employer-appropriate message	4,990	52	64	55	27
an updated résumé with current contact information, work history, and education	4,145	43	76	36	11
a reliable means of transportation if offered position	4,044	42	52	45	21
the ability to answer basic interview questions	3,981	42	62	40	15
the ability to manage a commute if offered position	3,966	42	52	44	18
a reliable means of transportation for the interview	3,940	41	55	42	17
appropriate interview attire	3,792	40	61	36	15
availability for interviewing, has no conflicting commitments	3,787	40	53	40	18
the ability to properly fill out an online and paper application	3,710	39	57	38	12
the ability to explain why they selected this type of work or position	3,619	38	51	39	15
the ability to clearly express career goals	3,561	37	55	36	13
work-appropriate clothing if offered position	3,336	35	52	33	14
the ability to effectively summarize their professional experience and transferrable job skills	3,225	34	52	32	9
the ability to conduct job market research on field of interest	3,094	32	49	32	9
at least three verified personal, professional, or academic references	2,705	28	45	26	6
a working cover letter template	1,636	17	30	15	3

**Source:** Jobs-Plus member data from the Efforts to Outcomes database for all members entered in the system as of March 11, 2016, at seven provider sites (excluding Brownsville and South Bronx).

**Note:** This analysis excludes the 1,445 members who did not appear to have a completed job-readiness checklist in the database.

## Employment Challenges and Job Assistance

In addition to residents needing assistance with skill development and access to resources, the following structural challenges influenced job placement, according to Jobs-Plus provider staff, NYCHA staff, employers that worked with Jobs-Plus sites, and Jobs-Plus members:

- Limited access to child care

- Concerns that working would jeopardize their public benefits (e.g., food assistance, cash assistance, or disability payments)
- Safety concerns because of turf wars between gangs
- Criminal history that showed up on background checks
- Low-quality employment options that would leave workers underemployed or with inconsistent schedules

Jobs-Plus providers reflected on these challenges. Their descriptions of how their programs responded to these challenges can be grouped into three general categories. One group thought these structural issues were nearly insurmountable for many residents, who perpetually struggle to find and maintain good employment. Another group acknowledged these issues but pointed out that the provider's role is to help members overcome structural issues. These respondents indicated that they would not be doing their job adequately if these barriers were insurmountable. A couple of providers in this second group explained how the structural challenges could make it so a person would need higher wages to make a job "worth it," given the investments for transportation, child care, and other opportunity costs involved with regular employment. In this case, the respondents saw it as their responsibility to find nearby or high-paying jobs that make the hassle worthwhile. A third group of respondents thought the structural concerns were more often a reflection of members' low motivation or negative beliefs about themselves. They attributed members' challenges becoming engaged and finding and keeping employment to individual shortcomings.

The third group of respondents were not the only ones to indicate that they thought personal barriers were more important than structural barriers in impeding members' success. Almost all providers shared concerns about members' personal and psychological barriers, such as

- the inability to persist in Jobs-Plus and stay in touch with providers;
- strong resistance to leaving their borough, neighborhood, or block;
- lack of resiliency or desire to rise above; or
- interpersonal problems with other household members that could lead to housing instability.

These personal challenges were often rooted in past traumas. Members reported experiencing social isolation and exposure to violence, death of family or friends, and overpolicing. Being exposed to and experiencing complex posttraumatic stress can affect self-regulation and goal setting, which can become an additional barrier. One member shared his challenges after getting out of jail:

In jail, police don't care—they gon' put you in the box. That box makes people crazy. I spent a year in the box. Now I got to see counseling because I have an anger issue.

Providers highlighted the persistent effort to build trusting relationships with Jobs-Plus members. These relationships encourage existing members to engage and prompt them to recommend Jobs-Plus to others.

Many service providers and city-level officials struggle to determine how to help members overcome personal roadblocks. To address trauma, HRA partnered with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to provide facilitated participation in a citywide training in mental health first-aid for Jobs-Plus staff. Several providers explicitly incorporate a focus on mental health through partnerships or staff training. But one staff member suggested this was the one thing Jobs-Plus needed to improve:

We need a psychologist.... We need a marriage counselor to talk to the couples. I would add an anger management piece to this—people come in and are perpetually pissed [off] out of their minds. These are all issues that prevent them from getting their jobs.

In the following chapters, we discuss how Jobs-Plus providers use core program components—such as job development, community support for work, and financial services to prepare members for employment—to help members achieve significant gains in employment and earnings.

# The Jobs-Plus Model in Practice

The Jobs-Plus model has three components: (1) employment-related services, (2) strategies for promoting work within the community (“community support for work”), and (3) financial services and incentives to reward work. In addition, New York City created a set of “880 outcomes” to prepare members for work and to address other goals that overlap with community support for work and making work pay. In qualitative interviews, we asked providers about each component and whether and how they used it.

## Employment Supports and Finding the Right Jobs

Jobs-Plus is an employment program, and that was the primary attraction for many members. Each site has a job developer to understand employers’ and workers’ needs and match candidates with available positions or fill job orders. Many providers talked about the importance of high-quality relationships with employers, and employers were enthusiastic about how Jobs-Plus helped them with their hiring needs.

Job developers found employers through networking and cold calling local businesses. Some relied on large employer networks through the Jobs-Plus providers’ parent organizations. Over time, several got employers more involved in activities on-site. The goal has been to keep employers engaged without creating stigma around Jobs-Plus or public housing residents. Employers like Jobs-Plus because it requires less documentation, such as detailed employment verifications and long-term tracking of outcomes, than other workforce programs. Providers try to balance the desire for large job orders with the need for tailored jobs that match members’ skills, interests, and qualifications and that pay relatively high wages. Chick-fil-A, Trader Joe’s, and Whole Foods were named as higher-paying employers that offer entry-level positions.

Jobs-Plus providers also work with NYCHA’s zone coordinators on job placement and other services. The housing authority undertook a neighborhood-based effort to improve access to services for NYCHA’s public housing residents through a Zone Model, which launched in 2009. The model focuses on service coordination, strategic partnerships, and leveraging community and NYCHA resources to increase residents’ incomes and assets. To implement the Zone Model, the housing authority’s Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability (REES) divided New York City into 15 geographic zones that each include an average of 11,000 NYCHA households. Each zone has an

assigned zone coordinator who works with resident leaders, local service providers, NYCHA frontline staff, and other stakeholders to connect residents to high-quality economic opportunity services. REES zone coordinators support Jobs-Plus sites in several ways, including facilitating referrals from NYCHA frontline staff and providing technical assistance to Jobs-Plus and NYCHA staff related to the Earned Income Disregard (EID).

## Making Work Pay

The EID is a critical component of Jobs-Plus’s “making work pay” design. The EID temporarily shields residents from rent increases when they move from unemployment to employment or take part in job training, work placement, adult education, or other programs meant to encourage financial independence. This incentive disregards 100 percent of residents’ additional income in the first year and 50 percent in the second year. Beginning in 2009, REES began an internal effort to streamline the EID process and develop tools for implementation. In addition, REES zone coordinators have helped Jobs-Plus staff and residents troubleshoot issues. They also track EID use monthly to improve its effectiveness and understand qualifying events.

The housing authority has tried to expand take-up of the EID among eligible households by developing new systems, providing training for property management staff, and encouraging buy-in among residents. Property managers, however, have struggled to process EID applications within the allotted time frame. In interviews, property managers varied greatly in their understanding of how the EID worked and their willingness to complete the necessary paperwork to process it.

Residents also have a hard time understanding the EID, and providers have a hard time messaging it. City-level and site-level staff developed flyers and brochures about the EID, but many residents still do not understand this benefit.

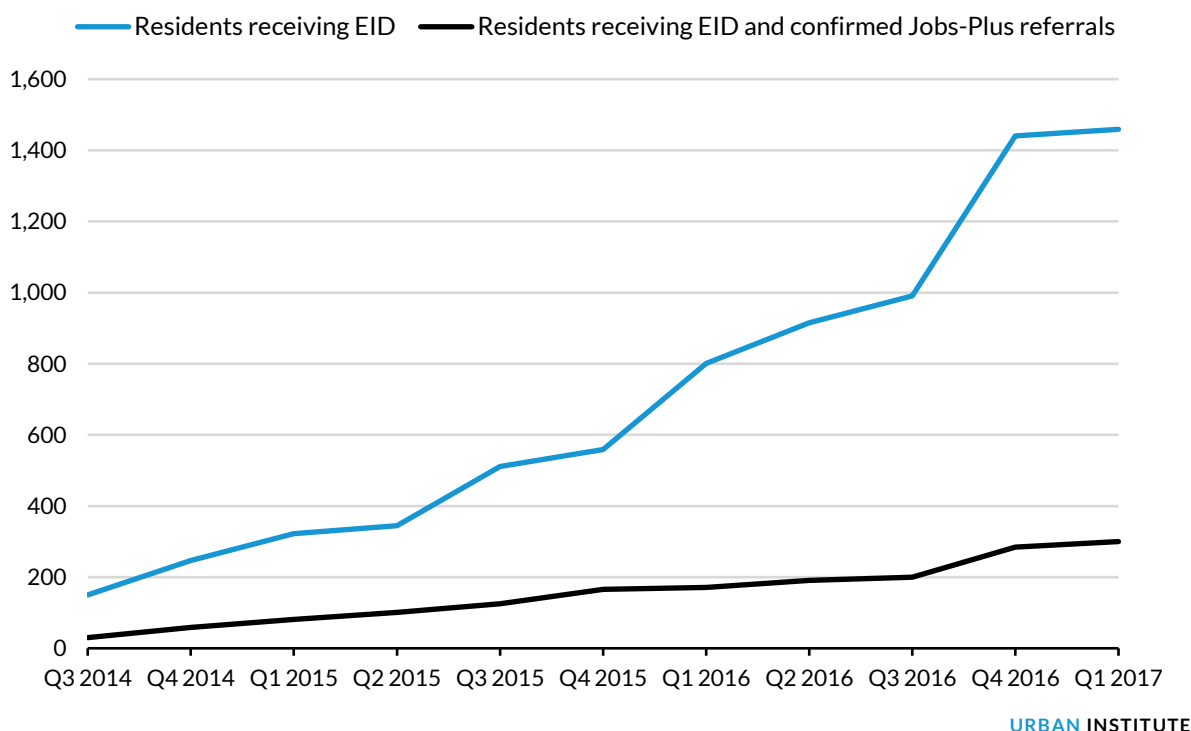
Some Jobs-Plus members perceive the EID as risky. Younger household members are especially hesitant to report an increase in earned income if they think it might be temporary. For households with multiple adults, it is often better for the head of household to remove younger family members from the lease when they become employed than to have them apply for the EID. It is also easier for households to remove young men from the lease because they are less likely to have dependents. This makes staff members and residents perceive the EID as more relevant for women with children.

One site reported that residents are concerned that the EID means that Jobs-Plus is reporting on them to NYCHA, which brought up trust issues. Provider staff shared that members often hesitate to

report their income to NYCHA at all - since some have “off the books” earnings that they have not reported for years to avoid rent increases.

Despite these challenges, use of the EID in Jobs-Plus targeted developments did increase over the implementation period. The number of households in the targeted developments receiving the EID increased from fewer than 200 in 2014 to more than 1,400 in early 2017, which is roughly 10 percent of the 14,641 households in the targeted developments. By comparison, during this period, NYCHA estimates that 3 percent of all public housing residents in its properties began receiving the EID benefit during this period. Most of the households receiving the EID in Jobs-Plus targeted developments did not have a family member in the Jobs-Plus program. Although our evaluation did not focus on efforts to expand the EID, this suggests that efforts to promote the EID increased take-up for all residents of Jobs-Plus targeted developments and not just those engaged in Jobs-Plus services.

**FIGURE 4**  
**Trends in the Receipt of the Earned Income Disregard between 2014 and 2016**  
**among Households in Jobs-Plus Targeted Public Housing Developments**



**Source:** Jobs-Plus Stat Decks using Efforts to Outcomes and New York City Housing Authority data

**Notes:** EID = Earned Income Disregard; Q3 2014 = third quarter of 2014. Years are fiscal years.



# Community Support for Work

In addition to employment support, providers described how they carry out the Jobs-Plus community support for work component. The premise behind community support for work is that messages about work and a work mentality will spread within targeted housing developments. At some point, a community reaches a critical saturation point where residents expect themselves and their neighbors to work and provide supports and encouragement to enable work.<sup>13</sup> Part of the motivation for the community support for work component in the original Jobs-Plus model was that the “social environment” within public housing developments discouraged work (Bloom, Riccio, and Verma 2005). Jobs-Plus members and staff suggested that this was not the case in the NYCHA developments Jobs-Plus targeted. Work was on residents’ minds, and for many, the pressing need for income—and a desire for on-the-books work—was a persistent, daily issue.

Although the community support for work was not necessary to overcome any negative attitudes toward work within the development, it was still valuable for strengthening social networks between residents. Below are examples of how providers have implemented community support for work:

- Building members’ skill sets for work, including how to be a “reliable, trustworthy person”
- Helping families learn how to support each other’s work (e.g., child care and psychological reinforcement)
- Getting neighbors to talk to each other more about employment opportunities
- Organizing public systems and supports so people can work (e.g., child care vouchers, food assistance, and holiday needs, including building partnerships to refer people to services)
- Conducting community-building and outreach activities to promote Jobs-Plus services
- Breaking down preconceptions and barriers to get employers on board with NYCHA residents as workers
- Encouraging people to get skills and build a network from their first low-level, underpaid job—“getting in the groove of working” so they can advance

These interpretations were wide ranging, including helping members overcome personal barriers, building networks, increasing access to services, and breaking down stereotypes about public housing residents. Each approach reflects each provider’s understanding of the issues that stand in the way of work within their service populations. Some respondents tried to strengthen existing social networks,

and others felt that members' deep connections to their communities can prevent them from taking risks, such as exploring jobs in other neighborhoods or pursuing different career paths than their peers.

## 880 Outcomes and Related Services

Providers emphasize 880 outcomes through financial counseling and education and training services. Every provider offers on-site financial counseling on such topics as access to credit and personal debt. Some Jobs-Plus sites introduce financial counseling at the beginning of the intake workflow to help residents prepare for stable financial situations, while other sites introduce it after initial job placement to provide situational context in helping members understand the importance of their financial health. Jobs-Plus staff also help members overcome barriers that are not counted in the 880 or performance-based outcomes. Jobs-Plus providers also offer nontraditional services including help with school financial aid applications, haircuts and styling, help with Christmas gifts, and immigration assistance.

At least one site helped a member with a work discrimination claim:

I had a claim with my last job. I feel like they let me go because of discrimination. Jobs-Plus made it a big issue. [Jobs-Plus staff member] told me straightforward, and we went step by step. [The staff member] referred me to HR. They stood there all the way for me and helped me do what I had to do. And I ended up taking care of my business.

In addition to services, Jobs-Plus gives members opportunities they would not otherwise experience. Soundview Jobs-Plus offers members various volunteer opportunities to build job skills and self-confidence. One member was particularly enthusiastic about the experience he had volunteering with the 100 Suits for 100 Men program, which provides business attire for job seekers, especially those who have been formerly incarcerated. This experience gave him a stronger self-image, helped him with public presenting skills, and made him feel like he was giving back to his community.

## Administrative Oversight and Performance Measurement

Like the original Jobs-Plus demonstration sites, the New York City model requires coordination between several city agencies and community-based organizations. NYC Opportunity initiated the expansion and provides ongoing high-level monitoring and evaluation support. Unlike the original model, where public housing authorities were the lead implementers, the New York City model is coordinated through the Human Resources Administration (HRA). As part of New York City's

Department of Social Services, HRA has expertise in workforce development programs for high-needs populations. It is responsible for contracting with and managing the nonprofit organizations that provide Jobs-Plus services. NYCHA is responsible for implementing the model's rent incentive component and promoting community support for work within its developments. The Office of Financial Empowerment oversees the model's financial counseling component.

The Jobs-Plus expansion effort has focused on data and performance incentives. In quarterly Jobs-Plus performance meetings, providers meet with staff from HRA, NYCHA, the Office of Financial Empowerment, and NYC Opportunity to review their performance relative to their performance goals, as well as the performance of other Jobs-Plus providers. At these meetings, providers are regularly assessed on outcome measures, such as services provided; new memberships achieved; job placement, retention, and average earnings; EID receipt; and financial counseling outcomes. The providers and city representatives discuss best practices, strategize on how to improve performance to meet benchmarks, and address challenges to improve services for members.

The focus on data and performance is also reflected in provider contracts. In providers' original contracts, 60 percent of payments were guaranteed and 40 percent of payments were contingent on meeting performance milestones. As part of providers' 2016 contract renewal, HRA changed the distribution of guaranteed performance-based payments from 60/40 to 70/30. Providers submit reimbursement requests to HRA for Jobs-Plus expenses, and HRA reimburses 70 percent of the request based on the provider's fulfillment of basic contract obligations. Providers earn the remainder of their funding through performance payments tied to job placement, job retention, and a high-wage bonus. All providers have the same annual base funding levels and performance targets regardless of the size or composition of the public housing developments they served. A provider can earn more than 30 percent by exceeding their performance milestones within budget limits, but that is rare. With the reduction in the performance proportion as part of the 2016 contract renewal, the payout for milestone achievement decreased from \$1,080 to \$600 per milestone to achieve the same contract total, which meant providers received more of the funding upfront, before milestones were earned, but less with each milestone achieved.

Jobs-Plus providers receive job placement payments when they help members obtain jobs that are at least 20 hours a week and pay at least the minimum wage. Retention payments are made if members can demonstrate that they are still working at least 20 hours a week in any job that pays at least minimum wage at 3 to 6 months, 6 to 9 months, and 11 to 13 months after placement. In addition, the retention milestones changed from being assessed on the 90th and 180th days after initial placement to the time frames described above. Providers also receive a high-wage bonus payment when members are

paid at least \$15 an hour in a job that Jobs-Plus helped them obtain; this target began at \$13 in 2016 and increases annually.

Performance-based contracting was not seen favorably among Jobs-Plus providers, but most acknowledged that it was a useful way to keep their teams motivated and efficient. Providers generally recommended modifying the performance incentives rather than eliminating them. The biggest challenges with the current incentives are that they prioritize job placements over education and industry-specific training, which can create tension with the career pathways framework. They also create financial uncertainty for providers, particularly those in smaller organizations that are less equipped to handle revenue shortfalls. Finally, they require providers to spend time documenting earnings rates, hours worked, and other employment details when they could otherwise spend that time providing services to members.

# Jobs-Plus's Effects on Members

In this section, we present our evaluation results on the effects of Jobs-Plus on members' employment rates and average quarterly earnings. We find that members' chances of working and their quarterly earnings increased considerably after joining Jobs-Plus. We find no evidence that Jobs-Plus affected the industries members worked in, although helping members find jobs in specific industries was not a focus of the program during our evaluation time frame (2007–15).

Our analysis uses the New York State Department of Labor wage record system to analyze members' employment status, quarterly earnings, and the industries in which they were employed. The WRS contains tax reports from employers on their employees' earnings and the industries in which they were employed. It includes 97 percent of New York's nonfarm employment, but it excludes some agricultural workers, railroad workers, private household workers, student workers, and self-employed workers (NYS DOL, n.d.). It also does not capture employment by New York City residents in neighboring states. These are well-known issues with earnings data and are not likely to bias the impact analysis.

The Urban Institute provided the DOL Social Security numbers from the Efforts to Outcomes database for all Jobs-Plus members who signed the release of information allowing for this data sharing. The Department of Labor then matched the SSNs to WRS records and returned quarterly data from January 1, 2007, to September 30, 2015. After excluding members who did not provide a valid SSN and members from Brownsville Jobs-Plus (which implemented the program too recently to be included in the evaluation), the data file included 8,655 Jobs-Plus members. As is common with analysis using state earnings data, members who had SSNs that appeared valid were assumed to have zero earnings for any quarter where they were not matched to the earnings record data.

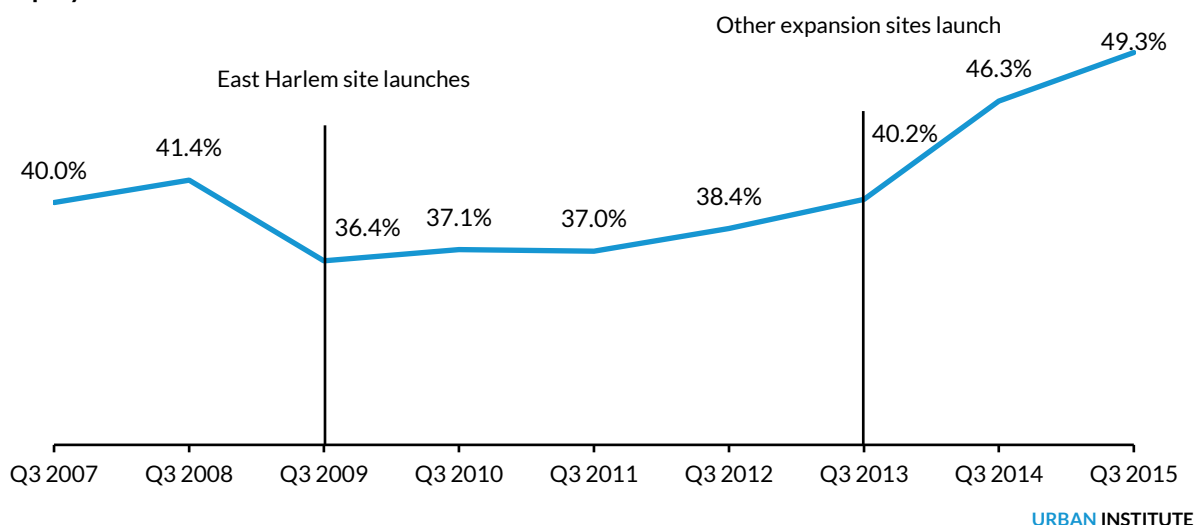
## Members' Labor Market Trends before and after Jobs-Plus Implementation

Figure 5 shows descriptive trends in the share of Jobs-Plus members working in each quarter between Q3 2007 and Q3 2015. To maintain a stable cohort, the analysis focuses on a consistent cross-section of 7,003 Jobs-Plus members who were at least 16 years old at the start of the analysis. The analysis tracks this cohort in all years, even though members joined the program at different points, and thus had different levels of exposure to Jobs-Plus services. Some members joined between 2009 and 2013, when

only the East Harlem site was operating, but the majority joined after 2013, when the other six Jobs-Plus expansion sites began operations.<sup>14</sup> The trend line focuses on the third quarter of each year to smooth out seasonal fluctuations. The share of members working dropped to 36.4 percent in 2009, at the height of the recession, and then rebounded to 40.2 percent in 2013. Employment increased to 46.3 percent in 2014 and to 49.3 percent in 2015. This analysis is descriptive and does not determine how much of the increase in employment is attributable to Jobs-Plus, the broader economic recovery, or other factors.

**FIGURE 5**

**Employment Rates of Jobs-Plus Members**



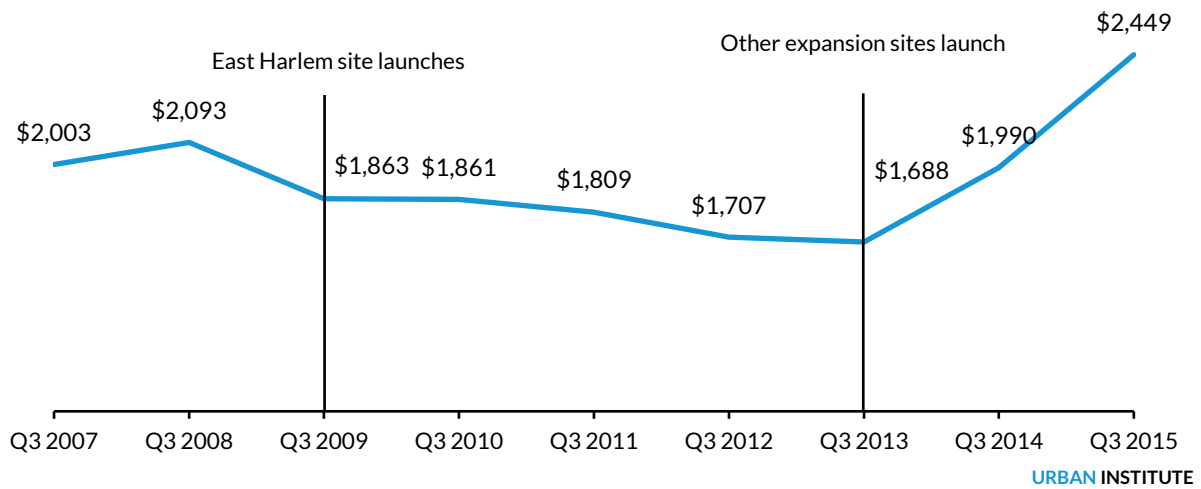
**Source:** New York State Department of Labor wage record system data from Q3 2007 to Q3 2015 for Jobs-Plus members who were at least 16 years old on January 1, 2007.

**Notes:** Q3 = third quarter. Members are considered employed if they have reported earnings in Q3 of each year.

Figure 6 shows the average quarterly earnings for the same cohort of 7,003 Jobs-Plus members from 2007 to 2015. It focuses on the third quarter of each year to smooth out seasonal fluctuations. The earnings trends are like the employment trends, but the fluctuation is more pronounced. After adjusting for inflation, average quarterly earnings dropped from \$2,093 in 2008 to \$1,863 in 2009 and then continued to fall until bottoming out in 2013 at \$1,688. Between 2013, when Jobs-Plus was implemented in all the evaluation sites, and 2015, average quarterly earnings increased from \$1,688 to \$2,449, a 45 percent increase. Again, this is only descriptive and not necessarily a direct result of the Jobs-Plus expansion.

FIGURE 6

# Earnings of Jobs-Plus Members



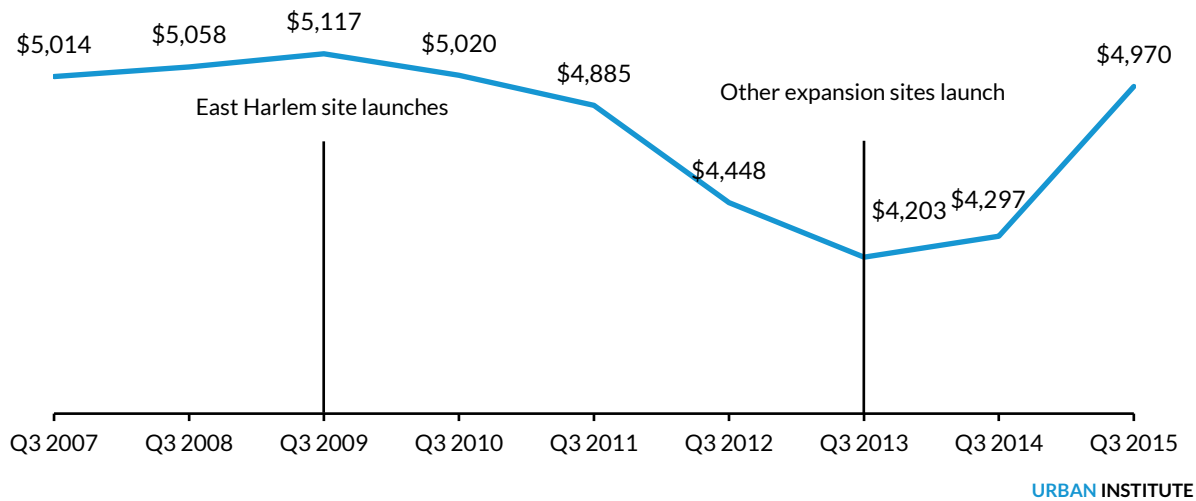
**Source:** New York State Department of Labor wage record system data from Q3 2007 to Q3 2015 for Jobs-Plus members who were at least 16 years old on January 1, 2007.

**Notes:** Q3 = third quarter. Data are in 2015 dollars.

Figure 7 shows quarterly earnings only for members who were employed in each quarter from 2007 to 2015. While figure 6 includes people with no earnings records in a quarter as having \$0 in quarterly earnings, figure 7 excludes members with no earnings. The data show that average quarterly earnings for workers peaked at \$5,117 in 2009 and then fell to a low of \$4,203 in 2013 before increasing to \$4,970 in 2015 (in inflation-adjusted dollars). All other analyses in this report include members with no match in the WRS employment data in a quarter as \$0 earners.

FIGURE 7

### Earnings of Employed Jobs-Plus Members



**Source:** New York State Department of Labor wage record system data from Q3 2007 to Q3 2015 for Jobs-Plus members who were at least 16 years old on January 1, 2007.

**Notes:** Q3 = third quarter. Data are in 2015 dollars.

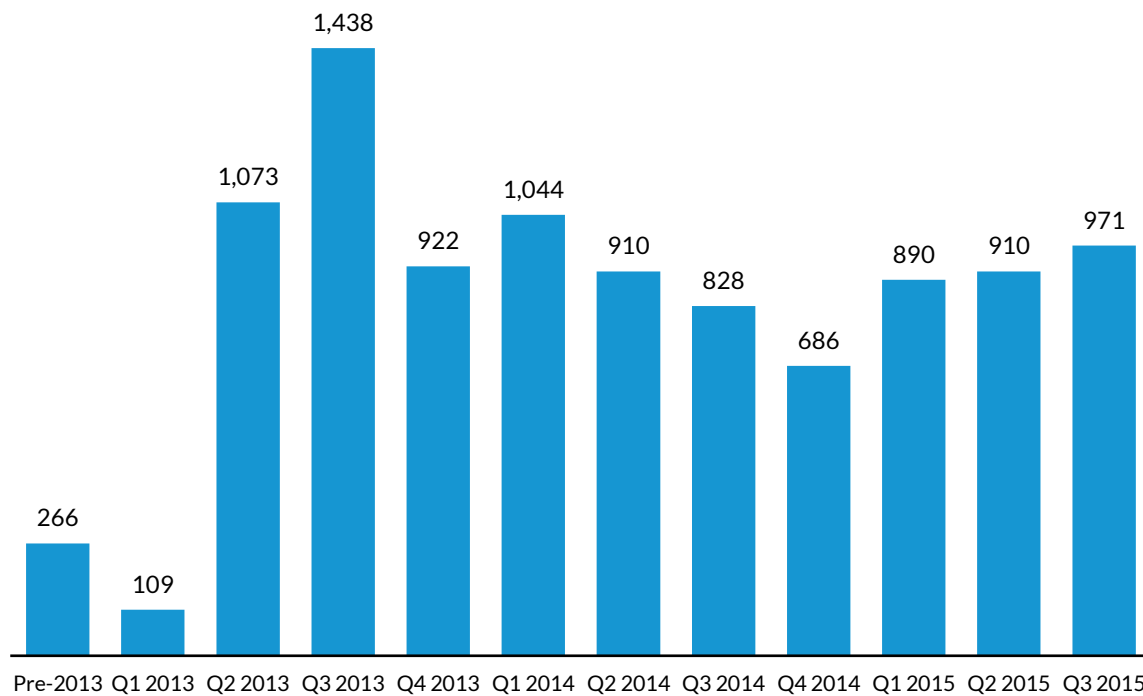
## Jobs-Plus's Effects on Members' Employment and Earnings

Members' employment and earnings increased after Jobs-Plus implementation. But this does not mean that Jobs-Plus implementation *caused* members' employment and earnings to increase. The 2013 expansion of Jobs-Plus coincided with the economic recovery from the Great Recession. The unemployment rate for the New York City metropolitan statistical area decreased from 9.1 percent in January 2013 to 4.7 percent in October 2015.<sup>15</sup> In addition, 30 percent of Jobs-Plus members were younger than 25. Employment and earnings might be improving as this cohort gets older and enters the labor force at greater rates rather than because of Jobs-Plus. Our evaluation does not include a comparison group of people similar to Jobs-Plus members who did not have access to the program, which would have helped us control for these factors. People could join Jobs-Plus at any time, however, and variations in when members enrolled allows us to estimate the program's effects on employment and earnings controlling for other factors, such as demographic characteristics, job readiness, prior earnings, and economic trends.



FIGURE 8

Quarterly Enrollment into Jobs-Plus Programs



URBAN INSTITUTE

**Source:** Jobs-Plus member data from the Efforts to Outcomes database for all members entered in the system as of March 11, 2016.

**Note:** Q = quarter.

Figure 8 shows the number of people enrolling in Jobs-Plus programs each quarter from 2013 to 2015. Although enrollment was heaviest in the second and third quarters of 2013, after the addition of six Jobs-Plus sites, at least 600 new members enrolled in every quarter after that. The dispersion in when people entered the program allows us to compare employment and earnings outcomes for members who had been enrolled in the program for some time with people with similar characteristics competing in the same job market at the same time, who had not yet enrolled in Jobs-Plus.

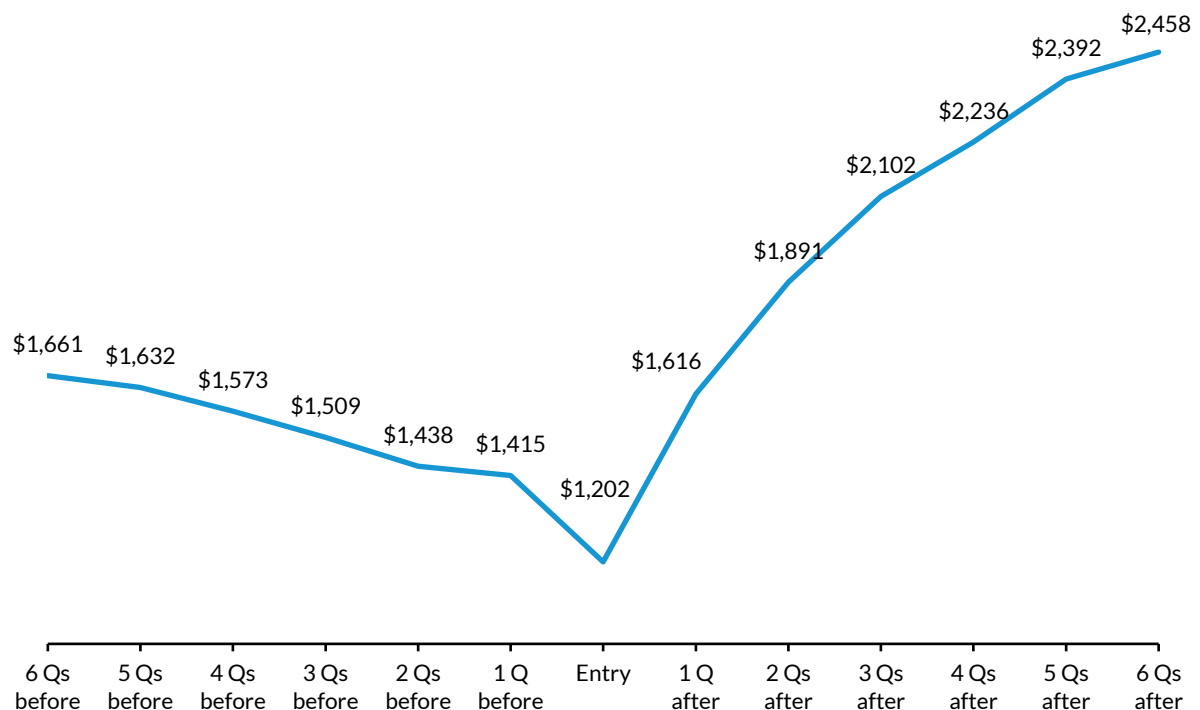
This analysis assumes that decisions to enroll in Jobs-Plus are random and not correlated with employment status or earnings. In fact, people might enroll in workforce development programs because they had either stopped working or had their hours or earnings cut. Research shows that this dip is temporary and earnings recover within six months, even absent a specific intervention. This phenomenon is called the Ashenfelter's Dip and can cause evaluators to overestimate the positive effects of workforce programs absent an experimental control group (Smith 2000). To see if the Ashenfelter's Dip applied to our population, we analyzed the average quarterly earnings of members

relative to when they entered the program (figure 9). As hypothesized, average quarterly earnings drop sharply during the first quarter of Jobs-Plus participation and then quickly rebound to exceed the earnings members had before Jobs-Plus. The sharp dip might be a mixture of external shocks preceding Jobs-Plus that motivated people to join the program and new members choosing to temporarily reduce their labor participation to engage in Jobs-Plus activities (e.g., workshops, coaching, or trainings). Rather than reverting to their prior earnings, however, Jobs-Plus members' earnings exceed their prior levels within one quarter of enrollment and continue to increase.

**FIGURE 9**

**Average Quarterly Earnings by Time before, at, and after Jobs-Plus Program Entry**

2015 dollars



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**Source:** New York State Department of Labor wage record system data from Q3 2007 to Q3 2015 for Jobs-Plus members.

**Note:** Q = quarter.

The regression model we created compares average earnings and employment status in a quarter for people enrolled in Jobs-Plus (the treatment group) and people who have not yet enrolled (the comparison group). To minimize the impact of the Ashenfelter's Dip, we compare averages between people who have been enrolled for one year with people who were one year away from enrolling between Q2 2014 and Q3 2015. For example, the model looks at the difference in average quarterly earnings and share of people employed in Q3 2015 for members who entered in Q3 2014 compared

with members who enrolled in Q3 2016. This approach raises another opportunity for bias, that members that joined earlier in the Jobs-Plus implementation were fundamentally different than members that joined later. Some Jobs-Plus providers told us that the members that joined soon after Jobs-Plus was implemented tended to be more motivated and, as time went on, the providers had to work harder to recruit members to meet their enrollment targets. Table 9 compares the demographic and employment characteristics of Jobs-Plus members that enrolled in the program early to those that enrolled later. Early joiners tend to be slightly younger, are more likely to be black, are less likely to be Hispanic, and are more likely to have a history of employment. Most of these differences are statistically significant.

**TABLE 9**  
**Demographic Characteristics and Employment History**  
**of Jobs-Plus Members Based on When They Enrolled**

	Early Joiners (Treatment)		Late Joiners (Comparison)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Age</b>				
Younger than 25 *	1,031	41	1,428	39
25 to 50	1,248	49	1,862	50
Age 51 or older **	245	10	420	11
<b>Race or ethnicity</b>				
Non-Hispanic white *	41	2	39	1
Non-Hispanic black ***	1,558	62	2,068	56
Hispanic ***	754	30	1,341	36
Other race	171	7	262	7
<b>Fast-track status</b>				
Fast-tracked ***	887	35	1,147	33
Needs extensive assistance **	575	23	761	21
<b>Previous employment</b>				
Employed 1 year previously ***	909	36	1,187	34

**Source:** Wage records are from the New York State Department of Labor wage record system from 2007 to 2015 merged with Jobs-Plus Efforts to Outcomes data on members.

\*=significant at .1 level, \*\*=significant at .05 level, \*\*\*=significant at .01 level

We use multivariate regression modeling to control for differences between the groups in age, race or ethnicity, gender, job readiness, location, and prior work history. The regression model results are shown in table 10. *Enrollment* is the critical row (bolded), showing the impact of being enrolled in Jobs-Plus on quarterly earnings and employment. **The model estimates that being enrolled is associated with a \$497 increase in quarterly earnings (to \$2,034 from \$1,537), controlling for other factors, and a 12 percentage-point increase in the average employment rate (to 28.7% from 16.7%).** The model also shows the effect of the provider site in which members enrolled on overall employment and earnings. This measures the influence of location rather than the effectiveness of each provider because

it combines the members who had already enrolled and members who had not yet enrolled. The results show no statistically significant differences based on where members accessed services, suggesting that, after controlling for other factors, location did not have a significant effect on individuals' employment and earnings. The model also controlled for age, job readiness, and employment history. Again, this is the impact of these factors on their own and not interacted with the degree of exposure members have had with Jobs-Plus. Members younger than 25, the reference category, were slightly more likely to be working than older members but had significantly lower earnings. Whether someone had been employed in the year before the outcome period had a strong influence on employment and earnings. The results of the gender, race, and ethnicity variables are omitted from table 10 but are included in the full regression model results in appendix table A.1. For the most part, these variables were not statistically significant for earnings or employment.

TABLE 10

**Results of the Regression Model on Effects of Jobs-Plus Participation  
on Members' Employment and Earnings**

	Earnings (\$)		Employment	
	Estimate (standard error)	Sig.	Estimate (standard error)	Sig.
Intercept	-135.32 (169.24)		0.214 (0.027)	***
<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>496.81</b> <b>(92.9)</b>	<b>***</b>	<b>0.120</b> <b>(0.015)</b>	<b>***</b>
Site: Staten Island	51.88 (135.30)		0.023 (0.022)	
Site: Lower East Side	180.79 (143.21)		0.034 (0.023)	
Site: Soundview	96.48 (131.53)		0.003 (0.021)	
Site: Mott Haven	12.23 (133.58)		-0.021 (0.021)	
Site: Astoria	201.97 (145.38)		0.000 (0.023)	
Site: Bedford-Stuyvesant	-15.40 (136.62)		-0.009 (0.022)	
Participant ages 25–50	578.84 (121.17)	***	-0.037 (.019)	*
Participant ages 51+	617.95 (189.86)	***	-0.071 (0.030)	**
Any employment 1 year prior	1,519.76 (97.61)	***	0.288 (0.015)	***
N	6,225		6,234	
Adjusted R squared	.192		.225	

**Source:** Wage records are from the New York State Department of Labor wage record system from 2007 to 2015 merged with Jobs-Plus Efforts to Outcomes data on members.

**Notes:** Earnings are in 2015 dollars. The table omits the following variables included in the model: fast-track status, gender, race, ethnicity, gender\*age, race\*age, and ethnicity\*age. Full model results are provided in the appendix. Reference variables are East Harlem (site), 18–24 (age), and minor barriers to employment. The analysis period for this model is quarter 2 2014 to quarter 3 2015.

\*  $p < 0.1$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

## Comparative Effectiveness of Individual Jobs-Plus Sites

Although Jobs-Plus providers all received the same guidance on implementing the model, they operate in different environments and employ different strategies for recruitment, training, job placement, and other services. Our qualitative analysis uncovered important differences between the sites in how they recruited members, the services they offered, and their methods for placing members into jobs. The quantitative analysis shows that enrollment in Jobs-Plus has been associated with increases in employment and earnings for all members.

Table 11 shows the number of members each provider enrolled and what share of these members were put on the fast track (i.e., were job ready), needed minor assistance, and needed extensive assistance. Providers differ in how they assess job readiness. Some of this variation likely reflects differences in member characteristics by site, while some is the result of differences in how providers made their assessments. Although the job-readiness checklist was universal, providers had discretion in where to assign members. Providers sometimes updated members' job-readiness status, but our analysis focuses on assigned status at program entry.

East Harlem is the only site that assigned most of its members to the fast track (61 percent). Mott Haven and Soundview assessed most of their members as needing minor assistance. No site assessed more than 24 percent of its members as requiring extensive assistance.

**TABLE 11**  
**Members Served and Job-Readiness Assessment by Service Provider**

	Total members	Fast track (%)	Needs minor assistance (%)	Needs extensive assistance (%)	Missing assessment information (%)
Bedford-Stuyvesant	1,727	31	21	11	37
Astoria	1,306	24	37	24	15
Mott Haven	1,539	16	61	19	4
Soundview	1,433	24	53	23	0
Lower East Side	1,457	17	42	20	21
East Harlem	1,230	61	21	15	3
Staten Island	1,466	28	47	19	6

**Source:** Jobs-Plus member data from the Efforts to Outcomes database for all members entered in the system as of March 11, 2016, at seven provider sites (excluding Brownsville and South Bronx).

Table 12 summarizes the regression results for Jobs-Plus's impact on earnings and employment for each provider after controlling for differences in demographics, work history, and job readiness. The full model, which includes all the control variables, is shown in appendix table A.2. **Jobs-Plus participation was associated with increased average quarterly earnings ranging from \$378 in Staten Island to \$741 in Astoria. The increase was statistically significant for all sites. Jobs-Plus participation had a positive and statistically significant effect on employment for all providers. The effect ranged from a 9.7 percentage-point increase in employment rates in Bedford-Stuyvesant members to a 15.2 percentage-point increase in the Lower East Side members.**

TABLE 12

**Regression Results on Effects of Jobs-Plus Participation on Members' Earnings and Employment Status by Service Provider**

	Quarterly earnings	Share of members working
Bedford-Stuyvesant	\$455***	.097***
Astoria	\$741***	.136***
Mott Haven	\$409**	.102***
Soundview	\$453***	.112***
Lower East Side	\$642***	.152***
East Harlem	\$535***	.135***
Staten Island	\$378***	.134***

**Source:** New York State Department of Labor wage record system data from Q3 2007 to Q3 2015 for Jobs-Plus members who were at least 16 years old on January 1, 2007.

**Notes:** Q = quarter. The analysis period for this model is Q2 2014 to Q3 2015. The table omits the following variables included in the model: quarter, site, gender, ethnicity, race, job readiness, and work history. The full model results are provided in the appendix.

\*  $p < 0.1$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

# Qualitative Findings on Jobs-Plus's Effects

Our quantitative results show that members' employment and earnings increased after enrolling in Jobs-Plus, but the data do not tell us why or how. The qualitative findings provide a window into how members feel about the program and how it has helped them. Staff and members said that Jobs-Plus is different from other jobs programs, that members feel safe in the offices, and that staff feel like family.

## Jobs-Plus Is Different

Members value having one place they can go to meet several needs. They appreciate the combination of services offered, the community-oriented atmosphere, and the staff's genuine interest in helping members achieve their potential. This makes Jobs-Plus feel unique among employment service providers in New York City.

Many focus group members had participated in other workforce development programs. These members almost universally felt that Jobs-Plus has a special approach and impact. More than the services offered, the members mostly talked about the staff's care, responsiveness, and motivation tactics:

Even if you don't leave with a job, at least they give you an opportunity... they give you something to look forward to. They keep tabs on you. They don't leave you in the dark. They keep you updated on everything. They work with you.

Jobs-Plus members saw the Jobs-Plus model as distinct from other workforce programs. Other programs also offer résumé-writing and interviewing workshops, trainings, and assistance with job placements, but Jobs-Plus offers more intensive coaching and barrier remediation services (e.g., criminal record expungement or credit score repair) attuned to the needs and interests of members. Members appreciated that Jobs-Plus is voluntary and free, while other programs they participated in were not. Members also perceive Jobs-Plus as less formal and more personal, while other programs are "more business oriented" and less interested in providing one-on-one assistance. Even staff members who had worked at other employment agencies said that Jobs-Plus is different in its focus on helping members find high-quality jobs rather than focusing on making job placements as quickly as possible.



## Offices Feel Safe, and Staff Are Like Family

Within their offices, Jobs-Plus staff professed dedication to creating safe and familial environments for members and to building trusting relationships with housing residents. Jobs-Plus offices are safe spaces from gang and drug activity, and members regularly bring their children into the offices because they have become community spaces.

Members value the program and the staff helping them with different issues. Consistent among the members' feedback was how much the staff believe in members' potential and challenged them to work hard. Jobs-Plus members appreciated the individual attention and support they received. They perceived that staff "want to help" and described the office as a community. Staff members know the members' names and the names of their family members. "It's like an episode of *Cheers*," one member remarked. One member shared this experience:

[The Jobs-Plus staff] make you understand that...no matter where you come from, no matter your story, you are a person. You should have the same opportunities as everyone else. The same guy that is a janitor, and the same guy that is the CEO of his own business. No favoritism here... They never shut the door on you. You may not always come out with a job, but you do come out with something. Something you may not have known about before.

One member felt the office was a safe place for her to find a sympathetic ear:

For me, it's a getaway. Whenever I feel like I just need to go somewhere, I come here. They listen and understand. Whether I'm having a good day or a bad day, with anything I need help—work, school.... When you need the help, they're there to help you.... They are willing to listen to your problems. It's somewhere you can just go.

Jobs-Plus members reported that staff members challenge them to work hard. Staff call members at all times of the day and expect reciprocal effort. Staff do not let up once they start working with a member in whom they see potential. Some members, especially the young men, described how staff are like maternal figures. One young man shared this story about his experience in the office soon after getting out of jail:

I came in and started dealing with [three female staff members]... I got like three mothers in one. They take care of me. They are on top of me. They give me tough love. And that is what I need. I don't need anyone to be soft with me.

## Staff and Work Culture

Providers hire staff with an ability to empathize with members and respond to members' needs with cultural competence. Provider leadership looked for staff who could bring stronger community

connection and understanding to the office, instead of only seeking out those with the highest credentials on paper. With HRA encouragement, several providers hire staff who are from the same neighborhood or have been NYCHA residents. Community coaches are recruited exclusively from the targeted developments.

Staff develop close working relationships with members and remediate barriers, such as social service needs, criminal records, and suspended driver's licenses. They also help members write résumés, practice job interviews, and build self-esteem. Once members go on the job market, staff members offer special incentives to keep members motivated, such as ringing a bell in the office or offering MetroCards when a member finds a new job. A few sites formed groups for members to receive peer support during and after their job search. Peer support groups exclusively for male Jobs-Plus members were particularly popular.

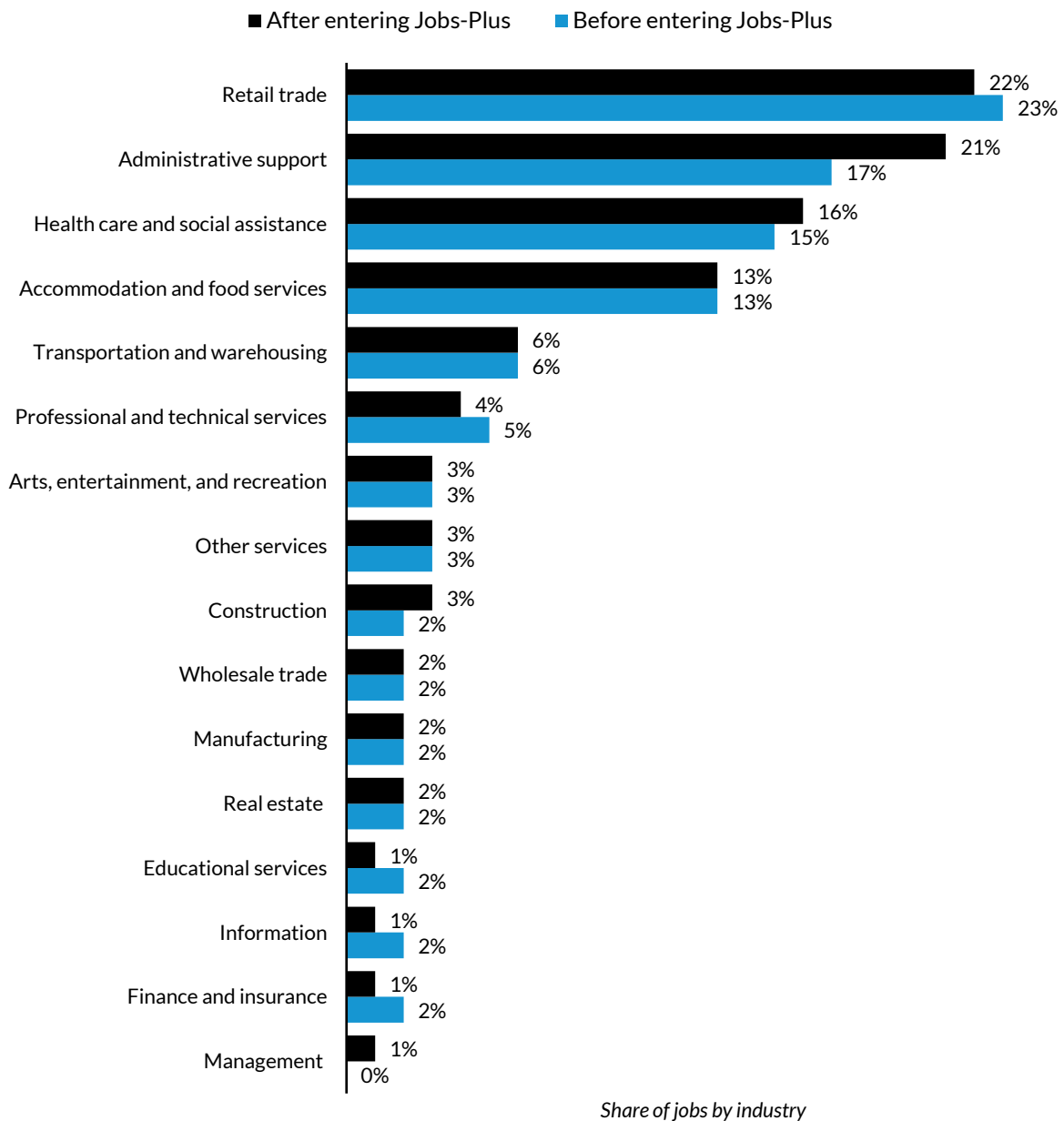
# Jobs-Plus's Efforts to Help Members' Find Careers

In this chapter, we use New York State Department of Labor wage records to identify the industries in which members were commonly employed before and after entering Jobs-Plus. The analysis shows members worked in the same industries after entering Jobs-Plus, but data are available only through September 2015. In 2016, Jobs-Plus providers were required to adopt New York City's career pathways framework as part of their contract renewal. This included choosing a focus sector or set of sectors upon which they would focus training and placement efforts. Although we cannot measure the impact of this shift using earnings records, information from interviews with staff and administering agencies suggest the career pathways framework has had a limited impact on the types of industries employing Jobs-Plus members.

Figure 10 shows the industries Jobs-Plus members were employed in before and after participating in Jobs-Plus. No single industry was dominant, but the top sectors employing Jobs-Plus members were retail, administrative support (which includes clerical workers, temporary workers, janitors, and security guards), health care and social assistance, and food and hospitality. Although construction jobs were in high demand according to staff reports, particularly among men, less than 5 percent of Jobs-Plus members worked in construction. Members were more likely to work in the administrative support sector after Jobs-Plus placement, which could reflect the use of temp agencies for job placements, but otherwise, there were no major shifts in the industry sectors members worked in before and after enrollment. Our data did not allow us to determine if members advanced within an industry, such as being promoted from a cashier to a manager.

FIGURE 10

Industries among Jobs-Plus Members before and after Enrollment



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**Source:** North American Industry Classification System industry codes from the New York State Department of Labor wage record system for Jobs-Plus members.

**Notes:** Members who worked in multiple subsectors within an industry were counted only once for each industry. Members who worked in one industry for multiple quarters were counted only once.

# Career Pathways

While we do not have the data to analyze whether Career Pathways helped members find jobs in more lucrative industries with better opportunities for advancement, we did get feedback from providers and city staff on its influence. Career pathways helped providers focus more intensely on how to help members find jobs in more competitive industries. It also elevated efforts to provide more opportunities for advancement among Jobs-Plus provider staff.

One recurring theme in our interviews was the challenge of getting members to focus on careers rather than jobs. Members generally understand the difference between jobs and careers but have difficulty identifying the intermediate steps or envisioning what a realistic career would look like for them. Providers identified several common challenges they face when trying to help members become career focused:

- Getting people to look beyond the immediate “I just need a job” mindset, which often reflects members’ needs for quick income to pay for food, clothing, and other necessities
- Helping members become comfortable with unfamiliar and highly competitive industries, especially technology
- Helping members gain educational credentials, such as a high school diploma, long-term training, and college degrees
- Moving beyond the retail-heavy job market in New York City

These findings were consistent with HRA’s survey of Jobs-Plus provider staff, which found that the main challenges staff had with the career pathways model were members’ desire for quick jobs, being restricted to a specific sector, and challenges enrolling members in industry-specific trainings because of training costs, availability, or eligibility criteria.

The Career Pathways initiative gave providers space to think about how to address challenges to getting members started in careers. Some of these problems do not have ready solutions, and providers have addressed them by continuing to work with members and employers to find opportunities that fit members’ skills, interests, and needs. Other problems can be addressed through education and training. Many providers created more robust trainings and emphasized educational pathways more explicitly. They also began to consider step-up trainings to help with career advancement.

As part of the career pathways model, Jobs-Plus providers all had to adopt one of six focus sectors: health care, technology, retail, food service, manufacturing, and construction. Providers would then

make targeted connections to trainers and employers in that sector. Only providers focused on health care have increased member placements in their focus sector. This is consistent with research on the citywide implementation of career pathways that has shown that health care employers have been more engaged in the initiative than other industry sectors (Gonzalez-Rivera 2016).

Implementing career pathways influenced some providers' approaches to staffing in two ways: (1) creating new positions to help with members' career advancement and (2) undertaking more purposeful efforts to improve their staff members' professional career pathways. Changes to help members progress on their career pathways included hiring additional staff to focus on retention and advancement and reorganizing staff roles to create positions oriented toward education, training, and career advancement.

The career pathways focus for members created more scrutiny among Jobs-Plus staff about whether their own positions provided enough opportunities for career advancement. Providers' staff advancement efforts often involved establishing more manager positions. HRA staff were aware of reorganizations to support Jobs-Plus staff advancement at five of the eight sites. In addition, many providers emphasized that they and their parent organizations dedicate professional development resources for staff to improve their skills. Some have guaranteed professional development allocations for all staff. One said that when a subset of staff members goes to a training, those staff members present the content to everyone else upon their return.

The focus on career pathways for staff is one strategy to counteract staff turnover, which has been a challenge for Jobs-Plus providers, as is the case for other direct service organizations. Because Jobs-Plus providers came from larger organizations and Job-Plus is a small program, staff advancement has resulted in staff leaving Jobs-Plus, leading to program turnover. Career pathways for staff create avenues for staff members to stay involved in the program while experiencing their own career growth.

# Jobs-Plus's Effects on Public Housing Residents in Targeted Developments

Jobs-Plus was designed to not only help participating members, but to boost employment and earnings for the entire working-age population within its targeted public housing developments. The original Jobs-Plus model aimed to create a development-wide impact through a saturation approach that reached all working-age, nondisabled adult residents. The theory was that although not all residents would directly receive Jobs-Plus employment services, they could take advantage of the changes to the rent subsidy designed to make work pay, and at a minimum, they would be exposed to the work-promoting messages of Jobs-Plus staff and members (Bloom, Riccio, and Verma 2005). The influence of Jobs-Plus would snowball as residents who may have originally been unaware of the program or reluctant to participate saw the program's positive effects.

MDRC's evaluation of the original demonstration sites found that implementing this saturation model was difficult, but sites that did so effectively did see broad gains in employment and earnings. Our analysis finds mixed evidence on the demonstration's success in increasing employment rates or earnings among all working-age, nondisabled adults living in targeted developments at Jobs-Plus implementation. Although employment and earnings increased for residents of the targeted developments, they also increased for residents of other similar NYCHA developments. There is some evidence that employment rates went up faster for residents in the target developments, but the results are not robust across analytic approaches. There is no evidence that wages went up faster for residents in the targeted developments.

We believe that we did not see stronger outcomes for public housing residents targeted by Jobs-Plus for several reasons. First, the targeted developments in the New York City expansion were much larger than the original demonstration sites. This might have impeded providers' ability to reach the saturation level necessary to boost overall employment and earnings for all public housing residents within the evaluation time frame. Second, in the first three years of implementation, up to 10 percent of members could come from outside the targeted developments, and in some cases, the share of members from outside the developments exceeded 10 percent. This might have diluted providers' ability to positively influence employment and earnings for residents of the targeted developments. Third, program data suggest that up to half of Jobs-Plus members from the targeted developments were

unofficial residents. Although Job-Plus's goal was to serve all members of the targeted developments, residents not on the lease could not be included in our analysis. This is a limitation of our design that makes it more difficult for us to estimate the program's full impact.

## Design of the Development-Wide Analysis

In the original demonstration, the public housing authorities nominated two or three similar public housing developments to be the Jobs-Plus site. One site was randomly selected to be the treatment site to have Jobs-Plus services within the development, while the other site or sites were assigned to the comparison group, which had access to whatever employment services were available as usual care (Bloom, Riccio, and Verma 2005). The New York City expansion sites were not randomly selected. The Human Resources Administration issued a request for proposals in May 2012 for prospective providers to offer Jobs-Plus services. Within certain specifications, applicants could propose which public housing developments they planned to target. Greater consideration was given to proposals that targeted developments in specific neighborhoods (community districts) that the city assessed to be high need and underserved by existing workforce programs. City officials reported that providers were selected primarily on the strength of their proposals rather than the characteristics of the developments they proposed to serve.

### Selecting Comparison Developments

To test the program's impacts within the developments, we worked with NYCHA to identify comparable public housing developments in similar neighborhoods. We used a three-tiered process to select comparison developments. First, we narrowed down the list of potential comparison developments based on size (number of occupied units) and structure (e.g., high-rise or low-rise, elevator or walk-up). We also matched the one mixed-income development with other mixed-income developments. Second, we further narrowed the list of potential comparison developments based on the characteristics of assisted households. We selected comparison developments with a similar proportion of working-age, nondisabled adults and with similar characteristics in terms of race, ethnicity, and average annual household income. Finally, we selected comparison developments in the same or similar neighborhoods based on both the neighborhoods' current demographics and the level of neighborhood change from 2000 to 2010. Appendix table A.3 displays the comparison developments that were selected for each targeted development. In a few cases, the same development is the comparison for multiple targeted developments.



Table 13 compares the characteristics of public housing residents in the targeted and comparison developments for current residents as of 2015. Residents of the target and comparison developments had similar disability rates, and the same proportion of men and women, but had statistically significant differences in age and race and ethnicity. The targeted developments had a lower share of residents 62 and older (12 percent versus 16 percent), and among working-age, nondisabled adults, targeted developments had a higher share of Hispanic residents (35 percent versus 31 percent) and a lower share of black (54 percent versus 57 percent) and Asian (6 percent versus 9 percent) residents. In both targeted and comparison developments, the median length of tenure for current residents was more than 16 years.<sup>16</sup>

TABLE 13

### Age, Race, and Ethnicity Characteristics of Public Housing Residents in Targeted and Comparison Developments

	Targeted Developments		Comparison Developments	
	Number	Share	Number	Share
Households	14,512	100%	28,377	100%
Households with nonelderly, nondisabled head of household ***	7,854	54%	14,855	52%
<b>Age ranges (all individuals)</b>				
Younger than 16 ***	11,087	30%	17,826	28%
16–18 ***	2,401	7%	3,626	6%
19–24 ***	3,714	10%	6,145	10%
25–61 ***	14,109	39%	25,604	40%
62 and older ***	4,421	12%	10,058	16%
Missing	779	2%	1,352	2%
Total	36,511	100%	64,611	100%
<b>Disability status (16-to-61-year-olds)</b>				
No	16,247	80%	28,576	81%
Yes	3,977	20%	6,799	19%
Total	20,224	100%	35,375	100%
<b>Gender (16-to-61-year-olds, nondisabled)</b>				
Male	5,571	34%	9,663	34%
Female	10,676	66%	18,913	66%
Total	16,247	100%	28,576	100%
<b>Race or ethnicity (16-to-61-year-olds, nondisabled)</b>				
White, non-Hispanic ***	606	4%	734	3%
White, Hispanic ***	5,675	35%	8,868	31%
Black ***	8,793	54%	16,145	57%
Asian ***	977	6%	2,524	9%
Other	167	1%	302	1%
Missing	29	<1%	3	<1%
Total	16,247	100%	28,576	100%
<b>Tenure in current development</b>				
Median years	16.4		16.3	

Source: New York City Housing Authority tenant data for 2015.

\* = Significant at the .1 level, \*\* = Significant at the .05 level, \*\*\*=significant at the .01 level.

## Data Processing and Limitations

To analyze Jobs-Plus's effects on employment and earnings within the targeted developments, NYCHA sent the state department of labor a file with the Social Security numbers and demographic characteristics of authorized public housing residents (those on the lease) in both the targeted and comparison public housing developments. The department matched the file with their earnings records from the wage record system and returned a file to Urban that replaced residents' SSNs with a

randomly generated research ID and included demographics, household income, quarterly earnings, and industry sectors from two years before Jobs-Plus implementation in each development until Q3 2016.

Although the WRS captures nearly all employment records for New York State, our analysis includes only people who were included in households' lease agreements with NYCHA. Unofficial residents living off the lease are not included in NYCHA's data system and are not included in our analysis.

## Development-Wide Regression Analysis Methods

Below, we present descriptive results of the development-wide comparisons and results from two rigorous impact approaches using regression techniques. The two regression models test Jobs-Plus's effects on employment rates and quarterly earnings of people in the targeted developments. They are: (1) a difference-in-differences (DiD) model and (2) a comparative interrupted time series (CITS) model. For both, the analysis is for the cohort of working-age, nondisabled adults officially living in the Jobs-Plus (targeted) and comparison developments at Jobs-Plus implementation. The analysis follows the same cohort even if they move out of the developments during implementation and does not include new residents who moved into the developments after implementation began.

The MDRC evaluation of the original demonstration included two approaches: (1) a cohort analysis of residents who lived in the targeted developments in 1998, even if they left public housing during the analysis period, and (2) a development-wide analysis that compared current residents, even if they were not present at the start of the demonstration.<sup>17</sup> In New York City, turnover in public housing is low—the median length of stay is 16 years—and the population in the developments at implementation remains more or less the same throughout the analysis. Thus, we conducted only a cohort analysis.

The DiD compares average (mean) resident employment rates and earnings in the targeted and comparison cohorts before and during Jobs-Plus implementation, controlling for changes in residents' ages. The impact estimate is the difference in the change in average quarterly earnings and employment rates before and during Jobs-Plus implementation between the targeted and comparison group cohorts (hence, the difference in differences). For example, controlling for other factors, if the average quarterly earnings for the treatment group cohort increased from \$2,000 to \$3,500 and the average quarterly earnings for the comparison group cohort increased from \$3,000 to \$4,000, the estimated impact of Jobs-Plus on quarterly earnings would be \$500 (\$1,500–\$1,000). The DiD approach assumes that the change in each outcome between the before and after periods would be the same across each group if

one group were not exposed to the treatment. Differences in the change in outcomes between the groups are assumed to be attributable to the treatment.

The comparative interrupted time series model is like the DiD design, but instead of comparing averages before and during implementation for the two groups, it compares quarterly trends. The CITS approach accounts for pre-implementation levels and trajectories in the indicator of interest (e.g., employment rates or earnings) and projects the trajectory of Jobs-Plus's influence on that indicator. This approach can control for differences in trends in the outcomes of interest that emerged before treatment. But the approach assumes these different trajectories would have continued absent the treatment, and we cannot know if this is correct.

## Jobs-Plus's Effects on Public Housing Residents' Earnings and Employment

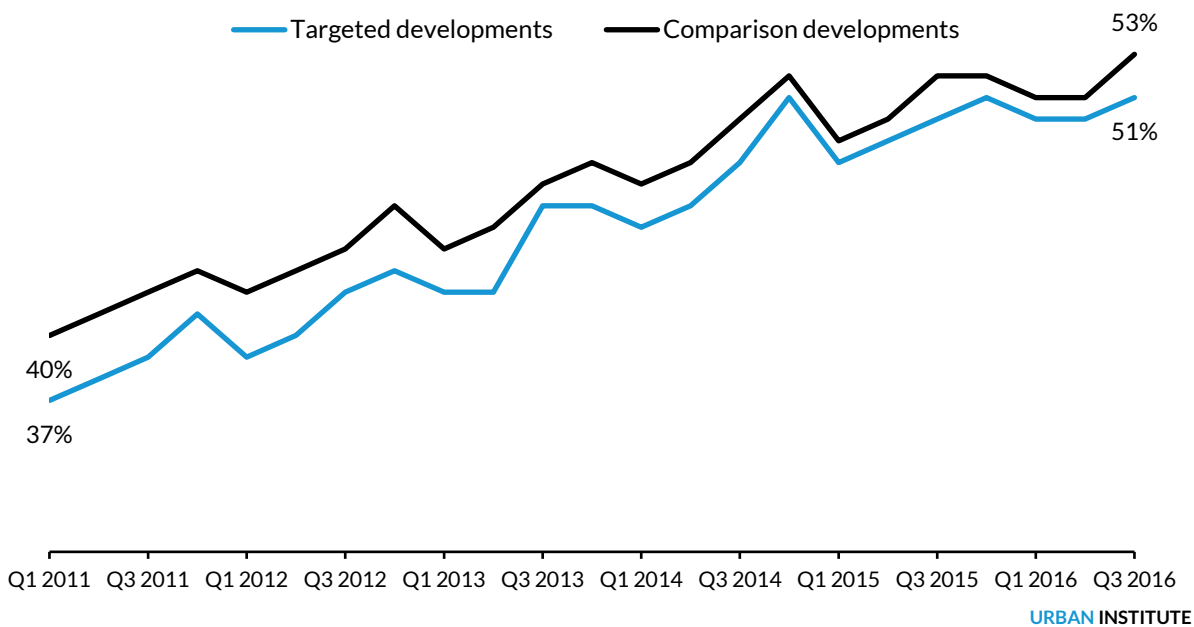
To measure Jobs-Plus's effects on employment and earnings within the targeted public housing developments, we focus on a cohort of working-age, nondisabled, adult, official members in targeted or comparison developments when Jobs-Plus was first implemented (in 2009 for the East Harlem site and in 2013 for the other sites). Our analysis uses WRS data to track changes in this cohort's employment status and quarterly earnings, including members of the cohort that exited public housing during the evaluation period or who were removed from the household's lease with NYCHA. This cohort analysis does not include individuals that moved into the targeted developments after Jobs-Plus was first implemented in the targeted developments.

### Descriptive Comparisons

Figure 11 shows the share of people employed in each quarter from Q1 2011 to Q3 2016. The trends show that the share of working-age, nondisabled residents who were employed in each quarter was 3 percentage points higher in the comparison group than in the targeted group at the start of the analysis (40 percent versus 37 percent). The share of residents with quarterly employment steadily increased for both groups, and by 2016, the share of residents working in the comparison developments was 2 percentage points higher than in the targeted developments (53 percent versus 51 percent).

FIGURE 11

Share of Employed, Working-Age, Nondisabled Adults in Targeted and Comparison Developments



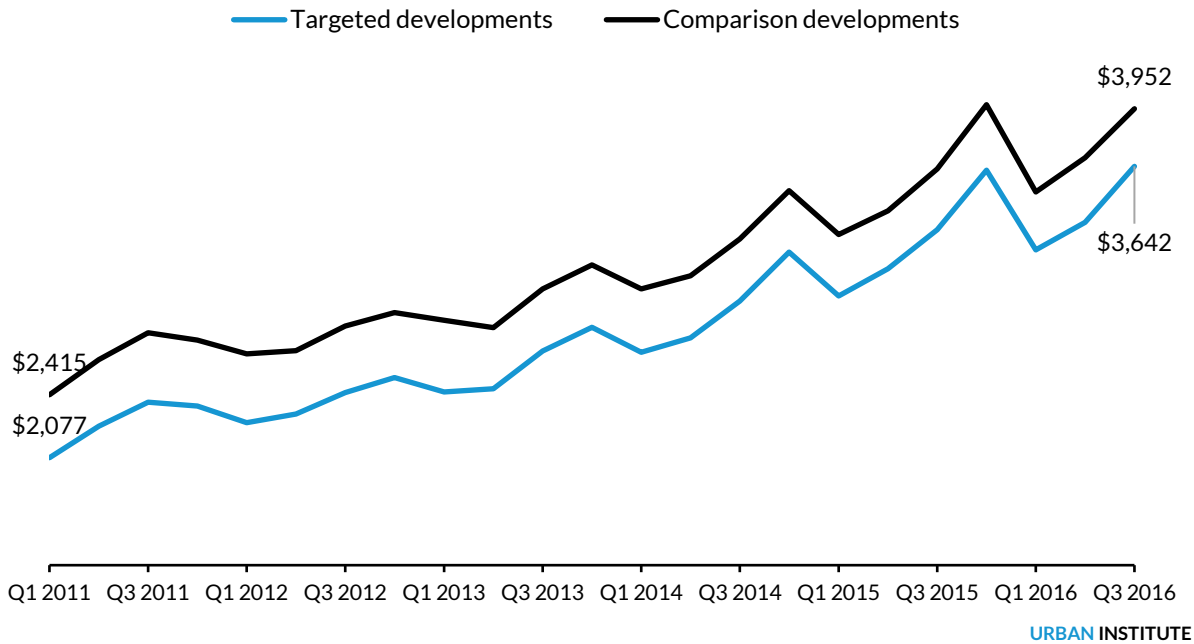
**Source:** New York City Housing Authority data on authorized public housing tenants in targeted and comparison developments between 2011 and 2016 merged with New York State wage record system data on quarterly employment and earnings.

**Notes:** Q3 = third quarter. The expansion sites launched in 2013. Members are considered employed if they have reported earnings in Q3 of each year.

Figure 12 shows the trends in quarterly earnings for the same cohort during the same period. The trend lines for residents of targeted and comparison site developments remain almost perfectly parallel before and after Jobs-Plus implementation. Residents in the targeted developments averaged about \$300 less in quarterly earnings before Jobs-Plus implementation and still averaged about \$300 less three years after, with both groups experiencing steady increases.

FIGURE 12

**Average Quarterly Earnings of Working-Age, Nondisabled Adults in Targeted and Comparison Developments**



**Source:** New York City Housing Authority data on authorized public housing tenants in targeted and comparison developments between 2011 and 2016 merged with New York State wage record system data on quarterly employment and earnings.

**Notes:** Q = quarter. The expansion sites launched in 2013. Data are in 2015 dollars.

## Development-Wide Regression Analysis Results: Difference in Differences

Table 14 shows the DiD regression model results estimating Jobs-Plus’s impact on employment and earnings. The model pools residents of the targeted developments in the six sites that implemented the program in 2013 and compares them with residents of the comparison developments. The coefficient for the employment model shows how each variable influenced the share of residents in the cohort working in each quarter. The coefficient for the wages model is the estimated influence of each variable on quarterly earnings. The *treatment development* row shows that before accounting for the program’s impact, residents of the targeted developments had lower employment rates and lower earnings than residents in the comparison developments. The *Jobs-Plus in effect this quarter* row shows that, controlling for differences in age, gender, and race or ethnicity, the average employment rate for all residents in the comparison development cohort increased by 9 percentage points after implementation, and average quarterly earnings increased by \$818. The *In Jobs-Plus development, Jobs-Plus in effect* row shows that, controlling for other factors, employment rates increased an *additional 1.7 percentage points* for authorized residents of the Jobs-Plus targeted developments and average quarterly earnings

increased an additional \$41. The increase in employment rates associated with being on the lease in a Jobs-Plus development was statistically significant, but the increase in earnings was not. Figures 13 and 14 below graph the estimated effects of Jobs-Plus implementation on average employment rates and earnings from this model.

**TABLE 14**  
**Regression Results on Impact of Jobs-Plus on Employment and Earnings**  
**for On-Lease Residents of Target Developments: Difference in Differences**

	Employment (standard error)	Sig.	Earnings (standard error)	Sig.
Intercept	0.428 (0.015)	***	3741.695 (172.208)	***
Treatment development	-0.030 (0.004)	***	-430.829 (44.361)	***
Jobs-Plus in effect this quarter	0.090 (0.002)	***	818.062 (16.262)	***
<b>In Jobs-Plus development, Jobs-Plus in effect</b>	<b>0.017 (0.003)</b>	<b>***</b>	<b>41.773 (26.143)</b>	
Black	0.072 (0.012)	***	662.063 (141.792)	***
Asian	0.029 (0.015)	*	-544.386 (166.219)	**
Other race	0.025 (0.037)		-254.110 (353.493)	
Hispanic	0.066 (0.012)	***	372.257 (144.299)	**
Ages 16–18 in Q1 2011	-0.285 (0.004)	***	-3630.900 (36.788)	***
Ages 19–24 in Q1 2011	-0.065 (0.004)	***	-2309.300 (41.234)	***
Female	0.053 (0.004)	***	-231.909 (45.287)	***
N	907,557		907,557	
R squared	.052		.089	

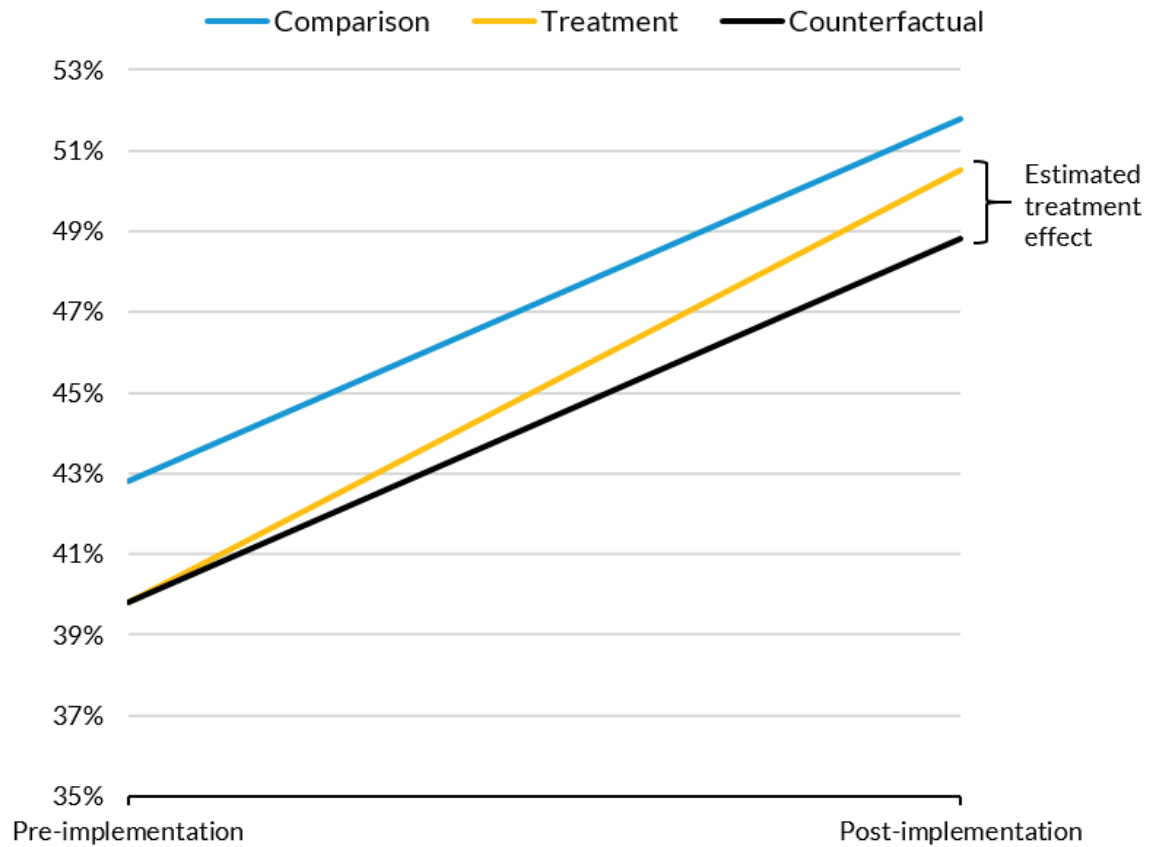
**Source:** New York City Housing Authority data on authorized public housing tenants in targeted and comparison developments between 2011 and 2016 merged with New York State Department of Labor wage record system data on quarterly employment and earnings.

**Notes:** Q1 = first quarter. Reference groups are white, ages 25–61 at implementation, male, and in development group Armstrong I and II (Bedford-Stuyvesant). Black people, Asian people, and people of other races are non-Hispanic.

\*  $p < 0.1$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

FIGURE 13

Regression Results on Impact of Jobs-Plus on Employment for On-Lease Residents of Targeted Developments: Difference in Differences



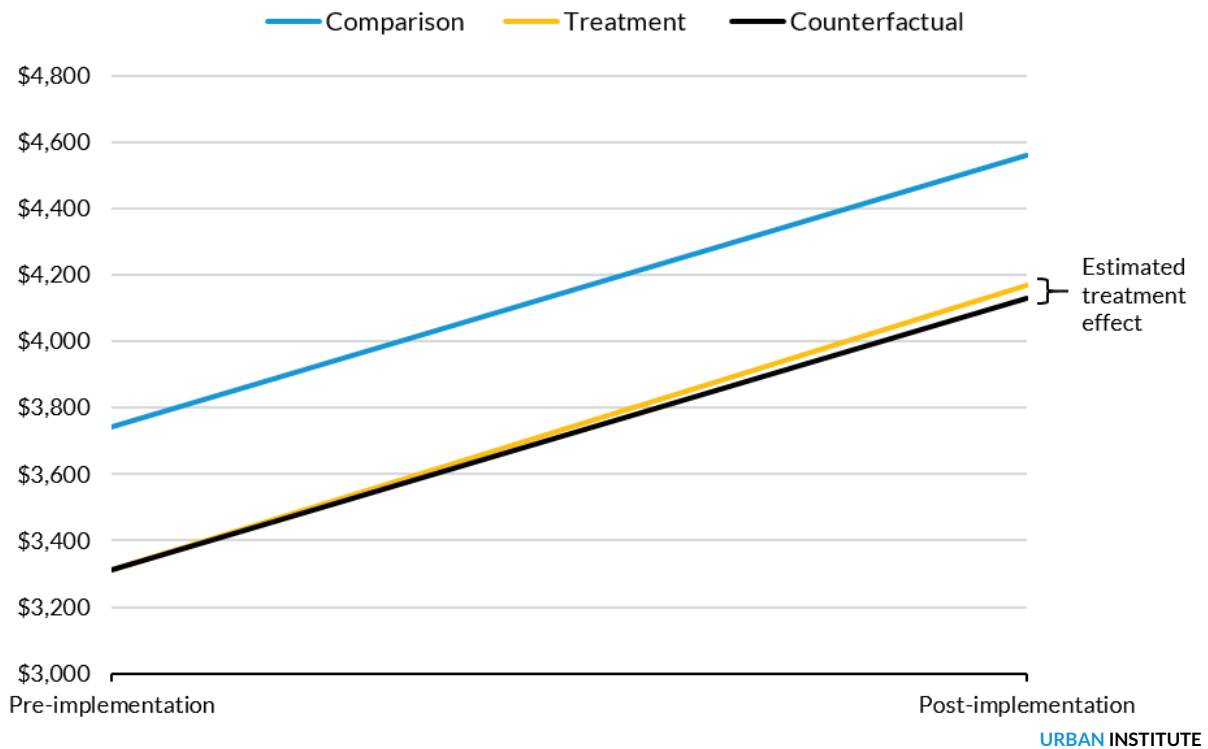
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Source: New York City Housing Authority tenant data for 2015.



FIGURE 14

**Regression Results on Impact of Jobs-Plus on Earnings for On-Lease Residents of Targeted Developments: Difference in Differences**



Source: New York City Housing Authority tenant data for 2015.

**Development-Wide Regression Analysis  
Results: Comparative Interrupted Time Series**

Table 15 shows the CITS model results for both employment and earnings. It shows that target developments had lower employment and earnings before Jobs-Plus implementation. In this pre-implementation period, employment and earnings increased for both the treatment and comparison developments. The rate of increase was a little faster for the treatment developments.

Employment rates had a small (0.7 percentage point), statistically significant increase relative to the previous trend in the first quarter of Jobs-Plus implementation (*In Jobs-Plus dev., Jobs-Plus in effect*). Over time, the effect of Jobs-Plus on earnings faded out from the initial small positive effects, with a decrease each quarter of 0.1 percentage points. The model shows no significant effect of Jobs-Plus on quarterly earnings.

TABLE 15

**Regression Results on Impact of Jobs-Plus on Employment and Earnings for On-Lease Residents of Targeted Developments: Comparative Interrupted Time Series Model**

	Employment (standard error)	Sig.	Quarterly earnings (standard error)	Sig.
Intercept	0.391 (0.015)	***	3556.410 (171.954)	***
Treatment development	-0.039 (0.005)	***	-446.666 (47.825)	***
Quarters since start of performance period	0.007 (0.000)	***	33.688 (2.237)	***
Quarter * in Jobs-Plus development	0.002 (0.001)	**	2.880 (3.557)	
Jobs-Plus in effect this quarter	0.021 (0.002)	***	17.741 (14.623)	
Quarters since implementation	-0.001 (0.000)	**	58.987 (3.318)	***
In Jobs-Plus dev., Jobs-Plus in effect	0.007 (0.004)	*	34.696 (23.905)	
In Jobs-Plus dev., quarters Jobs-Plus in effect	-0.001 (0.001)	*	-3.720 (5.219)	
<b>Average estimated impact of Jobs-Plus seven quarters after implementation</b>	<b>.001</b>		<b>-2.100</b>	
Black	0.072 (0.012)	***	662.063 (141.793)	***
Asian	0.029 (0.015)	*	-544.386 (166.219)	**
Other race	0.025 (0.037)		-254.110 (353.494)	
Hispanic	0.066 (0.012)	***	372.257 (144.300)	**
Ages 16–18 in Q1 2011	-0.285 (0.004)	***	-3630.900 (36.788)	***
Ages 19–24 in Q1 2011	-0.065 (0.004)	***	-2309.300 (41.234)	***
Female	0.053 (0.004)	***	-231.909 (45.287)	***
N	907,557		907,557	
R squared	0.092		0.092	

**Source:** New York City Housing Authority data on public housing tenants in targeted and comparison developments between 2011 and 2016 merged with New York State Department of Labor wage record system data on quarterly employment and earnings.

**Notes:** Q1 = first quarter. Reference groups are white, ages 25–61 at implementation, male, and in development group Armstrong I and II (Bedford-Stuyvesant). Black people, Asian people, and people of other races are non-Hispanic.

\*  $p < 0.1$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

## Summary of Regression Results

The DiD and CITS models do not tell a consistent story. Both models show what residents of the targeted developments had lower employment levels and earnings before Jobs-Plus and that employment rates increased at a slightly higher rate for official residents of targeted developments than for official residents at comparison developments. The DiD model, however, attributes these gains to Jobs-Plus, but the CITS model attributes them to differences in trends that started to emerge between the targeted and comparison developments before Jobs-Plus. We do not have sufficient information to know which model is more accurate, but the overall story seems to be that Jobs-Plus's effects on development-wide outcomes was marginal at best, with the caveat that the impact might have been greater if we included data on unofficial residents. This contrasts with the strong, positive impacts on individual members' employment and earnings described earlier.

## Subgroup Analyses

In the preceding analysis, we looked at the full cohort of official residents from the targeted developments and compared them with the full cohort of official residents from the comparison developments.<sup>18</sup> We also compared outcomes for the treatment and comparison groups for each public housing development separately using the DiD approach. The results from these models are included in table 16.<sup>19</sup>

One takeaway from these results is that Jobs-Plus providers were more likely to have development-wide positive, statistically significant impacts on earnings or employment if they were only responsible for serving one public housing development. Two of the three providers in this category, Astoria and Mott Haven, produced positive and statistically significant effects for either employment rates or quarterly earnings for residents of the targeted developments relative to residents of their comparison developments. East Harlem was the only provider responsible for just one development that did see significant improvements for either outcome. Although Jefferson Houses in East Harlem implemented Jobs-Plus in 2009 and had more time to achieve positive impacts, residents living in Jefferson Houses at Jobs-Plus implementation did not have significantly greater increases in earnings or employment than residents in the comparison development. The CITS model, however, shows that Jobs-Plus had a positive effect on quarterly earnings at Jefferson Houses.

Another takeaway is that there appears to be little relationship between Jobs-Plus's effect on residents' employment rates and its effects on residents' earnings. In three of the four developments where Jobs-Plus had a positive, statistically significant effect on employment rates, it had a negative,

though not statistically significant, effect on earnings. The Staten Island provider is the most confounding example of this trend. Employment rates increased relative to comparison developments in all of Staten Island's four targeted developments, with two developments (Mariners Harbor and Stapleton) meeting the statistical significance threshold, but earnings decreased in three of these four developments, with one decrease (Todt Hill) being statistically significant. We do not have any explanation for the divergence between employment and earnings impacts.

We also ran a regression model for 16-to-24-year-old residents at Jobs-Plus implementation to test the program's impact on young adults. The results are similar to the results for the full cohort (appendix tables A.4 and A.5). The DiD model shows no significant impact of Jobs-Plus on quarterly earnings but a positive and statistically significant impact of 1.7 percentage points on employment rates for residents in the targeted group after Jobs-Plus implementation.

**TABLE 16**  
**Regression Results on Impact of Jobs-Plus on Employment and Earnings for On-Lease Residents in Each Targeted Development: Difference in Differences**

<b>Jobs-Plus provider</b>	<b>Targeted development</b>	<b>Estimated impact on quarterly earnings</b>	<b>Estimated impact on employment rates</b>
Bedford-Stuyvesant	Armstrong I and II	-151.48	-.011
Astoria	Astoria	-7.78	.035***
Soundview	Classon Point	-566.67**	-.019
East Harlem	Jefferson Houses	-115.56	.005
Bedford-Stuyvesant	Lafayette	107.02	.012
Bedford-Stuyvesant	Marcy	-40.66	.020*
Staten Island	Mariners Harbor	-127.32	.048**
Soundview	Monroe	-51.13	.014
Mott Haven	Mill Brook	144.46*	.015
Staten Island	Richmond Terrace	-211.88	.023
Lower East Side	Riis II	48.84	.025
Soundview	Sack Wern	89.67	-.015
Staten Island	Todt Hill	-59.38	.003
Staten Island	Stapleton	55.99	.024*
Staten Island	South Beach	18.14	.028
Lower East Side	Wald	-117.53	.002
Staten Island	West Brighton I	-360.14*	.016

**Source:** New York City Housing Authority data on authorized public housing tenants in targeted and comparison developments between 2011 and 2016 merged with New York State Department of Labor wage record system data on quarterly employment and earnings.

**Note:** Reference groups are white, ages 25–61 at implementation, male, and in development group Armstrong I and II (Bedford-Stuyvesant).

\*  $p < 0.1$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

# Discussion and Conclusion

Past research showed that the Jobs-Plus model boosts employment and earnings when effectively implemented (Bloom, Riccio, and Verma 2005). This study found that, despite the unique challenges of adapting the program to New York City public housing, Jobs-Plus still improved members' employment and earnings. Fully implementing the program, however, required more than offering effective employment services to public housing residents. It also required engaging nearly all working-age residents of the targeted developments and addressing the perceived impediments to work created by the public housing rent calculation and culture. The size of the targeted developments in New York and NYCHA's inability to make significant changes to the rent structure may have limited New York's Jobs-Plus providers from fully implementing these components of the model. In addition, our evaluation time frame and design may have limited our ability to detect development-wide impacts. Prior work found that, even among strong implementers, it took several years before employment and earnings for residents of Jobs-Plus developments showed significant improvement over residents of comparison developments. Therefore, if the New York City expansion were tracked for more time, and if unofficial residents were included in the analysis, the size of impacts may change.

## Effectiveness of Jobs-Plus Replication

Our evaluation tested the effectiveness of New York City's implementation of the Jobs-Plus model in improving public housing residents' employment and earnings. Although program administrators in New York City could use the original demonstration sites as a blueprint for its own program, replicating evidence-based programs is challenging. Implementation science research has identified several factors that influence how effectively programs can be replicated:

- Fidelity to the original program model
- The dosage, or level, of services provided
- The quality of the services provided
- The program's reach
- The level of services available to the comparison group population (Durlak and DuPre 2008)

The Jobs-Plus expansion followed the original demonstration's design, with several exceptions. Unlike the original implementation settings, New York City's lead implementation partner was HRA, a

human services agency, not the housing authority. The size of targeted developments was larger in the New York City model (2,092 versus 562 units, on average), though the per-resident funding for Jobs-Plus was lower. Several Jobs-Plus offices were in the community but not inside public housing developments. The rent reform to make work pay for public housing residents was narrower because NYCHA lacked the waiver authority the original demonstration sites had to make more radical changes to how rents were calculated. The expansion was not as narrowly targeted to official (on-lease) public housing residents. Providers were initially allowed to serve people outside public housing if they did not make up more than 10 percent of their members, which was not carefully enforced in the expansion's early years. These factors likely contributed to the high share of Jobs-Plus members who were not on the lease in the targeted developments.

We could not compare differences in the dosage, or level, of services Jobs-Plus members received in the original demonstration sites compared with the New York City expansion sites. The quality of services, however, seems comparable. Like the original successful demonstration sites, New York City providers integrated themselves within the community and provide personalized services. Staff and residents saw the program as a critical resource in underserved communities. Residents appreciated having employment assistance within the neighborhood and the personal warmth, flexibility, and willingness to meet people where they are that Jobs-Plus staff brought to the work. The focus on performance and data has encouraged providers to find innovative methods to recruit and retain members, build employer networks, and offer specialized trainings and services.

Program reach is the main area where the expansion sites differed from the original demonstration sites. The difference is due, at least partly, to the relative size of target developments. The original demonstration sites served 62 percent of residents in the targeted developments at the start of implementation. None of the New York City providers served more than 60 percent of the units in their targeted developments, and about one-third of targeted units were served, on average, across providers. We suspect this is the main reason Jobs-Plus had a more limited effect on employment and earnings for all on-lease residents of the targeted developments. New York City providers faced two major challenges achieving saturation. First, the developments were large, with between 1,000 and 3,000 units, and the providers might not have been funded at the necessary scale to serve all, or most, eligible residents. Second, the program initially attracted a higher-than-anticipated number of people from outside the targeted developments, although this was later corrected by HRA's stricter enforcement of its policy.

New York City might have also differed from the original demonstration sites in services and opportunities available to members as part of usual care. Our evaluation found that Jobs-Plus filled a

need for personalized employment services near public housing, but NYCHA public housing residents likely have greater access to workforce programs than public housing residents in less densely populated and less service-rich areas. This might have lessened the contrast in services between residents of the Jobs-Plus targeted developments and residents of the comparison developments. We do not have data on the services the comparison development residents received to validate this supposition.

## Overall Findings

Jobs-Plus had significant positive effects on employment and earnings for people who received Jobs-Plus services (i.e., members). Controlling for differences in demographics, job readiness, location, and economic trends, one year of Jobs-Plus participation was associated with a 12 percentage-point increase in members' employment rates and with quarterly earnings gains of nearly \$500 per quarter, on average. We originally hypothesized that impacts would differ based on the strength of implementation at each site, but the gains were consistent across providers.

In the analysis of development-wide impacts, being on the lease in a Jobs-Plus development at implementation had no effect on residents' earnings and had a small but positive effect on the likelihood that a person would be employed. This effect on employment was statistically significant in one model (difference in differences) but not in the other (comparative interrupted time series). The modest differences in employment and earnings between residents in the Jobs-Plus developments and residents of the comparison developments might have as much to do with limitations of the evaluation—namely, excluding unofficial public housing residents from our analysis—as with other program factors.

## Recommendations for Policy and Future Evaluations

Our evaluation comes at a time of great local and national interest in increasing employment and earnings for public housing residents. New York City is making plans to expand Jobs-Plus to additional developments. HUD is implementing and evaluating a new Jobs-Plus Initiative in 24 PHAs. The expansion of Jobs-Plus coincides with renewed interest among federal policymakers of tying benefits, including housing assistance, food stamps, and Medicaid, to employment.

Our evaluation adds to the evidence base that Jobs-Plus services are effective at helping public housing residents find work and increase earnings. The use of data to pinpoint members' barriers to

employment, combined with a personal and flexible approach to addressing those barriers, created a strong personal attachment to the program among members. Our analysis shows that participation significantly increased employment and earnings. We think the evidence supports continued implementation of the program, but we see opportunities for improvement moving forward. One area for improvement is aligning providers' performance measures with the city's career pathways framework so providers can be rewarded for helping members receive the educational assistance and industry-specific trainings necessary to move beyond jobs to successful careers.

Jobs-Plus appeared to have little effect on improving employment rates for all official residents of its targeted developments and no effect on improving earnings. If New York City wants to prioritize development-wide impacts, it should either have providers serve smaller developments or increase funding and site space so that providers have the resources and physical space to serve larger developments. Finally, New York City was hampered by its inability to make significant changes to the public housing rent calculation to "make work pay." PHAs with Moving to Work status might be more successful in implementing that component of the Jobs-Plus model.

## Future Evaluations

Shortcomings with the evaluation design may have limited our ability to detect the full development-wide impacts of Jobs-Plus. The high proportion of Jobs-Plus members that were unofficial residents of targeted developments is not a shortcoming of program implementation; many of the off-lease members were the young men the program was most interested in serving.<sup>20</sup> But because of data limitations, we could not include these unofficial residents in our analysis of program effects within the targeted developments. The program's effects on the developments may have been different if unofficial residents were included. Any attempt by NYCHA to collect more complete data on unofficial residents might be perceived as a prelude to stricter enforcement and have unintended consequences. Future evaluations could look at population-level measures, such as census block groups, to measure differences between Jobs-Plus and comparison developments. This approach has been used in other evaluations of New York City public housing (Dastrup et al. 2015). It is a better way to capture unofficial residents, but it relies on self-reported income on federal surveys, and it might be difficult to attribute any change in outcomes at a geographic level to a specific intervention.

We also recommend that future studies more thoroughly document differences between treatment and comparison sites in the period before implementation. The Jobs-Plus program was implemented during a period of economic recovery when unemployment rates were falling throughout the region.



Our difference-in-differences model shows that people in the Jobs-Plus targeted group had greater employment gains after implementation than people in the comparison group. Our comparative interrupted time series analysis suggests that the differences in trends between groups began before Jobs-Plus and would have continued without it. Without knowing more about what was going on in each of the developments before implementation, we cannot determine which model is more likely to be correct.

Finally, future studies would benefit from a longer analysis time frame. The original demonstration sites took two years to fully implement and did not show positive trends in employment and earnings until the third year, with impacts growing thereafter, even after the demonstration ended. Our analysis period lasted three years after initial implementation. Stronger impacts might emerge over time, particularly given the size of the targeted developments in the New York City expansion.

# Appendix Tables

TABLE A.1

Full Results of Regression Model on Effects of Jobs-Plus  
Participation on Members' Employment and Earnings

	Earnings (standard error)		Employment (standard error)	
Intercept	-135.318 (169.237)		0.213 (0.027)	***
Enrollment	496.814 (92.898)	***	0.120 (0.015)	***
Q3 2013	165.825 (138.23)		0.033 (0.022)	
Q4 2013	240.649 (146.121)	*	0.047 (0.023)	**
Q1 2014	-88.088 (146.021)		-0.006 (0.023)	
Q2 2014	-96.80 (132.074)		0.027 (0.021)	
Q3 2014	48.602 (131.763)		0.035 (0.021)	
Site: Staten Island	51.883 (135.30)		0.023 (0.021)	
Site: Lower East Side	180.790 (143.209)		0.034 (0.023)	
Site: Soundview	96.483 (131.527)		0.003 (0.021)	
Site: Mott Haven	12.231 (133.576)		-0.021 (0.021)	
Site: Astoria	201.975 (145.379)		0.001 (0.023)	
Site: Bedford-Stuyvesant	-15.398 (136.625)		-0.009 (0.022)	
Participant is male	305.637 (110.612)	***	0.004 (0.018)	
Participant is white	511.477 (913.624)		0.089 (0.146)	
Participant is Hispanic	19.676 (121.448)		-0.012 (0.019)	
Participant is other race	-93.55 (215.909)		-0.055 (0.034)	
Participant ages 25–50	578.84 (121.170)	***	-0.037 (0.019)	*
Participant ages 51+	617.95 (189.961)	***	-0.071 (0.030)	**
Participant is male and ages 25–50	-137.354 (148.279)		-0.011 (0.023)	
Participant is male and older than 50	74.463 (242.507)		0.025 (0.039)	
Participant is white and ages 25–50	-220.281 (990.448)		-0.145 (0.158)	
Participant is white and older than 50	-1393.478 (1,118.548)		-0.265 (0.179)	
Participant is Hispanic and ages 25–50	108.265		0.005	

	Earnings (standard error)		Employment (standard error)	
	(159.830)		(0.025)	
Participant is Hispanic and older than 50	288.831		0.030	
	(258.658)		(0.041)	
Participant is other race and ages 25–50	-78.944		0.019	
	(293.633)		(0.047)	
Participant is other race and older than 50	-81.190		0.037	
	(490.015)		(0.078)	
Any employment 1 year previous	1,519.763	***	0.288	***
	(97.615)		(0.016)	
Any employment 5 quarters previous	1,297.999	***	0.197	***
	(99.785)		(0.016)	
Participant is on fast track for job placement	320.88	***	0.082	***
	(85.066)		(0.014)	
Participant needs extensive assistance for job placement	-348.306	***	-0.075	***
	(92.252)		(0.015)	
N	6,225		6,234	
Adjusted R squared	0.192		0.225	

**Source:** Earnings records are from the New York State Department of Labor wage record system from 2007 to 2015 merged with Jobs-Plus Efforts to Outcomes data on members.

**Notes:** Earnings are in 2015 dollars. Q = quarter. Earnings and employment are for all sites. Reference variables are East Harlem (site), 18–24 (age), and participant needs minor assistance. The analysis period for this model is Q2 2014 to Q3 2015.

\*  $p < 0.1$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

TABLE A.2

**Regression Results on Effects of Jobs-Plus Participation  
on Members' Earnings and Employment Status by Service Provider**

	Earnings (standard error)	Employment (standard error)	
Intercept	-42.493 (133.307)	0.221 (0.021)	***
Enrollment	.	.	
Q3 2013	142.537 (137.593)	0.030 (0.022)	
Q4 2013	212.506 (145.106)	0.041 (0.023)	*
Q1 2014	-113.978 (145.482)	-0.014 (0.023)	
Q2 2014	-120.213 (131.600)	0.023 (0.021)	
Q3 2014	30.839 (131.580)	0.030 (0.021)	
Enrolled at East Harlem	534.868 (159.149)	0.135 (0.025)	***
Enrolled at Staten Island	377.566 (146.971)	0.134 (0.023)	***
Enrolled at Lower East Side	641.71 (180.808)	0.152 (0.029)	***
Enrolled at Soundview	452.830 (169.467)	0.112 (0.027)	***
Enrolled at Mott Haven	408.670 (165.317)	0.102 (0.026)	***
Enrolled at Astoria	740.693 (179.639)	0.136 (0.029)	***
Enrolled at Bedford-Stuyvesant	455.789 (161.318)	0.097 (0.026)	***
Participant is male	308.144 (110.498)	0.005 (0.018)	***
Participant is white	529.056 (913.429)	0.092 (0.146)	
Participant is Hispanic	15.280 (120.742)	-0.013 (0.019)	
Participant is other race	-72.633 (214.991)	-0.049 (0.034)	
Participant ages 25–50	578.140 (121.032)	-0.037 (0.019)	*
Participant ages 51+	610.950 (189.809)	-0.073 (0.030)	**
Participant is male and ages 25–50	-137.669 (148.217)	-0.010 (0.024)	
Participant is male and older than 50	75.100 (242.374)	0.027 (0.039)	
Participant is white and ages 25–50	-210.018 (990.577)	-0.140 (0.158)	
Participant is white and older than 50	-1,321.178 (1,118.809)	-0.255 (0.179)	
Participant is Hispanic and ages 25–50	114.297 (159.958)	0.005 (0.026)	
Participant is Hispanic and older than 50	299.095	0.028	

	Earnings (standard error)		Employment (standard error)	
Participant is other race and ages 25–50	(258.380)		(0.041)	
	-79.114		0.015	
Participant is other race and older than 50	(293.357)		(0.047)	
	-75.421		0.035	
Any employment 1 year previous	(489.703)		(0.078)	
	1,526.477	***	0.288	***
	(97.618)		(0.016)	
Any employment 5 quarters previous	1,299.288	***	0.198	***
	(99.764)		(0.016)	
Participant is on fast track for job placement	297.776	***	0.079	***
	(82.191)		(0.013)	
Participant needs extensive assistance for job placement	-363.392	***	-0.076	***
	(92.888)		(0.015)	
N	6,225		6,234	
Adjusted R squared	0.192		0.225	

**Source:** New York State Department of Labor wage record system data from Q3 2007 to Q3 2015 for Jobs-Plus members who were at least 16 years old on January 1, 2007.

**Notes:** Q = quarter. The analysis period for this model is Q2 2014 to Q3 2015. Reference variables are East Harlem (site), 18–24 (age), and participant needs minor assistance. Omitted site variable controls.

\*  $p < 0.1$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

**TABLE A.3**

**Jobs-Plus Targeted and Comparison Public Housing Developments**

Census tract code	Borough	Development name	2010 median income (\$)
14000US36047025100	Brooklyn	Armstrong 1	34,191
14000US36047026500	Brooklyn	Armstrong II	49,714
14000US36047029300	Brooklyn	Bushwick II (Groups B and D)	28,038
14000US36047041700	Brooklyn	Stuyvesant Gardens I	25,875
14000US36081008700	Queens	Astoria	23,807
14000US36081016300	Queens	Ocean Bay Apartments (Bayside)	17,763
14000US36081097203	Queens	Woodside	28,786
14000US36005002000	Bronx	Classon Point	19,150
14000US36005008700	Bronx	Stebbins Avenue–Hewitt Place	28,725
14000US36005013100	Bronx	Union Avenue East 166th Street	28,594
14000US36061018000	Manhattan	Jefferson	24,577
14000US36061016400	Manhattan	Washington	34,267
14000US36061018400	Manhattan	Taft	25,380
14000US36047023300	Brooklyn	Lafayette	75,834
14000US36047034300	Brooklyn	Albany	25,269
14000US36047038100	Brooklyn	Brevoort	23,556
14000US36047025500	Brooklyn	Marcy	25,838
14000US36047018501	Brooklyn	Whitman	21,303
14000US36047049300	Brooklyn	Williamsburg	29,190
14000US36085031901	Staten Island	Mariners Harbor	27,386
14000US36085011401	Staten Island	Berry	38,843
14000US36061023200	Manhattan	Samuel (City)	27,439
14000US36005004200	Bronx	Monroe	27,868
14000US36005004400	Bronx	Sotomayor	21,033
14000US36005002000	Bronx	Soundview	19,150
14000US36005002701	Bronx	Mill Brook	26,094
14000US36005002701	Bronx	Mill Brook Extension	26,094
14000US36005002300	Bronx	Mitchel	13,902
14000US36005005100	Bronx	Patterson	21,423
14000US36085000700	Staten Island	Richmond Terrace	40,134

Census tract code	Borough	Development name	2010 median income (\$)
14000US36085011401	Staten Island	Berry	38,843
14000US36081088901	Queens	Latimer Gardens	41,379
14000US36081087100	Queens	Bland	21,154
<b>14000US36061002400</b>	<b>Manhattan</b>	<b>Riis II</b>	<b>25,833</b>
14000US36061009300	Manhattan	Elliott	90,819
14000US36061023600	Manhattan	Harlem River	37,647
14000US36047012700	Brooklyn	Wyckoff Gardens	31,875
14000US36047090600	Brooklyn	Hughes Apartments	18,280
<b>14000US36005002000</b>	<b>Bronx</b>	<b>Sack Wern</b>	<b>19,150</b>
14000US36005013300	Bronx	McKinley	22,012
14000US36005014500	Bronx	Webster	20,621
	Queens	Ocean Bay Apartment (Oceanside)	17,763
	<b>Staten Island</b>	<b>Todt Hill</b>	<b>37,766</b>
	Queens	South Jamaica I	32,574
	Brooklyn	Carey Gardens	21,468
	Queens	Hammel	50,602
	<b>Staten Island</b>	<b>Stapleton</b>	<b>34,510</b>
	Staten Island	Berry	38,843
	<b>Staten Island</b>	<b>South Beach</b>	<b>51,961</b>
	Manhattan	Holmes	71,618
<b>14000US36061002000</b>	<b>Manhattan</b>	<b>Wald</b>	<b>35,012</b>
14000US36061002500	Manhattan	Smith	15,652
14000US36061000202	Manhattan	Vladeck	26,355
<b>14000US36085013301</b>	<b>Staten Island</b>	<b>West Brighton I</b>	<b>14,710</b>
14000US36081027800	Queens	Baisley Park	38,100
14000US36085011401	Staten Island	Berry	38,843
14000US36047034200	Brooklyn	O'Dwyer	13,934

Sources: 2010 median income is from the American Community Survey.

Note: Targeted developments are in bold.

TABLE A.4

**Full Regression Model Results on the Effects of Jobs-Plus on Earnings  
for Public Housing Residents Age 16-24 in Targeted Developments**

	CITS		Difference in Differences- Basic Model		Difference in Differences with demographic controls	
	Estimate (standard error)	Sig.	Estimate (standard error)	Sig.	Estimate (standard error)	Sig.
Intercept	811.886 (157.613)	***	898.457 (74.408)	***	1,191.015 (158.243)	***
Treatment development	-77.566 (28.233)	**	-89.292 (27.71)	**	-93.844 (27.926)	***
Quarters since start of performance period	68.932 (2.390)	***	.		.	
Quarter * in Jobs-Plus development	-2.960 (3.696)		.		.	
Jobs-Plus in effect this quarter	-34.401 (20.216)	*	1,321.788 (23.054)	***	1,322.415 (23.054)	***
Quarters since implementation	80.585 (4.225)	***	.		.	
In Jobs-Plus dev., Jobs-Plus in effect	74.882 (32.026)	*	16.983 (35.41)		17.087 (35.458)	
In Jobs-Plus dev., quarters Jobs Plus in effect	-3.394 (6.562)		.		.	
Black	-395.647 (142.826)	**	.		-395.647 (142.825)	**
Asian	-213.070 (176.840)		.		-213.070 (176.839)	
Other race	-178.575 (330.776)		.		-178.575 (330.774)	
Hispanic	-254.724 (143.560)	*	.		-254.724 (143.559)	*
Female	81.929 (33.152)	*	.		81.929 (33.152)	*
Dev. group: Astoria	44.660 (83.489)		55.82 (83.382)		44.660 (83.489)	
Dev. group: Classon Point	-23.666 (140.754)		-1.741 (140.032)		-23.666 (140.753)	
Dev. group: Lafayette	-170.808 (89.843)	*	-190.217 (89.800)	*	-170.808 (89.843)	*
Dev. group: Marcy	-39.407 (88.360)		-19.446 (88.371)		-39.407 (88.359)	
Dev. group: Mill Brook	-147.201 (87.379)	*	-112.827 (87.061)		-147.201 (87.379)	*
Dev. group: Monroe	-131.169 (85.971)		-102.013 (85.511)		-131.169 (85.971)	
Dev. group: Riis II	73.530 (122.004)		95.231 (122.342)		73.530 (122.003)	
Dev. group: Sack Wern	-216.515 (101.329)	*	-194.552 (101.205)	*	-216.515 (101.329)	*
Dev. group: South Beach	-167.079 (81.449)	*	-171.503 (81.387)	*	-167.079 (81.449)	*
Dev. group: Stapleton	-129.048		-120.981		-129.048	

	CITS		Difference in Differences- Basic Model		Difference in Differences with demographic controls	
	Estimate (standard error)	Sig.	Estimate (standard error)	Sig.	Estimate (standard error)	Sig.
Dev. group: Wald	(100.900)		(101.471)		(100.899)	
	11.200		77.033		11.200	
	(94.134)		(92.707)		(94.133)	
Dev. group: Mariners Harbor, Richmond Terrace	-79.590		-66.558		-79.590	
	(87.000)		(87.236)		(86.999)	
N	333,454		334,029		33,3454	
R squared	0.07905		0.05465		0.05582	

**Source:** New York City Housing Authority data on public housing tenants in targeted and comparison developments between 2011 and 2016 merged with New York State Department of Labor wage record system data on quarterly employment and earnings.

**Notes:** CITS = comparative interrupted time series. Reference groups are white, ages 25–61 at implementation, male, and in development group Armstrong I and II (Bedford-Stuyvesant).

\*  $p < 0.1$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .



APPENDIX TABLE A.5

**Full Regression Model Results on the Effects of Jobs-Plus on Employment Rates  
for Public Housing Residents Age 16-24 in Targeted Developments**

	CITS		Difference in Differences—Basic Model		Difference in Differences with Demographic Controls	
	Estimate (standard error)	Sig.	Estimate (standard error)	Sig.	Estimate (standard error)	Sig.
Intercept	0.184 (0.021)	***	0.320 (0.012)	***	0.282 (0.021)	***
Treatment development	-0.026 (0.008)	***	-0.017 (0.006)	**	-0.017 (0.006)	**
Quarters since start of performance period	0.018 (0.001)	***	.		.	
Quarter * in Jobs-Plus development	0.002 (0.001)	*	.		.	
Jobs-Plus in effect this quarter	0.041 (0.004)	***	0.218 (0.004)	***	0.218 (0.004)	***
Number of quarters since implementation	-0.004 (0.001)	***	.		.	
In Jobs-Plus dev., Jobs-Plus in effect	0.011 (0.007)		0.017 (0.006)	**	0.017 (0.006)	**
In Jobs-Plus dev., number of quarters Jobs-Plus in effect	-0.002 (0.001)		.		.	
Black	-0.005 (0.018)		.		-0.005 (0.018)	
Asian	-0.049 (0.022)	*	.		-0.049 (0.022)	*
Other race	0.026 (0.050)		.		0.026 (0.050)	
Hispanic	-0.002 (0.018)		.		-0.002 (0.018)	
Female	0.078 (0.005)	***	.		0.078 (0.005)	***
Dev. group: Astoria	0.016 (0.013)		0.010 (0.013)		0.016 (0.013)	
Dev. group: Classon Point	0.014 (0.022)		0.010 (0.022)		0.014 (0.022)	
Dev. group: Lafayette	-0.027 (0.014)	*	-0.031 (0.014)	*	-0.027 (0.014)	*
Dev. group: Marcy	-0.013 (0.013)		-0.018 (0.013)		-0.013 (0.013)	
Dev. group: Mill Brook	-0.013 (0.014)		-0.015 (0.014)		-0.013 (0.014)	
Dev. group: Monroe	-0.019 (0.013)		-0.021 (0.013)		-0.019 (0.013)	
Dev. group: Riis II	-0.005 (0.018)		-0.011 (0.018)		-0.005 (0.018)	
Dev. group: Sack Wern	-0.023 (0.017)		-0.024 (0.017)		-0.023 (0.017)	
Dev. group: South Beach	-0.027 (0.013)	*	-0.024 (0.013)	*	-0.027 (0.013)	*
Dev. group: Stapleton	-0.030	*	-0.032	*	-0.030	*

	CITS		Difference in Differences—Basic Model		Difference in Differences with Demographic Controls	
	Estimate (standard error)	Sig.	Estimate (standard error)	Sig.	Estimate (standard error)	Sig.
Dev. group: Wald	(0.015)		(0.015)	*	(0.015)	
	-0.012		-0.026		-0.012	
	(0.014)		(0.014)		(0.014)	
Dev. group: Mariners Harbor, Richmond Terrace	0.013		0.013		0.013	
	(0.013)		(0.014)		(0.013)	
N	333,454		334,029		333,454	
R squared	0.06936		0.0516		0.05816	

**Source:** New York City Housing Authority data on public housing tenants in targeted and comparison developments between 2011 and 2016 merged with New York State Department of Labor wage record system data on quarterly employment and earnings.

**Notes:** CITS = comparative interrupted time series. Reference groups are white, ages 25–61 at implementation, male, and in development group Armstrong I and II (Bedford-Stuyvesant).

\*  $p < 0.1$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

# Notes

- <sup>3</sup> In 2015, HUD launched a new Jobs-Plus Initiative Program, modeled after the original demonstration. It is now under way in 24 communities.
- <sup>4</sup> This evaluation excludes a New York City Jobs-Plus expansion site in the South Bronx, which was funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service's Social Innovation Fund grant and was evaluated separately. In addition, the Brownville Jobs-Plus site started operations later than the other sites and is excluded from the impact analysis. This site participated in the qualitative research.
- <sup>5</sup> More information on the citywide Career Pathways initiative can be found at "NYC Career Pathways," City of New York, accessed June 5, 2018, <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/careerpathways/index.page>.
- <sup>6</sup> Under this model, residents might pay \$200 a month in rent in their first year in public housing, regardless of their income, \$225 a month in their second year, and so on.
- <sup>7</sup> New York City's financial component was designed in partnership with Morgan Stanley in New York's South Bronx Jobs-Plus site before the program expanded and was subsequently built into the expansion models.
- <sup>8</sup> 2017 data based on 2010 Census data for NYCHA public housing assisted households compared with national public housing households. See "Assisted Housing: National and Local, Picture of Subsidized Households," US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, accessed May 31, 2018, <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/assthg.html>.
- <sup>9</sup> Data are available at "Series VIIA: Population for Renter-Occupied Housing Units," US Census Bureau, last updated October 18, 2017, <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/nychvs/series-7a.html>. This survey reportedly includes a small sample of NYCHA residents, but the trends could be generally informative about the labor market for public housing residents.
- <sup>10</sup> Members from outside the developments who had already received a job placement or achieved another milestone were exempted from this rule.
- <sup>11</sup> Jake Blumgart, "The Ghost Tenants of New York City," *Slate*, last updated March 3, 2016, [http://www.slate.com/articles/business/metropolis/2016/03/new\\_york\\_city\\_public\\_housing\\_could\\_have\\_more\\_than\\_100\\_000\\_ghost\\_tenants.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/business/metropolis/2016/03/new_york_city_public_housing_could_have_more_than_100_000_ghost_tenants.html).
- <sup>12</sup> Jake Blumgart, "The Ghost Tenants."
- <sup>13</sup> This description comes from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's web page on the Jobs-Plus Initiative. See "JPI Jobs-Plus Initiative Program," US Department of Housing and Urban Development, accessed May 31, 2018, [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/jpi](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/jpi).
- <sup>14</sup> While Hostos began serving members in 2009, many members that joined before 2013 are not included in our analysis because they were not entered in the Efforts to Outcomes database.
- <sup>15</sup> Bureau of Local Statistics local area unemployment statistics.
- <sup>16</sup> For the site-by-site comparison of each of the 18 targeted developments and their matches, see "Demographic Characteristics of NYCHA Residents," Urban Institute, last updated June 8, 2018, [https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/nycha\\_demographics\\_table\\_for\\_appendix.xlsx](https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/nycha_demographics_table_for_appendix.xlsx).
- <sup>17</sup> MDRC's evaluation found that in sites where Jobs-Plus had no significant impacts in the cohort analysis, there were also no significant impacts in the development-wide analysis. In sites with higher public housing turnover, such as Dayton, Ohio, impacts were greater for the original cohort than for the development because more successful participants used their increased earnings to move out. In Los Angeles, where turnover was low, impacts were greater at the development level than for the original cohort.

<sup>18</sup> Residents of Jefferson Houses (the East Harlem site) and its comparison developments were excluded from this analysis because Jefferson Houses implemented Jobs-Plus four years earlier than the other sites. Jefferson Houses is included in the development-wide regressions.

<sup>19</sup> For the full results, see “DiD Model Results for Appendix,” Urban Institute, last updated June 8, 2018, [https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/did\\_model\\_results\\_for\\_appendix.xlsx](https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/did_model_results_for_appendix.xlsx).

<sup>20</sup> Jake Blumgart, “The Ghost Tenants.”

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# About the Authors

**Josh Leopold** is a senior research associate in the Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center at the Urban Institute, where his work focuses on homelessness and affordable housing policy. Before joining Urban, Leopold was a management and program analyst at the US Interagency Council on Homelessness, where he helped implement the Obama administration's plan for ending chronic homelessness and homelessness among veterans by 2015; he also helped develop a national research agenda related to homelessness. From 2006 to 2011, he was an analyst for Abt Associates, where he was involved in numerous studies, including the Annual Homeless Assessment Report; the Costs of Homelessness study; the Study of Rents and Rent Flexibility in Subsidized Housing; and an evaluation of the AmeriCorps program. Leopold has a bachelor's degree from Grinnell College, Iowa, and a master's degree in information science from the University of Michigan.

**Theresa Anderson** is a research associate in the Income and Benefits Policy Center at the Urban Institute. She is a member of the Building America's Workforce cross-center initiative and is affiliated with the Center on Education Data and Policy. Her work focuses on workforce development; postsecondary, adult, and secondary education; and family support programs. She works on projects related to college and high school quality and student success, career pathway demonstrations for low-skilled adults, two-generation initiatives, disconnected youth-serving programs, employment programs for public housing residents, and social assistance programs. She has extensive experience leading mixed-methods program evaluations, both formative and summative. Anderson holds a bachelor's degree from Hampshire College and a master of public policy degree from the George Washington University. She is a candidate for a Ph.D. in public policy and public administration at the George Washington University.

**Marla McDaniel** is a senior fellow in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute. Before joining Urban, she was a postdoctoral fellow at the Columbia University School of Social Work. McDaniel has researched, written about, and spoken about racial disparities; low-income children, youth, and families; and the programs and policy environments that touch families' lives. She is interested in the relationships between vulnerabilities and in how inequality across multiple domains—including health, education, and employment—has a compounding effect on overall health and well-being. McDaniel earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Swarthmore College and was a case manager for youth in foster care before earning a doctorate in human development and social policy from Northwestern University.

**Christopher Hayes** is a senior research associate in the Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center. His work focuses on the use of neighborhood-level data to improve public policy decision-making. Hayes directs the first stage of an evaluation of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Rental Assistance Demonstration program and its impact on public housing residents. His recent projects include identifying community-level indicators for New York State's Community Opportunity Reinvestment Initiative, managing program data from several housing authorities for the Housing Opportunity and Services Together program to help determine the impact of intensive case management, and providing technical assistance under the US Department of Education's Promise Neighborhoods program. Other work includes analyses of the impact of housing transformation on crime in neighborhoods receiving relocated public housing residents in Chicago and Atlanta, a study of the factors affecting neighborhood choice by housing voucher recipients, and managing the data for a multiwave survey of neighborhood residents for the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Making Connections project.

**sade adeeyo** is a former research associate in the Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center. She worked primarily with the Program on Neighborhoods and Youth Development team, focused on building multigenerational, place-based interventions in public housing communities. She was part of the Promoting Adolescent Sexual Health and Safety project. Before joining Urban, adeeyo worked at the Black Women's Health Imperative. She has consistently held positions that advocate for equitable public health and the housing stability of women and communities of color. adeeyo holds a BA in comparative women's studies with a minor in public health from Spelman College and an MPP with a concentration in women's studies from the George Washington University.

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