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<https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/33181>

Employment Retention and Advancement Project, 2000-2007 [United States] (ICPSR 33181)

Version Date: Mar 30, 2012 [Cite this Study](#) | [Share this study](#)

Principal Investigator(s): [Gayle Hamilton](#), MDRC

<https://doi.org/10.2886/ICPSR33181.v1>

Version V1

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Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA) project was designed to fill the gap in knowledge about employment retention and advancement strategies that might be effective. The goal of ERA was to identify and rigorously test a diverse set of innovative models designed to promote employment stability and wage or earnings progression among current or former welfare recipients or other low-income groups. As part of ERA, over a dozen different program models have been evaluated over the past 10 years using random assignment research designs. These models embodied states' and localities' choices of program goals, target populations, and program features, and the programs were largely paid for through existing funding streams. The programs were thus "real-world" interventions initiated by practitioners and not programs set up and funded solely for research purposes. The diversity of the models presents an opportunity to explore the effectiveness of a variety of strategies implemented for different populations in order to identify what might work. This collection includes seven datasets, four classified as Core/Final Report Sites and three from Harder to Employ Sites. Almost all of the ERA programs targeted current or former recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the cash welfare program that mainly serves single mothers and their children. The programs differed, however, in terms of when services were first provided and to whom. The Harder to Employ Sites files focus on the three ERA models that served harder to employ populations: (1) Tier 2 program in Minnesota: unemployed welfare-to-work participants who were in welfare-to-work services for a year or longer and hadn't been employed in the previous three months were given welfare-to-work services aimed at addressing barriers to employment which took into account their employment limitations. The Tier 2 program focused on assessing barriers to employment and addressing those barriers through referrals to appropriate services and close monitoring and follow-up. (2) New York City PRIDE: welfare recipients who were deemed "employable with limitations" were required to take part in welfare-to-work activities -- which emphasized unpaid work experience, education, and job placement assistance -- however, the program took into account their employment limitations when placing them in activities. The PRIDE program began with an in-depth assessment of participants' work and education history and their medical conditions. (3) New York City Substance Abuse Case Management (SACM): public assistance applicants and recipients who screened positive for signs of substance abuse were given a mandatory appointment to assess the level of substance abuse treatment needed. Depending on the outcome of the assessment, clients were referred to treatment, employment services, or a combination of both. Noncompliance at any stage resulted in sanctions and loss of public

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