

Jobs and Housing



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COVID-19's impact on the regional economy became a personal tragedy for many County residents who experienced unemployment and housing instability. King County focuses on lifting up those individuals who have felt the brunt of the pandemic through homelessness, joblessness, and economic insecurity. The Jobs and Housing program is designed to stabilize people's lives by providing a steady place to live, an interim job, and access to support services and career navigation for up to one year with the ultimate goal of transitioning each person to permanent housing and a permanent job. The aim of the program is to help people exit the homelessness system, particularly those communities who have been disproportionately impacted by homelessness.

Investment Areas

- Over 400 individuals experiencing homelessness will be connected to County-supported jobs, housing support, and career services. All will receive case management and career navigation services.
- A total of 469 participants have been hired for temporary jobs for up to one year as of June 2, 2023. Jobs and Housing is continuing to exceed its original participation goal continuing to exceed our goal as community partners and King County agencies continue to hire new participants.
- As of June 2023, 278 participants have been housed through a mix of Rapid Re-Housing and other housing support.
- Career counseling and support is offered to all participants to address employment barriers, improving their interview, resume, and presentation skills, as well as developing short- and long-term employment plans.

Employment

The program is designed to provide a goal of 400 unemployed or underemployed workers that are experiencing homelessness with County or County-supported jobs, job training, subsidized employment, and employment supports or incentives (housing and career services). The County either creates or contracts positions for beneficiaries with subsidized employment for up to one year. This program is expected to extend through 2024. The average pay is between \$20-25 per hour, and many jobs come with health insurance and other benefits. Jobs may be with King County or other local organizations.

Participants will also receive employment supports, including but not limited to ORCA transportation passes, work attire, and employment-related equipment. In addition, some career attainment funding is available to support services to cover costs that will remove barriers to employment (e.g., driver's license, childcare, work-related clothes or tools, training-related costs, certifications).

Active participants have been connected with temporary employment assignments of either:

- Subsidized King County jobs in Parks, Human Resources, Regional Animal Services Regional (RASKC), Elections, and Water and Land Resources Division (WLRD).
- Subsidized jobs with one of 13 contracted community partners: African Community Housing & Development (ACHD), InterCultural Children & Family Services (ICCFs), Juma Ventures, Orion, Seattle Humane, FareStart, Weld Seattle, Seattle Jobs Initiative, Dirt Corps, Lutheran Community Services Northwest (LCSNW), WA Department of Ecology, Uplift Northwest, and TRAC Associates.

Performance is assessed in terms of the numbers of candidates involved in various stages of the hiring and retention process. To date, the majority of program participants with County agencies have been employed with Parks performing maintenance and beautification projects over the duration of the program. The majority of participants with contracted partners have been employed with Weld Seattle. King County Parks, RASKC, and the WA Department of Ecology are in the process of candidate searches and interviewing. New job possibilities are always being sought.



“This program means a lot to me mainly because it gives me an opportunity to get motivation back on my side of things and move forward with my life and keep going. But at the same time, it gives me an opportunity also to learn a new trade, to learn something new, and to help build and beautify the city itself in the county.”
— Jobs and Housing participant,
King County Parks Beautification Crews

Figure 1: Photo of King County Parks Beautification Crew Members, Parks Director Warren Jimenez, and Executive Dow Constantine at [2021 Revive and Thrive Jobs and Housing Event](#).¹

On-the-ground and classroom job training on related topics is provided. Jobs and Housing has invested in several community partners who have connected program participants with a variety of training and career opportunities. Partners include InterCultural Community and Family Services, Weld Seattle, and

¹ <https://kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/news/release/2021/September/29-jobs-housing-parks.aspx>

FareStart. Depending on their host agency, program participants may also receive industry-focused training, including flagger certification, light manufacturing, construction, and culinary skills. For example, the Jobs and Housing participants with Dirt Corps are provided with paid restoration training, professional skills development, and equity and social justice training. Other training opportunities may include natural area management, planting, riparian restoration, invasive species management, stormwater management, and site maintenance. Additionally, Uplift has facilitated a total of 174 training sessions, covering a wide range of essential skills to ensure that participants possess the necessary qualifications to excel in their respective roles. The commitment to personalized training is reflected in lessons on Financial Literacy, Conflict Resolution, Problem Solving, Cultural Literacy, and more. By tailoring programs to address the unique needs of participants, these training opportunities enhance participant readiness for the job market and empower them to overcome the challenges they face.

The Jobs and Housing program has diligently continued to build its capacity to enroll more workers and expand the pool of jobs, align with partners to provide housing and career support, and develop its performance and evaluation strength. In addition, valuable and essential work is contributing to the health and vibrancy of the County's resources, particularly in supporting needed restoration to parks, facilities, and roadways. This is work that would not have been able to be completed without the Jobs and Housing Program—an extra benefit to King County.

Housing Support & Rapid Re-Housing

All Jobs and Housing program participants receive housing support, and eligible participants are referred to Rapid Re-Housing (RRH). Those who experience homelessness struggle with both finding and sustaining housing. King County uses multiple approaches to house the homeless, and more information can be found in the Homelessness Response section. Housing assistance through the Jobs and Housing Program provides additional capacity to address our homelessness crisis, particularly for those who are in emergency shelters and those who require employment to sustain their Rapid Re-Housing placements.

This project provides funding to contract Rapid Re-Housing Partners (e.g., Wellspring Family Services, Catholic Community Services, and Neighborhood House) to provide housing navigation support and housing subsidies for a goal of 400 individuals based on current RRH guidelines. Contracted agencies must demonstrate their ability to provide housing support equitably and to a diversity of individuals experiencing homelessness.

INSIGHTS

How are rapid re-housing programs performing overall?

1/1/2022 to 12/31/2022



Figure 2: Rapid Re-Housing has been very successful in permanently housing households with low returns to homelessness. Figure from The King County Regional Homelessness Authority's Rapid Re-Housing [Data Dashboard](#).

Using the Rapid Re-Housing model, housing interventions are designed to help individuals and families exit homelessness quickly and return to permanent housing. Short-term rental assistance and supportive services are provided. Those typically eligible for Rapid Re-Housing must be experiencing literal homelessness, such as those living in emergency shelters, unhoused (living in their car or other places), and individuals leaving the hospital or prisons without a place to go. Data regarding the RRH model demonstrates that it is an effective strategy for transitioning individuals out of homelessness. RRH data indicates a successfully large move-in rate and high level of permanent housing.

Not every participant can be referred to Rapid Re-Housing based on their living situation, but in that case those program recipients still receive other support to find permanent housing. For example, participants have used Jobs and Housing funds for long-term temporary housing. This includes clean and sober living, transitional housing, etc. Neighborhood House provides housing services for those not eligible for RRH. Additionally, a number of contractors also provide their own housing support.

The Jobs and Housing Program works to ensure that each program participant is connected to permanent housing. As of June 2023, a total of 278 program participants were housed. Of housed individuals, 161 moved into their own permanent housing. Most of these individuals were connected to Rapid Re-Housing support through Jobs & Housing partners Catholic Community Services, Wellspring, and Neighborhood House. Another 117 secured stable, temporary housing.

Career Services

All participants receive career services, including connection to a Career Navigator and help in obtaining their next unsubsidized permanent job. Basic career support services include job readiness workshops, skills assessment, information on labor market, professional development skills training, or job search strategies. Individualized career services can include development of an employment plan, individual career planning, workshops on resumes and interviewing, or referral to education/training programs. In addition, some career attainment funding is available to support services to cover costs that will remove barriers to employment (e.g., driver's license, childcare, work-related clothes or tools, training-related costs, certifications).

"It's really cool that people are getting this opportunity to not only get a job but to get help with housing. And it's not even just housing. It's other stuff too. I'm getting my driver's license thanks to the program and am pretty excited about that."

*— Jobs and Housing participant,
[Dirt Corps Team Member](#)*

For example, Jobs and Housing's partner Weld Seattle serves community members who have a history of criminal justice involvement and have built a program that provides employment, housing, and full person support. Particularly impactful support includes life skills classes that are needed for clients who are returning to their community, including goal setting, orientation to new technology and digital literacy, job application strategies, and conflict resolution. The team highlighted the importance of community and shared lived experience in the success of their participants.

Beyond career navigation and counseling, the Jobs and Housing program provide support that includes connection to public benefits, ORCA transportation passes, equipment or attire required for work, training and education that takes place pre-employment, on-the-job, or post-program to support permanent employment, and any other support that removes barriers to employment.

SUCCESS STORIES

Gus enjoys his employment at King County Parks and recently became a permanent employee. Not only does his new job give him an opportunity to work outdoors and learn more about forestry, County employment enabled him to **secure an apartment and needed healthcare for his special needs child.**



Trevor, who was incarcerated at a young age in 2004, has been successfully employed at Seadrumar Recycling since his release in 2022. Trevor is an **excellent worker**, has **great attendance**, and is **well-liked by his co-workers and supervisors.** He continues to succeed.

Oliver joined Parks last spring and is interested in becoming a commercial truck driver. He is starting a weekend program to **train for and acquire a Commercial Driver's License.** Since there is significant demand for these well-compensated positions, the future is promising for Oliver and his family.



When George, age 48, entered the Jobs & Housing Program, he was sleeping in a church basement and was in **recovery from a substance use disorder** for the first time in his life. George was accepted into Weld Housing and continues to be **a successful member of the housing program**, which requires members to engage in recovery mentorship, recovery meetings, and accountability meetings with the group in the house. George was **permanently hired** into a position making \$23 per hour.

"I love the job I am privileged to show up for each morning, and have the joy of tending directly to the needs of my family, and what could be better than that?"

- Program participant

**Participants' names have been changed to protect their privacy.*

PERFORMANCE REPORT

Jobs and Housing Program

The Jobs and Housing Program provides funding for a new County program promoting economic recovery by connecting individuals experiencing homelessness with County or County-supported jobs, housing support, and career services. Additionally, the program supports employment and training programs provided by agencies to individuals experiencing homelessness so they can move toward economic and housing stability. Agencies were selected following two procurement rounds and after outreach to community partners notifying them of this funding opportunity. A key consideration in selecting agency partners was the equitable distribution of funds to communities disproportionately impacted by homelessness.

How much?

The Jobs and Housing Program is **intended to support 400 individuals experiencing homelessness** with these services by creating county or county-subsidized positions for program beneficiaries, contracting with community partners to provide job training and jobs for program beneficiaries. The program provides subsidized employment for up to one year for individuals experiencing homelessness. As of June 2, 2023, the program has employed **469 participants** – it is **117%** toward the original program goal of 400 individuals!

King County Employed Participants by the Numbers

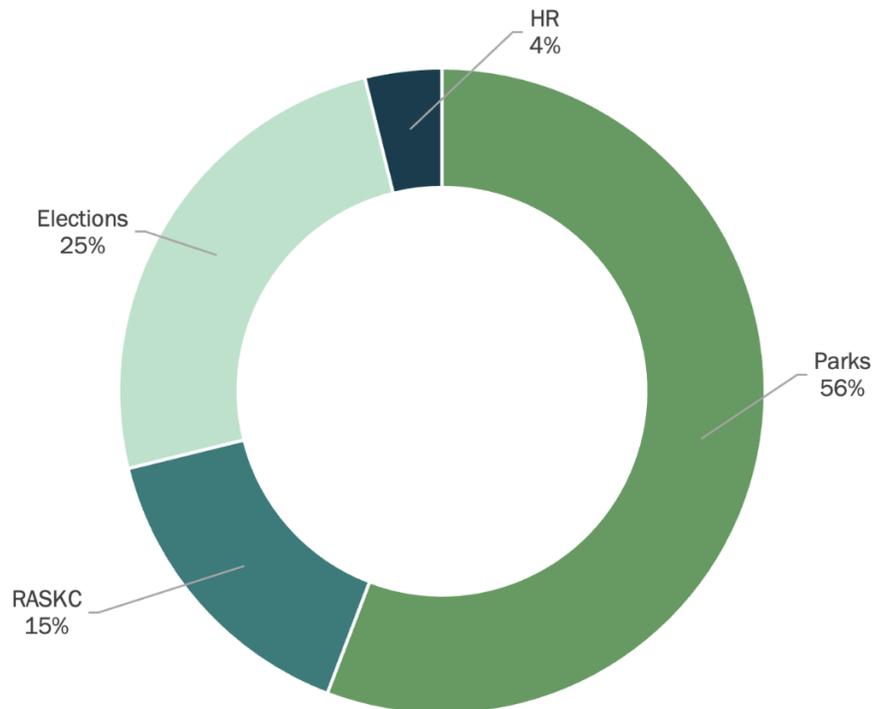


Figure 3: King County Parks currently employs the highest number of County employed participants. King County agencies currently working with Jobs and Housing participants include Parks, Local Services, Regional Animal Services, and Elections. **As of June 2023, 53 program participants have been hired into subsidized King County employment.**

Community Partner Employed Participants by the Numbers

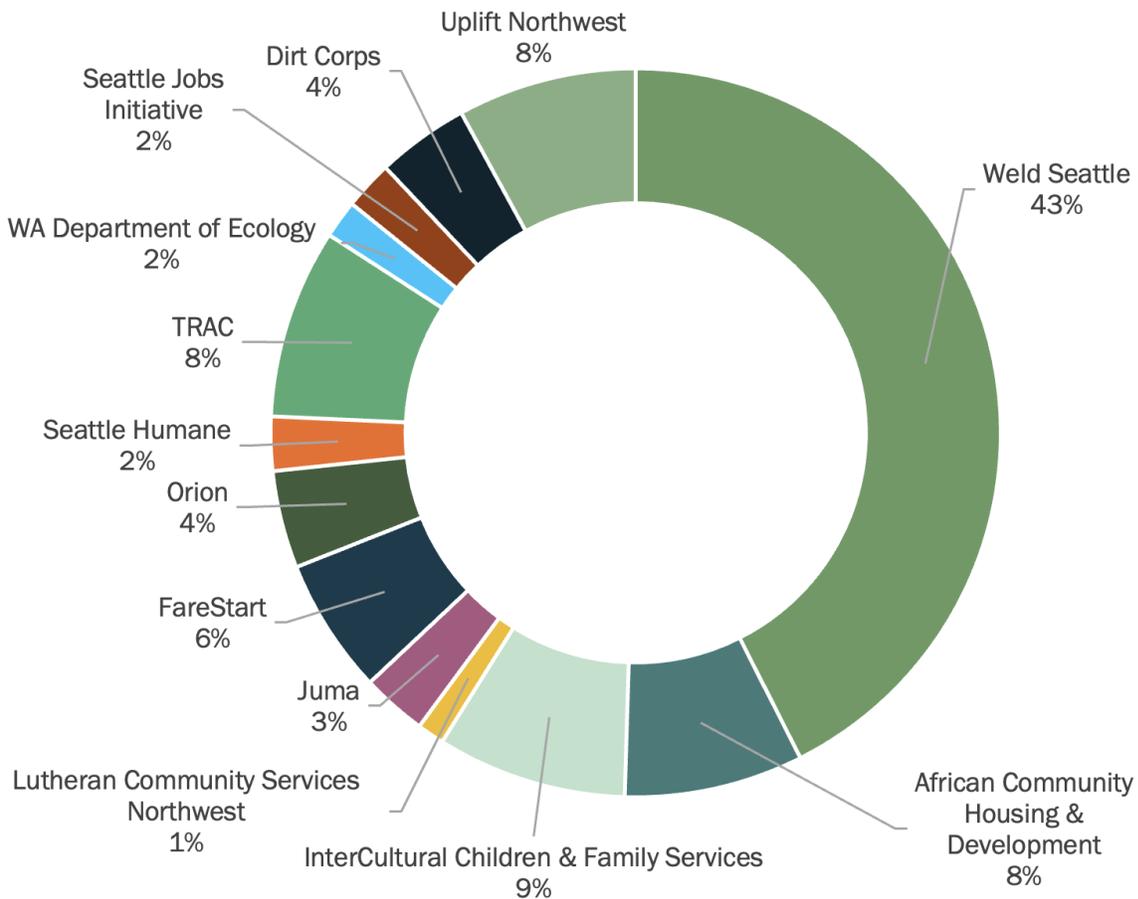


Figure 4: Weld Seattle currently employs the highest number of program participants employed by Jobs and Housing contracted community partners.

There are currently 13 contracted community partners providing expanded employment opportunities: Weld Seattle, Seattle Humane Society, Uplift NW, WA Dept. of Ecology, FareStart, TRAC, African Community and Housing Development, InterCultural Children Family Services, Juma, Lutheran Community Services NW, Orion, Dirt Corps (with support from King County Water and Land Resources Division), and the Seattle Jobs Initiative. Close to \$14M has been invested in community partners who are providing expanded employment and training opportunities. **As of June 2023, 416 program participants have been hired by partner organizations.**

Additionally, all participants are eligible for housing support. **As of June 2023, 278 participants have been housed, either permanently or temporarily.** Eligible participants are referred for Rapid Rehousing (RRH) through Catholic Community Services, Neighborhood House, and Wellspring. Others have been enrolled in other housing support by contracted partners, including InterCultural Children Family Services, African Community and Housing Development, Weld Seattle, and TRAC. For example, Weld Seattle is set to provide housing enrollment and support to 100 individuals, 14 of which are permanently housed as of June 2023, with 54 additionally placed in temporary housing.

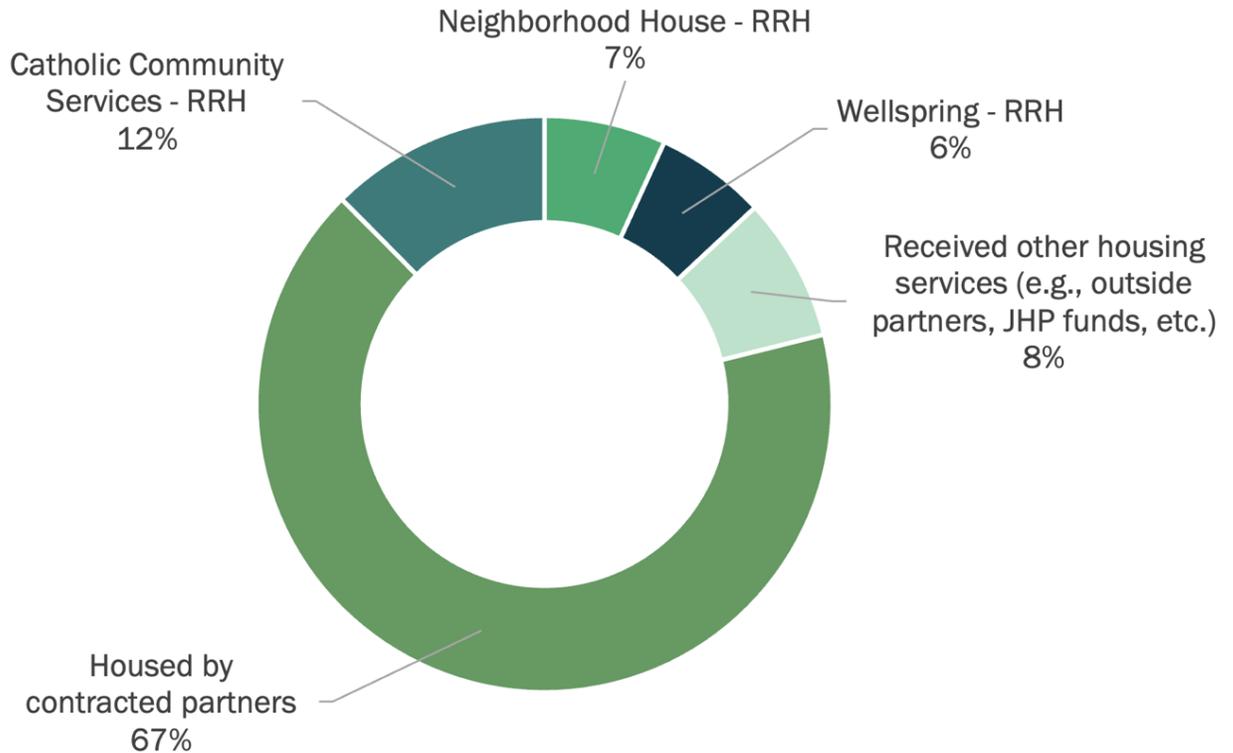


Figure 5: 161 total participants have been permanently housed as of June 2, 2023. *Contracted partners provide a mix of housing support to participants. Some have their own housing support for permanent housing, some offer long-term temporary housing, and some participants are referred for RRH. Many participants working with a contracted partners are in long-term temporary housing (e.g., clean and sober transitional housing), which is not reflected in the data above because it is still temporary housing.*

Of those housed, a total of **161 participants are in permanent housing** through RRH, contracted providers, and other support to find permanent housing. Rapid Re-Housing partner Catholic Community Services has provided 12% of RRH permanent housing provided to date. 67% of permanently housed participants have been supported by contracted partners providing other housing services. For example, African Community and Housing Development has permanently housed 30 non-RRH-eligible participants.

How equitably did we provide service?

Communities disproportionately impacted by homelessness are prioritized. Steps to equitable awareness include outreach and guidance to targeted homeless service providers and community partners, and discussion with all partners about equity goals. Additionally, community agencies were selected following two procurement rounds and after targeted outreach to organizations serving underserved communities notifying them of the program funding opportunity. A key consideration in selecting agency partners was the equitable distribution of funds to communities disproportionately impacted by homelessness.

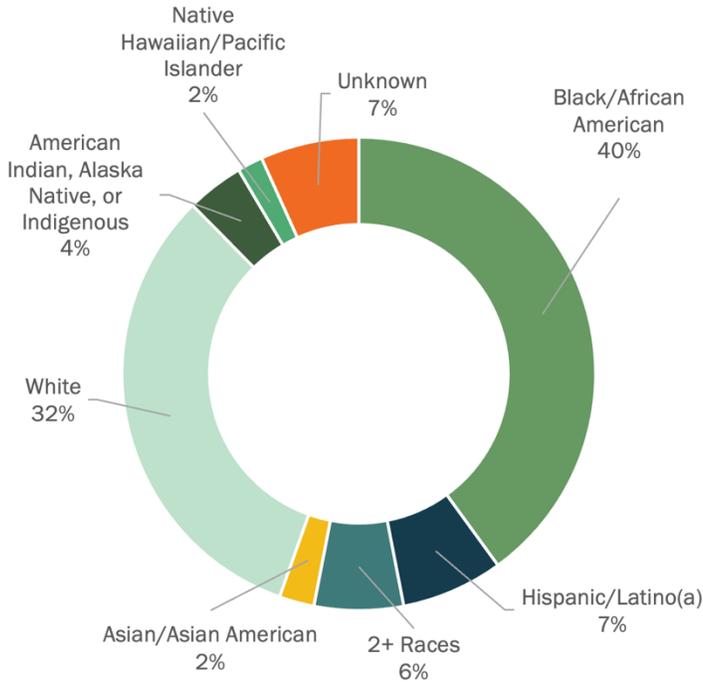


Figure 6: Over 60% of employed Jobs and Housing participants are BIPOC.

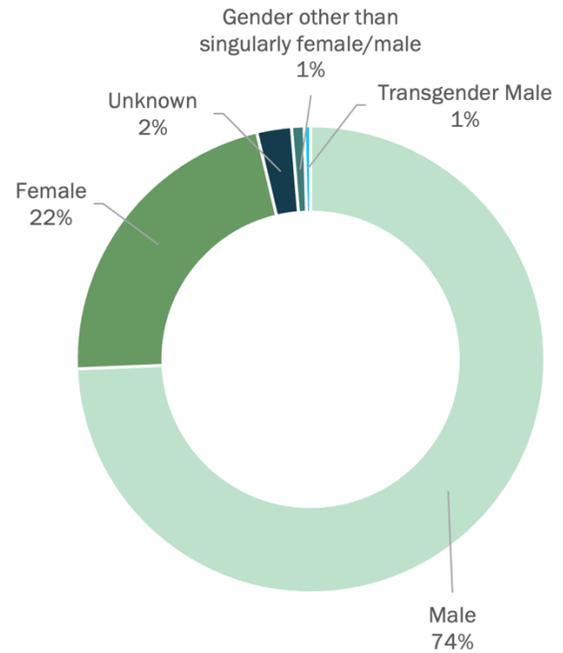


Figure 7: Over 70% of employed Jobs and Housing participants identify as male.

The majority of Jobs and Housing participants identify as BIPOC and male. Of those no longer in the program, some found permanent employment and permanent housing, while others separated from the program for various reasons, including, but not limited to: did not meet vaccination requirements, relocations outside of area, overriding health needs and performance issues.

Equitable distribution of funds to communities disproportionately impacted by homelessness has been a visible goal. The [2020 Point-in-Time Count](#) for Seattle/King County reported Native American/Alaska Native people made up one percent of the population in Seattle/King County, but 15 percent of the respondents experienced homelessness. Black/African Americans are 7 percent of the Seattle/King County population, but 25 percent of the respondents. Latinx persons are 10 percent of the Seattle/King County population, but 15 percent of the survey respondents.

Is anyone better off?

The ultimate goal of the Jobs and Housing Program is to successfully transition each participant to permanent housing and a permanent job. For the most part, beneficiaries are still working in the program. The program is designed to provide job and housing support for one year, and the first cohort of program participants employment ended in December 2022. The wait time to transition participants to permanent housing has been challenging. As a result, the housing support period lags the employment period for most participants by several months. The program will be able to provide more robust outcome reporting next year, as more participants complete the program. Additionally, the program is working with UW researchers to collect employment and housing data post-program.

This program has specific goals, including that **80%** of participants complete job assignments and that **80%** of participants move into permanent housing while in the program. An additional program goal is **<20%** return to homelessness 6 months after program completion.

An external evaluation of the program is underway to determine impact on permanent housing and employment outcomes for program participants. The ultimate goal is for individuals to be on an economic footing that enables them to exit the homelessness system permanently.

As many participants are reaching the end of their temporary assignments, the Jobs and Housing team has focused efforts to support their connection to new employment. Continued employment will remain a focus as individuals end their subsidized employment.

King County would not have been able to complete the valuable work needed without the Jobs and Housing Program. The community has benefited directly, by the enhancement of parks, the clean-up of trails, and the myriad additional jobs performed by the participants for the public good. The Jobs and Housing Program has inspired and encouraged individuals ready to work, to provide support for their own community.

For example, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks' second Jobs and Housing Program crew helped maintain completed restoration projects and lay the foundation for future restoration successes. In November 2022, participants worked to restore Green River habitat and ecological functions – taking the first steps toward potential careers in conservation. In addition to

“This is a really good program for people coming in and wanting to better themselves or learn a new trade... I didn't go to school for this. So, for them to be teaching me, I really appreciate that because it's a whole new set of skills I can put on my resume and possibly get a job higher up here.”

*— Jobs and Housing participant,
Dirt Corps Green Start Team Member*

helping King County's Water and Land Resources Division maintain completed restoration projects, crew members support future restoration successes by removing noxious weeds, both of which contribute to the County's [30-Year Forest Plan](#) and [Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan](#). They also increase the capacity of the County's [Healthy Lands Project](#), known as HeLP.²

² <https://kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/news/release/2022/November/01-DNRP-Green-Start.aspx>

Jobs and Housing Program participants were a vital part of the King County Elections team in the November 2022 General Election.

CASE STUDY

Jobs and Housing Program

The King County Jobs and Housing Program connects people experiencing homelessness to subsidized employment, housing, and career services to help them permanently exit the homelessness system. King County established this program in 2021 to combat the region's homelessness crisis using American Rescue Plan funds. Executive Dow Constantine [said](#), "When you take the time to talk to our unhoused neighbors, what you consistently hear is that they don't want handouts. They want opportunities. **And that's what this program offers. An opportunity for a good paying job. An opportunity to get a roof over your head. An opportunity to work with professionals to chart a path forward in your life towards that self-sufficiency, that dignity.** And it's even better when that job contributes to the community where you live."

Jobs and Housing Program participants were a vital part of the King County Elections team in the November 2022 General Election. They played an important role in preparing for Election Day and verifying and processing the ballots returned by King County voters. Participants worked long hours; trained and worked in workgroups across the organization; gained valuable experience; and helped facilitate another successful election for nearly 1.4 million voters during a time of unprecedented election observer interest. Over 900,000 ballots were returned in the November election.

Some highlights of their work include:

- **Providing customer service at Vote Centers throughout the county.** All Vote Centers were busy registering new voters, issuing replacement ballots, and helping voters with disabilities use assistive voting devices.
- **Serving as closing captains at ballot drop boxes on election night.** They ensured drop boxes closed promptly at 8 p.m., and all laws and procedures were followed.
- **Performing ballot processing functions from start to finish.** They were engaged with every step of the process and were happy to be trained in new tasks and take on new work.



Erik Jensen from King County Elections shared, "**We have been so grateful to have the King County Elections (KCE) Jobs & Housing Program participants as members of our team. Their work on updating signatures has helped tens of thousands of voters update their records, and their willingness to jump into other areas of work has deepened their connection to our team and our mission at KCE of conducting accurate, secure, and accessible elections.**"