



Employment Retention Services



Employment retention services interventions offer a combination of services intended to help maintain employment and promote career advancement among people, often those with low incomes who already have a job. The combination of services can differ across interventions but often include ongoing case management, career counseling to assist in long-term career planning and advancement, conflict resolution for workplace disputes, financial counseling, and access to supportive services—such as rental assistance or subsidized child care—that can alleviate employment barriers. The Pathways Clearinghouse classified interventions as providing employment retention services if the study authors used the term “employment retention services” when describing the intervention. Because the Pathways Clearinghouse relied on the authors’ definitions, the services implemented might differ across interventions.

State and county government agencies, local nonprofits, workforce agencies, and community colleges administer these types of interventions. Interventions that feature employment retention services often rely on a network of program staff, including case managers, career counselors, and education and training specialists. Staff recruit clients, establish eligibility, and provide post-employment services and referrals to other services. Employment retention services interventions serve clients who are employed and often require clients to have recently received or be current recipients of public benefits, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (formerly Aid to Families with Dependent Children).¹

What are employment retention services?

The Pathways to Work Evidence Clearinghouse defines employment retention services as supplementary services provided when a client already has a job. These could include ongoing case management to address barriers or to assess progress toward career goals. However, employment retention services can be defined in different ways, and the Pathways Clearinghouse relied on authors’ language and definitions to classify interventions.

What are Evidence Snapshots?

Evidence Snapshots are short briefs on the effectiveness of programs that use a specific approach to service provision. These briefs draw on interventions that the Pathways Clearinghouse has reviewed. They summarize what we know about programs that use a specific service (such as employment retention services) or a common service-delivery strategy (such as career pathways).

What is the Pathways Clearinghouse?

The Pathways Clearinghouse identifies interventions that aim to improve employment and earnings outcomes for populations with low incomes, especially public benefits recipients. The Pathways Clearinghouse conducts a transparent, comprehensive search for studies of such interventions, rates the quality of those studies to assess the strength of the evidence they provide, and determines the evidence of effectiveness for the studied interventions.

For more information, visit the Pathways Clearinghouse website: <https://pathwaystowork.acf.hhs.gov/>.

What does the evidence say?

The Pathways Clearinghouse identified nine interventions in which employment retention services were the primary focus of the intervention, or the primary service.² These interventions were each examined in at least one high- or moderate-rated study that examined employment, earnings, public benefit receipt, or education and training outcomes.³ This Evidence Snapshot summarizes 19 studies of these 9 interventions that were conducted between 1994 and 2005, and published through May 2022, and that the Pathways Clearinghouse reviewed.⁴

For this snapshot, the Pathways Clearinghouse considered earnings, employment, public benefit receipt, and education and training findings in the short term (18 or fewer months) and long term (between 18 months and 5 years). Across these studies, we observe the following:



Short-term annual earnings increased by \$818, and long-term annual earnings increased by \$671, on average, across the 9 employment retention services interventions for which these outcomes were examined. Three employment retention services interventions increased clients' earnings, either in the short term or long term. Two of these interventions increased earnings in the short and long term, and one increased earnings in the short term but not the long term.⁵



Short-term and long-term employment increased by one percentage point, on average, across the nine employment retention services interventions for which these outcomes were examined. One intervention increased employment in the short term, and two interventions improved employment in the long term.



The proportion of people receiving public benefits did not change in the short term or long term, on average, across the eight employment retention services interventions for which this outcome was examined. The amount of annual public benefits received decreased by \$11 in the short term and \$34 in the long term, on average, across the 8 employment retention services interventions for which these outcomes were examined. Across the eight employment retention services interventions that measured whether people received public benefits or the amount of public benefits received, one intervention reduced the proportion of people receiving public benefits in the short term and one intervention reduced the proportion of people receiving public benefits in the long term. No individual intervention reduced the amount received in either the short term or long term.⁶



Most of the 19 studies of employment retention services interventions reviewed for this snapshot did not assess effects on education and training attainment; therefore, we do not know whether most employment retention services interventions affected these outcomes.⁷ Education and training attainment increased by 3.3 percentage points for the 1 intervention that examined this outcome.



Two employment retention services interventions improved more than one type of outcome. The [Post-Assistance Self-Sufficiency \(PASS\)](#) program and the [Texas Employment Retention and Advancement \(Texas ERA\)](#) program increased short-term and long-term earnings and increased long-term employment. Both interventions served parents with low incomes who received or applied for TANF, with nongovernmental organizations primarily providing the services. Case managers provided career planning and development in addition to other services. Texas ERA provided monthly stipends for achieving various job or education and training goals, whereas the PASS program provided payment for supportive services such as child care or transportation and provided referrals to other social services.

One intervention, Work Advancement and Support Center (WASC) Demonstration, had effects that were not supported in three domains. WASC decreased short-term earnings, decreased short- and long-term employment, and increased the receipt of public benefits in the short- and long-terms. One intervention, Post-Employment Services Demonstration (PESD), had effects that were not supported in two domains.

How does the Pathways Clearinghouse assess if an intervention is effective?

The Pathways Clearinghouse assigned an evidence of effectiveness rating to each intervention in each of four outcome domains: earnings, employment, public benefit receipt, and education and training. Most of the domains are broken into short (18 or fewer months) and long (between 18 months and five years) term because we expect the interventions might have different effects in different time periods. The education and training domain is not broken into time periods because after you obtain a degree, you cannot lose it in the future. The evidence of effectiveness rating describes whether the intervention is likely to produce favorable results in that domain if faithfully replicated with a similar population. If an intervention had no evidence to assess support in any domain, we excluded it from this brief.

There are six ratings:

- ★ *Well-supported* means there are at least two moderate- or high-quality studies with favorable findings.
- ⬆️ *Supported* means there is one moderate- or high-quality study with favorable findings.
- ⊕ *Mixed support* means there is some evidence from moderate- or high-quality studies that the intervention improves outcomes and some evidence the intervention worsens outcomes.
- ✖️ *Not supported* means moderate- or high-quality studies did not find any favorable results.
- ⊖ *Insufficient evidence to assess support* means there are moderate- and high-quality studies but we cannot assign one of the other ratings.
- *No evidence to assess support* means there are no moderate- or high-quality studies.

No employment retention services interventions received the well-supported rating in the outcome domains of interest to the Pathways Clearinghouse. Five employment retention services interventions received a supported rating in at least one outcome domain.

Evaluations compared the outcomes of study participants in the intervention group to the outcomes of participants in a comparison group who were not offered the intervention but who might have received alternative services. For studies examining employment retention services, people in the comparison group had access to (1) a less-intensive version of services (37 percent of the studies), (2) other services provided by the organization or available in the community (58 percent of the studies), or (3) a different set of intensive services (5 percent of the studies).⁸

How does the Pathways Clearinghouse calculate the average effect of an intervention?

For this brief, the Pathways Clearinghouse calculated the average effect for each domain by averaging effects within moderate- and high-quality studies, then within interventions, and then across interventions that use employment retention services. The average includes all studies, not just those with a supported rating or statistically significant findings, because these studies still provide useful evidence in considering the overall effectiveness of employment retention services. We show the average and not the median because, for the most part, there are no outliers skewing the average.⁹

What makes an effect large?





















The Pathways Clearinghouse classifies an effect as large if its corresponding effect size is more than 0.25 standard deviations. The effect size is the strength of the effect measured in standard units (that is, standard deviations). In 2018, an increase in annual earnings of \$5,229 would have an effect size of about 0.25.

What interventions provide employment retention services as their primary service?

The Pathways Clearinghouse defines an intervention as a specific bundle of services or policies implemented in a given context. Exhibit 1 alphabetically lists and describes the nine interventions that offered employment retention services as the primary service. This exhibit includes information about the

populations served by each intervention, the setting where the intervention was provided (whether it was in urban, rural, or mixed settings), and when the evaluation was conducted. It also contains the highest effectiveness rating for each domain.

Exhibit 1. Employment retention services interventions and their effectiveness by domain^a

Intervention description	Populations and employment barriers ^b	Settings ^c	Year evaluation began	Increase earnings	Increase employment	Decrease public benefit receipt ^d	Increase education and training
<p><u>Chicago Employment Retention and Advancement (Chicago ERA)</u> Provided career counseling and related services to employed single parents with low incomes who received TANF. The intervention's goal was to help clients maintain employment and increase their earnings.</p>	Employed, Cash assistance recipients, Parents, Single parents	Urban only	2002				
<p><u>Cleveland Employment Retention and Advancement (Cleveland ERA)</u> Offered case management, weekly life skills sessions at clients' places of employment, and training for clients' supervisors at work, with the goal of helping employees with low wages retain jobs.</p>	Employed	Urban only	2002				
<p><u>Post-Assistance Self-Sufficiency (PASS) Program</u> Provided post-employment services, such as case management, counseling, mentoring, and money management workshops, and payment for supportive services to improve employment retention and career advancement among employed people who were recently TANF participants.</p>	Employed, Parents, Single parents	Urban only	2002				
<p><u>Post-Employment Services Demonstration (PESD)</u> Provided additional case management services and payment for employment expenses to newly employed AFDC recipients to promote job retention and reemployment.</p>	Cash assistance recipients, Employed	Urban only	1994				
<p><u>Texas Employment Retention and Advancement (Texas ERA)</u> Provided financial support and case management to TANF applicants and recipients, with the goal of helping them find and maintain employment and advance into jobs that had better pay, hours, benefits, and career advancement opportunities.</p>	Parents, Single parents	Urban only	2000				

Intervention description	Populations and employment barriers ^b	Settings ^c	Year evaluation began	Increase earnings	Increase employment	Decrease public benefit receipt ^d	Increase education and training
★ well-supported ⬆ supported ⚖ mixed support ✖ not supported ⚪ insufficient evidence ○ no evidence							
<u>Transition, Advancement, and Growth (TAAG) Program</u> Provided employment-related retention and advancement services, such as coaching, conflict resolution, and job search assistance, to help employed parents with low incomes maintain their jobs and move ahead in the labor market.	Employed, Parents, Single parents	Urban only	2002	⬆	⚪	⚪	○
<u>Work Advancement and Support Center (WASC) Demonstration</u> Delivered integrated, intensive retention and advancement services, such as career coaching and skill development, and financial work supports to workers with low wages and reemployed dislocated workers to fill gaps in services available to them and help them advance and increase their incomes.	Employed	Tested in multiple settings	2005	✖	✖	✖	⬆
<u>Work Plus</u> Provided intensive case management and enhanced supportive services to encourage employment stability. This intervention also allowed newly employed TANF recipients to partially reduce work requirements in order to pursue education and training concurrent with 20 hours of work per week.	Cash assistance recipients, Employed, Parents, Single parents	Tested in multiple settings	2001	⚪	⚪	⚖	○
<u>Work Plus as compared with Training Focused Program (Work Plus as compared with TFP)</u> Provided intensive case management and enhanced supportive services to encourage employment stability. This intervention also allowed newly employed TANF recipients to partially reduce work requirements in order to pursue education and training concurrent with 20 hours of work per week. This evaluation directly compared Work Plus to a separate intervention, the Training Focused Program, to better understand which of the two interventions might be more effective; the distinctive feature of Work Plus is the emphasis on combining employment with education and training.	Cash assistance recipients, Employed, Parents, Single parents	Tested in multiple settings	2001	⚪	⚪	⚪	○

Table notes:

^a To make the results easier to view in this Exhibit, the effectiveness ratings represent the highest rating given to the short-term, long-term or very-long term outcomes for that intervention. For example, if an intervention has a supported effectiveness rating in the long-term for earnings, but not in the short-term or very-long term, we will display the ⬆ supported icon for the earnings domain.

^b Populations and employment barriers are listed if authors described all intervention participants as having the characteristic or if the characteristic was an eligibility requirement.

^c The settings indicate whether the study or studies of an intervention were conducted in urban, rural, or multiple settings.

^d The decrease public benefit receipt ratings in this table are from the [Pathways Clearinghouse](https://www.pathwaysclearinghouse.org/) website and combine outcomes related to public benefit receipt and amount. Later in this report, we break out the outcomes by public benefit receipt and public benefit amount. That means the ratings listed in this column might or might not line up with data presented in the text and graphs in this report.

AFDC = Aid to Families with Dependent Children; TANF = Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

How were the interventions implemented?

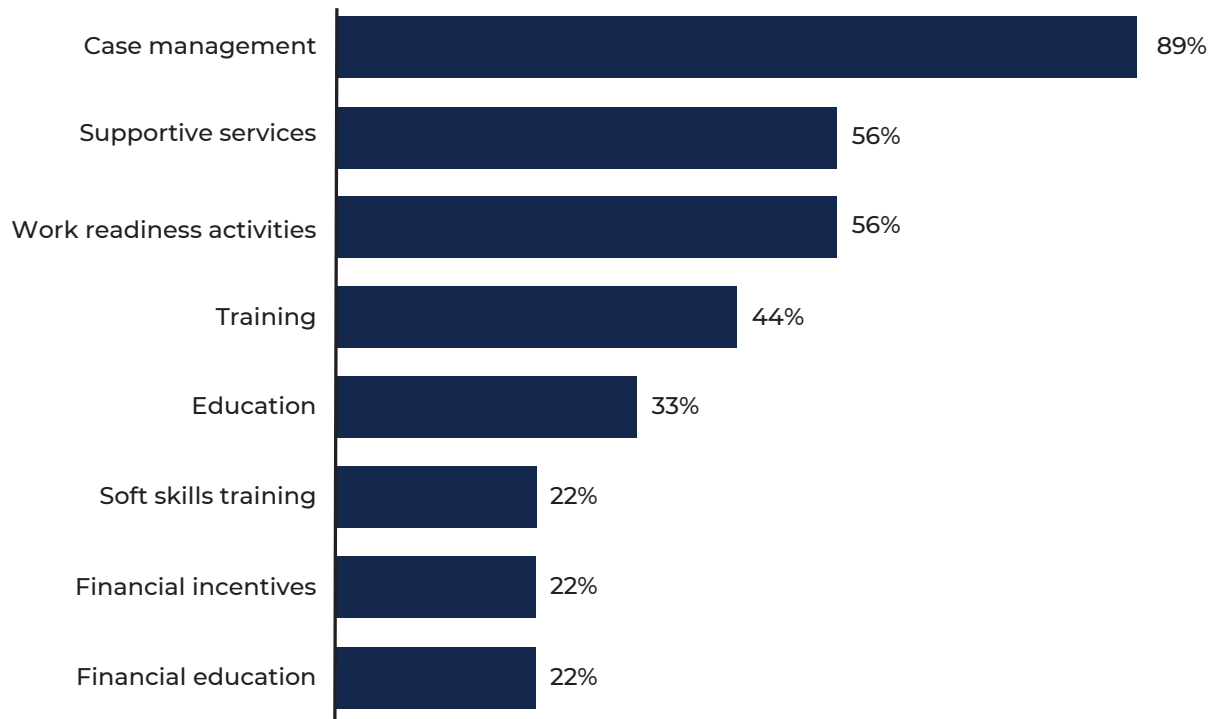
Understanding how interventions were implemented is crucial to deciding whether an intervention is likely to have a similar effect in your community. Public-sector organizations, such as human services or TANF agencies, often implemented employment retention services interventions, typically in collaboration with local nonprofits or workforce agencies. The nine employment retention services interventions we examined used different combinations of policies or services (see Exhibit 2). Most employment retention services interventions offered services through ongoing case management (89 percent), and the majority provided work readiness activities (56 percent) and/or supportive services (56 percent).¹⁰ Four interventions included mandatory services. Chicago Employment Retention and Advancement (Chicago ERA) required program participation, including maintaining regular contact with case managers; PESD required Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training program participation; Texas ERA required program participation in job search workshops or employment advancement activities for recipients of TANF benefits; and Work Plus required clients to work at least 20 hours per week.

Interventions offered various combinations of services to support clients in retaining employment. Five of the nine interventions provided supportive services, such as child care or transportation subsidies, and five provided work readiness activities related to finding or maintaining

employment, such as résumé preparation assistance, job placement, job search assistance, and coaching. One intervention provided life skills training for clients as well as training for clients' supervisors to increase supervisor support and retention; three interventions provided access to education and training services through tuition support or on-the-job training, often to support long-term employment and career advancement.


The length of the interventions varied widely from 60 days to 2 years, but most interventions lasted for about 12 months. The populations, settings, and timing of the studies of employment retention services interventions also varied (Exhibit 1). Clients of employment retention services interventions were already employed in all but one intervention. Most interventions served parents (often single parents), and while all served people with low incomes, about half served cash assistance recipients specifically. The majority of clients were female and in their early 30s. Most employment retention services interventions have been tested in urban settings, but a few have been tested in multiple settings. Studies of employment retention services interventions were most common in the early 2000s: eight of the evaluations began in the early 2000s, and one began in 1994. The Pathways Clearinghouse website (<https://pathwaystowork.acf.hhs.gov/>) includes more detail about each intervention.

Exhibit 2. Other services offered with employment retention services, out of nine interventions¹



Percentage of employment retention services interventions that provided service

Do employment retention services interventions increase earnings?

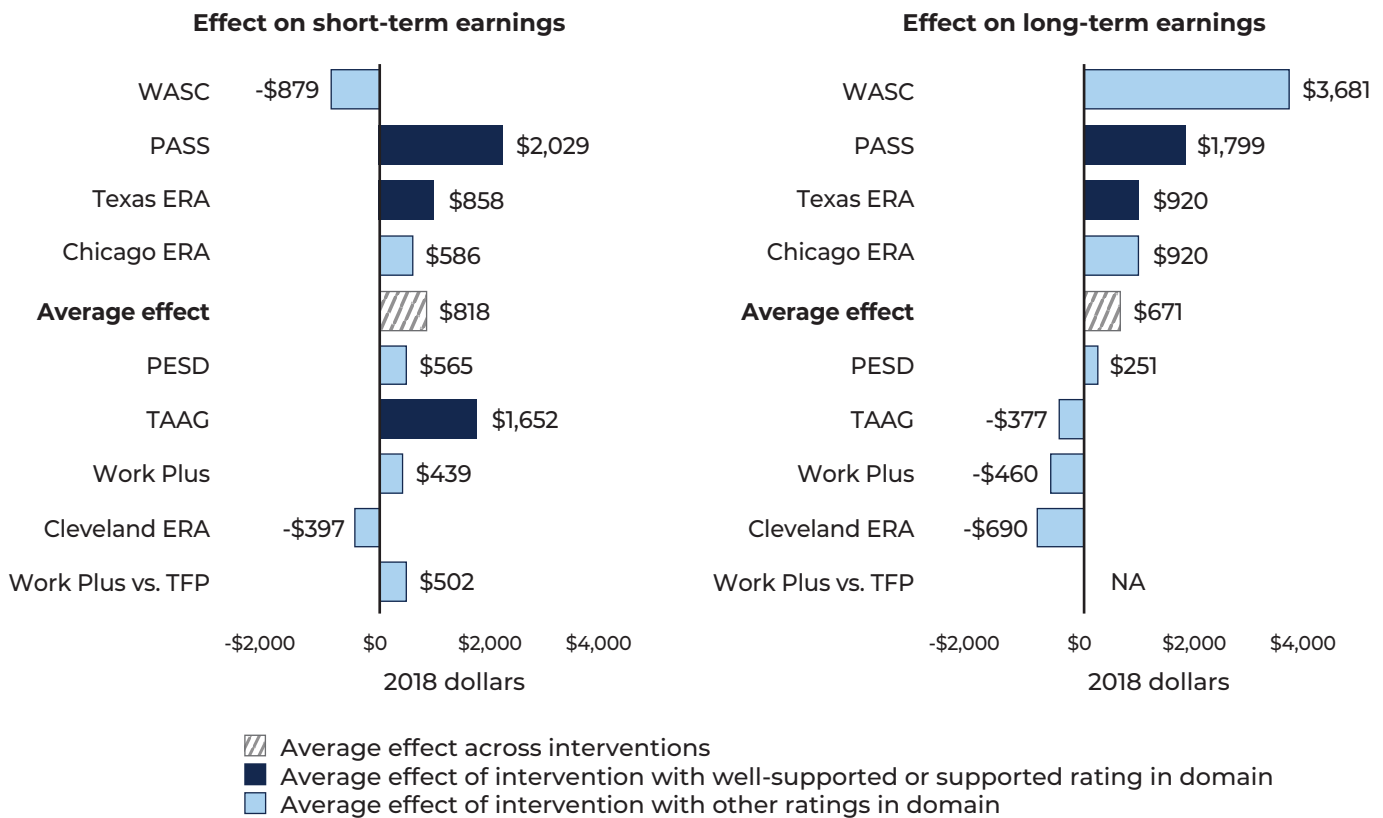
 **Short-term annual earnings increased by \$818, and long-term annual earnings increased by \$671, on average, across the nine employment retention services interventions that measured an effect on earnings (Exhibit 3), compared with comparison group earnings.**

Three of the nine employment retention services interventions increased clients' annual earnings in the short term or long term, compared with comparison group earnings. Two of these interventions increased earnings in both the short and long term—the PASS program and Texas ERA. The PASS program and the Transition, Advancement, and Growth (TAAG) program

had the largest effects on short-term earnings, increasing earnings by \$2,029 and \$1,652, respectively. TAAG only increased earnings in the short term. The PASS program and Texas ERA had the largest effects on long-term earnings, increasing earnings by \$1,799 and \$920, respectively. Some interventions, such as Work Plus and Chicago ERA, allowed participants to reduce work hours to provide more time to pursue education and training opportunities, which might have contributed to smaller earnings effects while the interventions were being evaluated.

Exhibit 3 shows the average effect on earnings for each intervention. Significant and favorable effects are noted in darker blue.

Exhibit 3. Employment retention services interventions, on average, increased short-term earnings and long-term earnings



We sorted interventions according to the size of the long-term effects because long-term effects better represent sustained increases in economic self-sufficiency. Supported interventions, meaning interventions with research indicating significant and favorable effects, are noted in darker blue.

NA means an intervention did not measure outcomes at the specified time period.

Chicago ERA = Chicago Employment Retention and Advancement; Cleveland ERA = Cleveland Employment Retention and Advancement; PASS = Post-Assistance Self-Sufficiency program; PESD = Post-Employment Services Demonstration; Texas ERA = Texas Employment Retention and Advancement; TAAG = Transition, Advancement, and Growth program; WASC = Work Advancement and Support Center Demonstration; Work Plus vs. TFP = Work Plus (as compared with Training Focused Program).

Do employment retention services interventions increase employment?

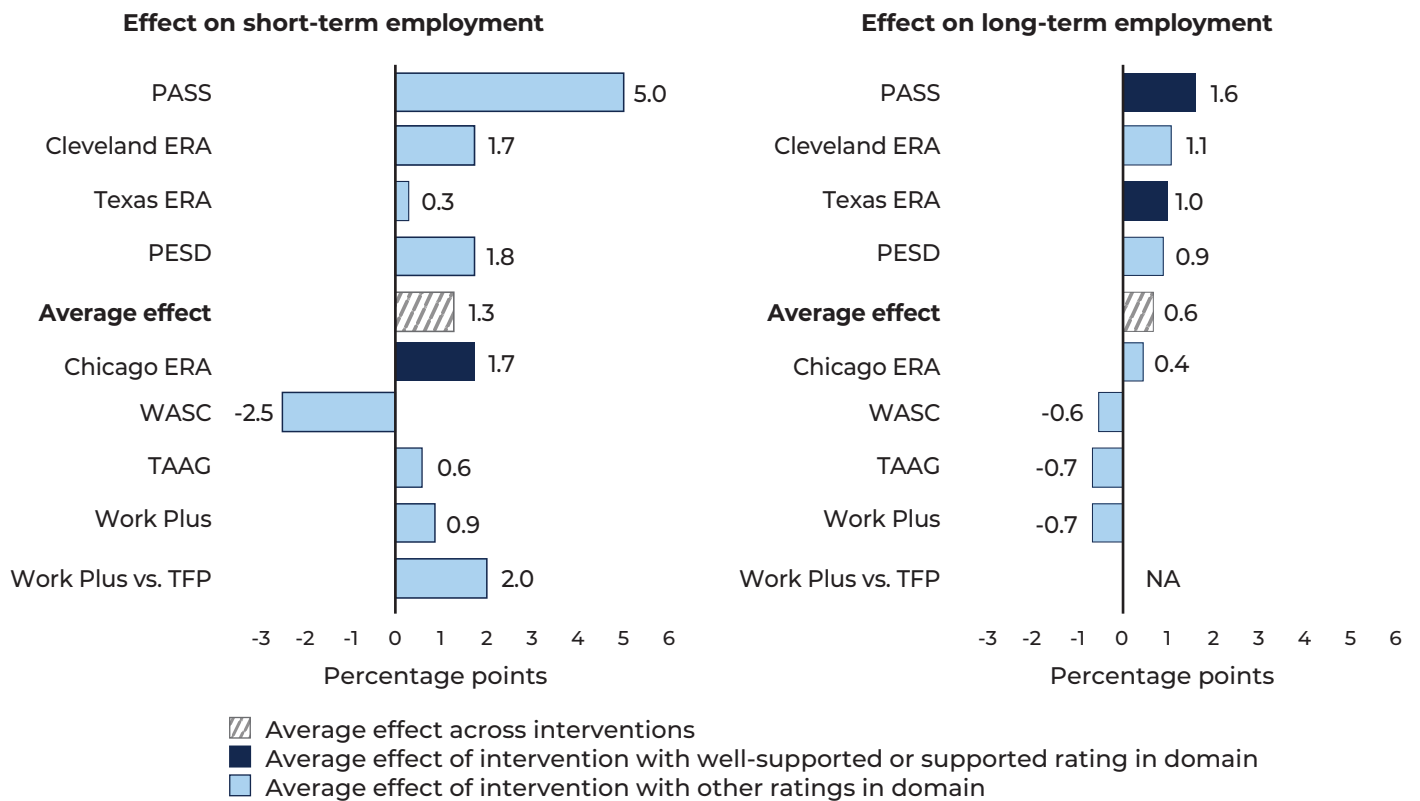


Short-term employment increased by one percentage point, and long-term employment increased by one percentage point, on average, across the nine interventions that examined employment outcomes (Exhibit 4), compared with comparison group employment.

One intervention increased employment in the short term, and two interventions improved employment

in the long term, compared with comparison group employment. Chicago ERA had a significant short-term effect, and the PASS program and Texas ERA had significant long-term effects. Specifically, Chicago ERA increased employment by 1.7 percentage points in the short term, and the PASS program and Texas ERA increased employment by 1.6 and 1.0 percentage points in the long term, respectively. Exhibit 4 shows the effects of each intervention.

Exhibit 4. Employment retention services interventions, on average, had little effect on short-term and long-term employment



We sorted interventions according to the size of the long-term effects because long-term effects better represent sustained increases in economic self-sufficiency. Supported interventions, meaning interventions with research indicating significant and favorable effects, are noted in darker blue.

NA means an intervention did not measure outcomes at the specified time period.

Chicago ERA = Chicago Employment Retention and Advancement; Cleveland ERA = Cleveland Employment Retention and Advancement; PASS = Post-Assistance Self-Sufficiency program; PESD = Post-Employment Services Demonstration; Texas ERA = Texas Employment Retention and Advancement; TAAG = Transition, Advancement, and Growth program; WASC = Work Advancement and Support Center Demonstration; Work Plus vs. TFP = Work Plus (as compared with Training Focused Program).

Do employment retention services interventions decrease public benefit receipt?



The proportion of people receiving public benefits did not change in the short or long term, on average, relative to the comparison group. Studies of eight employment retention services interventions estimated effects on the proportion of people receiving public benefits (Exhibit 5).¹²

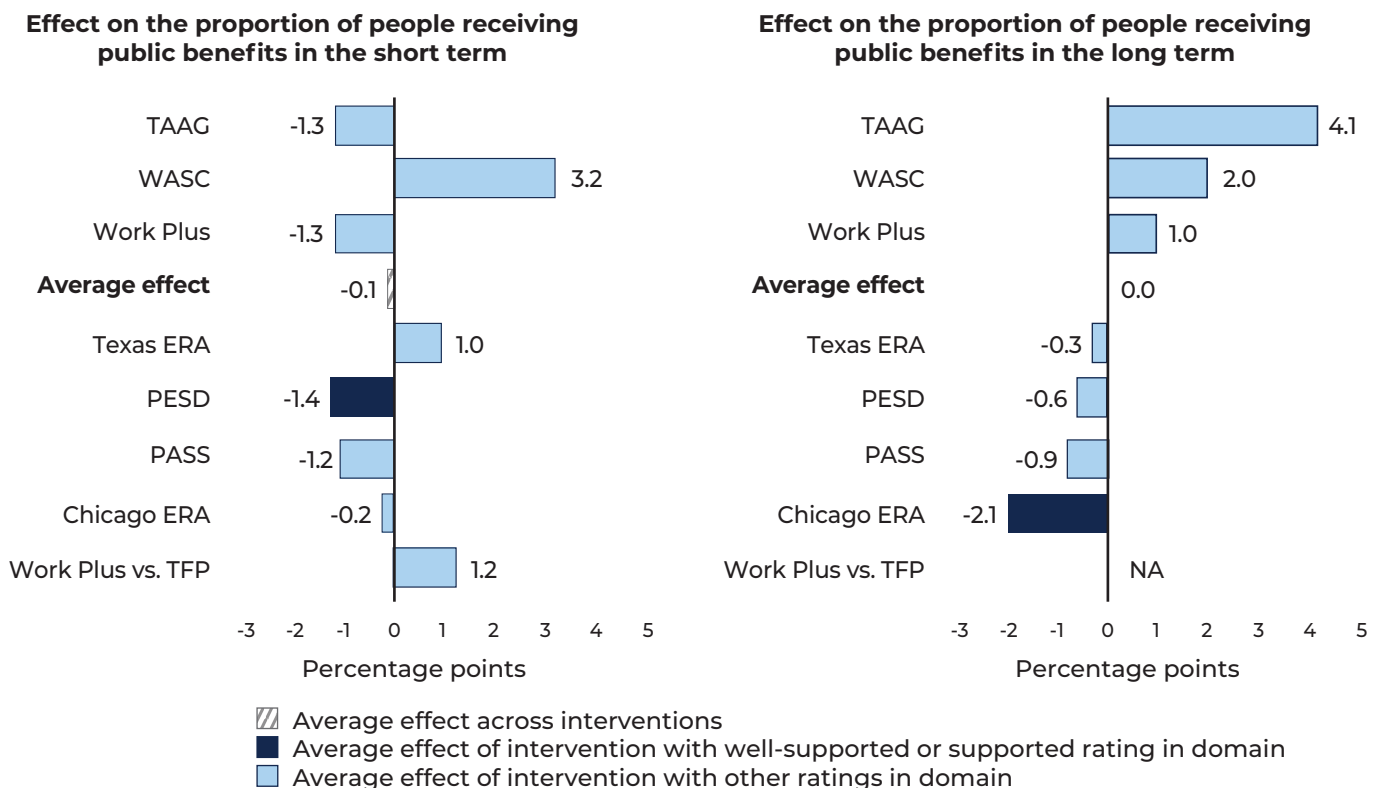
Studies of eight employment retention services interventions estimated effects on the proportion of people receiving public benefits (Exhibit 5).¹²

One intervention decreased the proportion of people receiving public benefits in the short term, and one intervention decreased the proportion of people receiving public benefits in the long term, relative to the comparison group. Across the research on interventions that measured the proportion receiving public benefits, PESD reduced the proportion of people receiving public

benefits in the short term (-1.4 percentage points), and Chicago ERA reduced the proportion of people receiving public benefits in the long term (-2.1 percentage points).

The amount of annual public benefits received decreased by an average of \$11 in the short term and decreased by an average of \$34 in the long term, compared with the amount of public benefits received by the comparison group. Studies of eight employment retention services interventions estimated effects on public benefit amount (Exhibit 6). None of the findings were supported, meaning no intervention showed significant reductions in the amount of public benefits provided in the short or long term, relative to the comparison group.

Exhibit 5. Employment retention services interventions, on average, did not change the proportion of people receiving public benefits in the short or long term

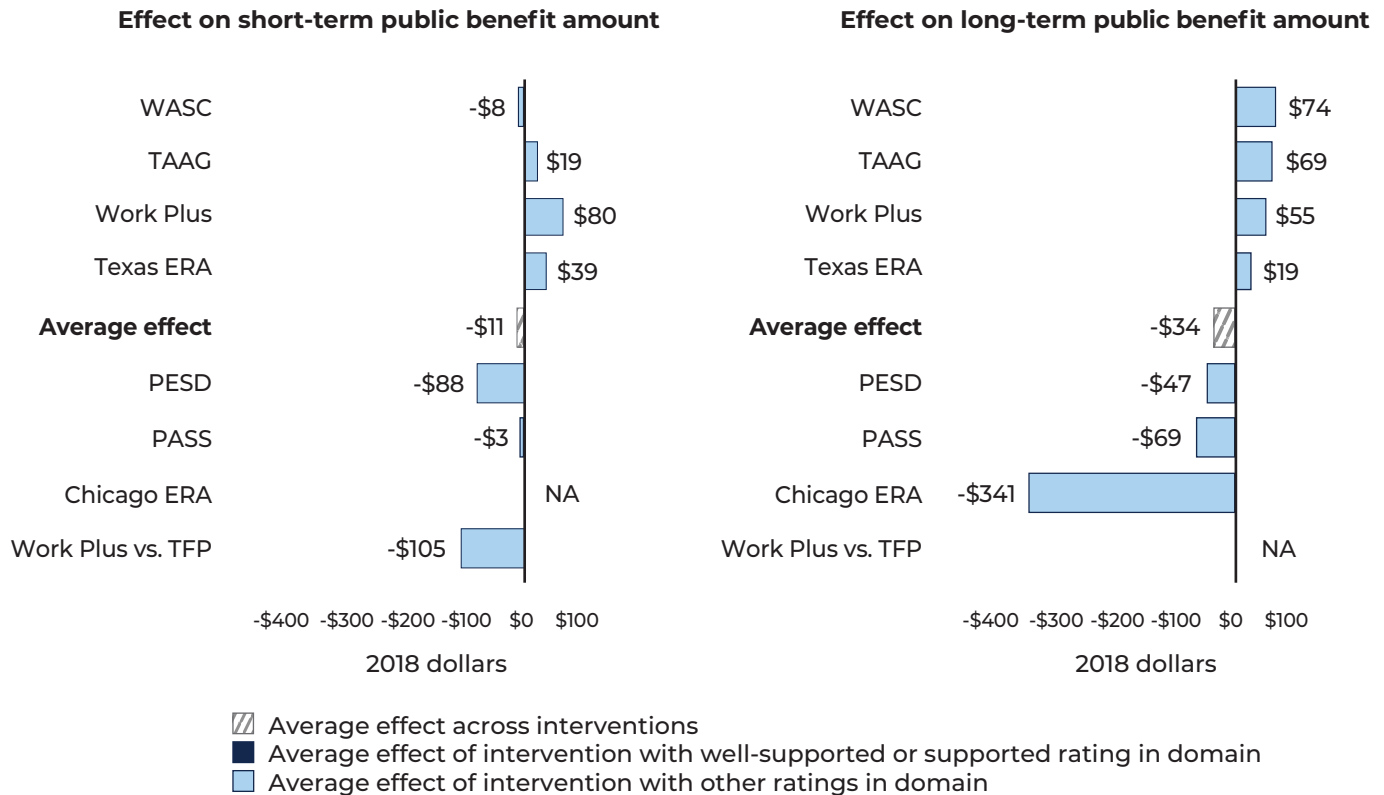


We sorted interventions according to the size of the long-term effects because long-term effects better represent sustained increases in economic self-sufficiency. Supported interventions, meaning interventions with research indicating significant and favorable effects, are noted in darker blue.

NA means an intervention did not measure outcomes at the specified time period.

Chicago ERA = Chicago Employment Retention and Advancement; PASS = Post-Assistance Self-Sufficiency program; PESD = Post-Employment Services Demonstration; Texas ERA = Texas Employment Retention and Advancement; TAAG = Transition, Advancement, and Growth program; WASC = Work Advancement and Support Center Demonstration; Work Plus vs. TFP = Work Plus (as compared with Training Focused Program).

Exhibit 6. Employment retention services interventions, on average, had little effect on the amount of public benefits received in the short or long term¹³



We sorted interventions according to the size of the long-term effects because long-term effects better represent sustained increases in economic self-sufficiency. Supported interventions, meaning interventions with research indicating significant and favorable effects, are noted in darker blue.

NA means an intervention did not measure outcomes at the specified time period.

Chicago ERA = Chicago Employment Retention and Advancement; PASS = Post-Assistance Self-Sufficiency program; PESD = Post-Employment Services Demonstration; Texas ERA = Texas Employment Retention and Advancement; TAAG = Transition, Advancement, and Growth program; WASC = Work Advancement and Support Center Demonstration; Work Plus vs. TFP = Work Plus (as compared with Training Focused Program).

Do employment retention services interventions increase education and training attainment?



Education and training attainment increased 3.3 percentage points for the 1 employment retention services interven-

tion (WASC) that measured this outcome, compared with comparison group education and training attainment. WASC provided intensive retention and advancement services, including access to and funding for vocational training. Services were offered for up to two years.

Only three employment retention services interventions provided education and training in the form of academic instruction, and most studies of these interventions did not assess the effect of the interventions on education and training, possibly because these outcomes were not a focus of the intervention. Therefore, we do not know whether most employment retention services interventions affected these outcomes.

Which are the most effective employment retention services interventions?

Two employment retention services interventions (PASS and Texas ERA) had a favorable effect on two outcome domains examined by the Pathways Clearinghouse. Both improved employment and earnings (Exhibit 7). More specifically, the PASS program and Texas ERA increased long-term employment (1.6 percentage points and 1.0 percentage point, respectively), short-term earnings (\$2,029 and \$858, respectively), and long-term earnings (\$1,799 and \$920, respectively).

These interventions share some characteristics, but they also differ in interesting ways. Both interventions served mostly parents who had applied for, were receiving, or had recently received TANF benefits, and they primarily provided services through local nongovernmental organizations or in combination with local governmental human services organiza-

tions. The interventions were also tested in urban areas and provided services for up to one year.

As with many of the employment retention services interventions, both interventions offered case management services focused on career planning and development. However, other services differed across the interventions. Texas ERA provided financial incentives in addition to any TANF benefits for achieving certain goals, such as obtaining or maintaining employment or participating in education and training programs. The PASS program provided additional life skills training, such as financial budgeting and management workshops. The PASS program also provided supportive services, including payments for child care, transportation, or books.

Exhibit 7. Effects in 2018 dollars for employment retention services interventions that improved outcomes in two domains

Increase earnings

	Post-Assistance Self-Sufficiency (PASS) Program	Texas Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA)
Short-term	⬆️ ⬆️ \$2,029 per year	⬆️ ⬆️ \$858 per year
Long-term	⬆️ ⬆️ \$1,799 per year	⬆️ ⬆️ \$920 per year

Increase employment

	Post-Assistance Self-Sufficiency (PASS) Program	Texas Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA)
Short-term	⊘ ⬆️ 5% (in percentage points)	⊗ ⬆️ 0% (in percentage points)
Long-term	⬆️ ⬆️ 2% (in percentage points)	⬆️ ⬆️ 1% (in percentage points)

Interventions with the greatest effect size

Another way to assess intervention effectiveness is to examine the greatest effects by domain. Across all employment retention services interventions:

- The PASS program had the biggest effect on short-term earnings (\$2,029), long-term earnings (\$1,799), and long-term employment (1.6 percentage points).
- Chicago ERA had the biggest effect on short-term employment (1.7 percentage points).
- PESD and Chicago ERA were the only interventions with favorable effects on any public benefits outcome. PESD reduced the proportion of people that received public benefits in the short term by 1.4 percentage points and Chicago ERA reduced the proportion of people receiving public benefits in the long term by 2.1 percentage points.
- WASC was the only intervention to examine education and training outcomes, increasing education and training attainment by 3.3 percentage points.

Interventions that were not supported in more than one domain

Findings for some interventions suggest that, in more than one outcome domain, they are unlikely to produce favorable results. Studies of the following interventions have found that they are “not supported” – defined by the Pathways Clearinghouse as having a pattern of null and/or unfavorable findings – in two or more domains:

- WASC had effects that were not supported in three domains: earnings, employment, and public benefit receipt. Moreover, WASC decreased short-term earnings, decreased short- and long-term employment, and increased the receipt of public benefits in the short and long terms.
- PESD had effects that were not supported in two domains: earnings and employment.

Needs for future research

More research is needed to determine the short- and long-term benefits of employment retention services. Currently available evidence is somewhat limited in scope. All studies of employment retention services interventions took place in the early 2000s or earlier. New studies of more recent cohorts of workers can add to the body of evidence and reflect current working conditions and trends. Furthermore, studies of only one intervention examined education and training outcomes, though several employment retention services interventions offered access to education and training services. Additional research can determine whether education and training services provided in the context of employment retention services interventions improve education and training attainment.

Additionally, few studies of employment retention services interventions found statistically significant and favorable effects on employment and earnings. Various reasons might explain these findings. In some cases, there were small differences in the amount or intensity of services that the comparison and intervention groups received. For instance, comparison group participants might have found services in the community or through TANF providers similar to those the intervention group received, or intervention group participants might have used only some of the available supplemental employment retention services. Because most employment retention services interventions offered multiple services, and because those services did not always differ substantially from those the comparison group received, further research should evaluate the effectiveness of specific services and should clearly distinguish the services each group receives. This additional research might clarify what types of employment retention services are most effective.

Endnotes

- ¹ Almost all interventions served only clients who were employed (see Exhibit 1). Only one intervention—Texas Employment Retention and Advancement—provided services to help both employed and unemployed people find and maintain employment.
- ² An intervention’s primary service is the principal service of the intervention. The primary service is (1) a component that a large proportion of intervention group members received and a large proportion of comparison group members did not and (2) the component that was described by the study authors as most integral to the theory of change tested by the study. Interventions may provide multiple services, but only one service is designated as primary.
- ³ A high rating means there is strong evidence that the study findings are solely attributable to the intervention examined. A moderate rating means that readers can be somewhat confident that the study findings are attributable to the intervention, but other factors not accounted for in the study might also have contributed to the findings. Some employment retention services interventions may have been examined only in low-rated studies. These interventions were not included in this Evidence Snapshot. For more information, see the section “How does the Pathways Clearinghouse calculate the average effect of an intervention?”
- ⁴ Evaluations of employment retention services interventions that are ongoing or that released findings after May 2022 are not included in this snapshot. The Pathways Clearinghouse continues to review new studies and might produce updated snapshots as additional evidence becomes available.
- ⁵ Earnings data were reported in various timeframes, including quarterly and annual. The Pathways Clearinghouse converted all the earnings estimates to annual estimates.
- ⁶ Eight interventions had studies measuring the effect on public benefit receipt or amount. Studies of eight interventions measured short-term public benefit receipt, and studies of seven interventions measured effects on long-term public benefit receipt. Studies of seven interventions measured public benefit amount in the short term, and studies of seven interventions measured effects on long-term public benefit amount. In contrast to considering public benefits amount and receipt separately, the Pathways Clearinghouse considered public benefit amount and receipt together and assigned them a single, combined effectiveness rating. That means the ratings listed in this report might or might not line up with summary ratings in Exhibit 1 and on the website.
- ⁷ The Pathways Clearinghouse includes measures of the attainment of educational degrees and other credentials of potential value in the labor market (for example, acquisition of a GED, associate’s degree, bachelor’s degree, or another certificate or credential). Studies might include other measures of education and training outcomes, such as decompositions of measures over time (for example, earned a GED within one year of service receipt) and measures of credit attainment, but the Pathways Clearinghouse does not include such measures in its review.
- ⁸ The comparison group varies by study, so in this section, we present the statistics by percentage of studies and not the percentage of interventions.
- ⁹ The Pathways Clearinghouse considers statistical significance to be support for the existence of an effect of an intervention. The Pathways Clearinghouse considers an effect estimate statistically significant if the p -value of a two-sided hypothesis test of whether the effect is equal to zero is less than 0.05. A p -value is the probability of observing an effect estimate as large or larger than the one observed, if there was no actual effect.
- ¹⁰ At the time of publication, the Pathways Clearinghouse was in the process of adding additional services tags for interventions that provide more intensive services related to housing, child care, legal assistance, and possibly other related domains. For this snapshot, any interventions including these types of services are included in the “supportive services” classification.
- ¹¹ Specific definitions of these services are available in this glossary: <https://pathwaystowork.acf.hhs.gov/glossary>. Services were included if provided to the intervention group but not the comparison group, or if the services were provided more intensively or differently to the intervention group than the comparison group.

¹²We report the proportion of people receiving public benefits and the amount of public benefits received separately in these exhibits for graphing purposes. When reporting intervention effectiveness ratings for the public benefit receipt outcome domain, the Pathways Clearinghouse considers these outcomes together based on effect sizes and assigns them a single, combined effectiveness rating.

¹³The Pathways Clearinghouse adjusted the various estimated effects to account for inflation and other changes over time. This adjustment accounts for changes in the maximum amount of public benefits available because of the Great Recession and other policy changes.

Goals of the Pathways Clearinghouse

The Pathways Clearinghouse systematically evaluates and summarizes the evidence on the effectiveness of interventions that aim to improve employment outcomes, reduce employment challenges, and support self-sufficiency for populations with low incomes. It has several goals:

- Conduct a transparent, comprehensive search to identify studies of employment and training interventions designed to improve employment, increase earnings, support self-sufficiency, or advance education and training for populations who have low incomes.
- Rate the quality of those studies to assess the strength of the evidence they provide on the different interventions.
- Determine the evidence of effectiveness for those interventions.
- Share the results, as well as other Clearinghouse products, on a user-friendly website to help state and local TANF administrators, policymakers, researchers, and the general public make sense of the results and better understand how this evidence might apply to questions and contexts that matter to them.
- Synthesize the overall state of evidence in the field by creating and disseminating a variety of reports, briefs, and other products.

For more information, see <https://pathwaystowork.acf.hhs.gov>.

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