



ALLEGHENY COUNTY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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County Selected for National Initiative Addressing Homelessness, Employment

PITTSBURGH – The Department of Human Services (DHS) and Partner4Work (P4W), the workforce development board for the Pittsburgh area, announced today that Allegheny County is one of seven jurisdictions selected to take part in the Pathways Forward Challenge. The Challenge, overseen by the Heartland Alliance’s National Initiatives on Poverty & Economic Opportunity, is aimed at more effectively and equitably connecting homeless and unstably housed job seekers to employment.

Allegheny County was selected based on its proposed plan to strengthen its already robust data warehouse with additional workforce data and provide analysis to more fully understand and serve the employment needs of those experiencing homelessness for the first time. DHS also plans to use this opportunity to analyze and address racial disparities within the homeless and workforce development services systems.

“We are aware that there’s an important connection between employment and housing needs, and that if you can provide stable employment for someone needing housing early enough, you can stave off potential chronic homelessness,” said Marc Cherna, DHS director. “We thank the Heartland Alliance for helping us find solutions in Allegheny County, and also allowing us to be a part of the national conversation.”

Partner4Work will collaborate with DHS in this initiative to help find ways to better meet the workforce development needs of those experiencing homelessness.

“Through this strategic partnership with Allegheny County DHS, human services and workforce development are better aligned to support some of the region’s most vulnerable citizens, breaking down barriers and opening pathways to opportunity and stability,” said Earl Buford, P4W chief executive officer.

As part of the Pathways Forward Challenge, Allegheny County will receive a \$75,000 grant from the Heartland Alliance, supported by the Oak Foundation and Melville Charitable Trust, as well as technical assistance and support from a group of national peers.

“The Pathways Forward Challenge communities not only have the potential to move the needle on increasing employment for homeless job seekers but are also advancing new ideas that will add to our

learning about how to create better, more equitable systems,” said Carrie Felton, project manager for Heartland Alliance’s National Center on Employment and Homelessness (NCEH).

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Marc Cherna, Director

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Earl Buford, Chief Executive Officer

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