Economic Empowerment Resources for People Living with HIV

All people with HIV have a right to tools to help make decisions about economic opportunities. Learn about programs and projects that uphold economic justice for people living with HIV.

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Note: Most of the information below applies to the United States.

Women living with HIV in the US tend to be disproportionately low-income. Poverty not only renders people more vulnerable to HIV but can also be one consequence of an HIV diagnosis for a variety of reasons.

Every person living with HIV has the right to tools and support to make well-informed decisions about education, employment, benefits, and other economic opportunities. Women living with HIV can demand that service providers, service systems, and federal programs prioritize capacity building to help connect women with information, services, and resources to develop and pursue career, training, and education goals.

Below you will find a list of resources that we hope will grow as members of our community share more organizations and programs, research and advocacy projects that uphold economic justice for people living with HIV in the US. If you have such a resource, please click this link to get in

touch by email.

Relevant Resources from The Well Project

- Considering Going Back to Work
- Moving Forward, Living with HIV: Considering Education or Training
- Understanding Your Rights and Responsibilities in the Workplace in the US
- Public Benefits and HIV in the US
- Housing Options for People Living with HIV in the US
- How to Be an Advocate for Yourself and Others

Economic Justice - Policy and Advocacy

- Advancing Economic Justice for People Living with HIV (PWN-USA webinar, video): Learn more about the policies that impact our ability to be fully supported and prepared to participate in the workforce in ways that we choose
- Employment (Federal AIDS Policy Partnership): A working group of a coalition of local, regional, and national organizations advocating for progressive federal HIV legislation and policy, approaching employment as a structural intervention
- Family Values at Work: Fights for paid family and medical leave, support for caregivers as part of the workforce
- Solutions Not Punishment Collaborative (SnapCo): Atlanta-based Black trans- and queer-led initiative that fights for divestment from the prison industrial complex and investment in resources that support our communities
- Ending the HIV Epidemic in the United States: A Roadmap for Federal Action (Act Now: End AIDS Coalition): In the PDF, section on employment begins on page 84, with recommendations beginning on page 86
- Questions and Answers: The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rights of Persons with HIV/AIDS to Obtain Occupational Training and State Licensing (US Department of Justice)
- Questions and Answers: The Americans with Disabilities Act and Persons with HIV/AIDS (US Department of Justice, via Center for HIV Law and Policy)

- Protecting the Civil Rights and Health Information Privacy Rights of People Living with HIV/AIDS (US Department of Health and Human Services): Collection of documents on civil rights and health information privacy rights, including information on filing a complaint

Resources for Job Seekers

- Ticket to Work Program (US Social Security Administration): Search for your local state vocational rehabilitation agency (can provide funding for schooling/training), as well as your local grantee in the WIPA (Work Incentive Planning & Assistance) program (benefits counselors who provide SSI and/or SSDI beneficiaries with accurate, individualized information about the interplay of their benefits and work income)
- Find an American Job Center (US Department of Labor): A source of training programs and funding - more than 3,000 located nationwide
- Disability Benefits 101: Information about benefits, especially in terms of working; only developed for some states
- POZ Job Board: Frequent postings of jobs in the HIV community across the US
- Grace Institute: Workforce development program focused solely on women in New York City, especially training for administrative jobs
- Career Power Source: Coordinates employment fairs and trainings in partnership with HIV and LGBTQ organizations in the New York City area

Employment - General Information

- Employment and Health (HIV.gov)
- Living with HIV Infection: Your Legal Rights in the Workplace Under the ADA (US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission)

Employment - Organizations and Projects

- National Working Positive Coalition: Premier coalition committed to improving the financial and personal wellbeing of people living with HIV in the US
- HIV, Housing and Employment Project (Boston University School of Social Work): Improving

health outcomes through the coordination of supportive employment and housing services

- Economic Justice Resources (Positive Women's Network - USA): Platform and tools provided by the largest US advocacy network of women living with HIV
- Alliance for Positive Change: Helps people in New York City living with HIV and other chronic health conditions get the medical care, peer support, and housing assistance they need to achieve health, happiness, and stability

Employment - Relevant Research

- Program Evaluation of a Trauma-Informed HIV Prevention and Vocational Development Intervention for African American Women (2016 National Ryan White Conference on HIV Care & Treatment, PDF)
- Remaking a Life: How Women Living with HIV/AIDS Confront Inequality (book by Celeste Watkins-Hayes)
- Vocational Rehabilitation May Help People with HIV or AIDS and Substance Use Disorder Overcome Employment Challenges (National Rehabilitation Information Center)

For Employers, Counselors, or Other Service Providers

- Getting to Work: A Training Curriculum for HIV/AIDS Service Providers and Housing Providers (US Department of Housing and Urban Development)
- What You Should Know About HIV/AIDS & Employment Discrimination (US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission)
- Helping Patients with HIV Infection Who Need Accommodations at Work (US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission)
- Business Responds to AIDS: What Is BRTA? (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Guidance for Employees with HIV and Their Coworkers (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention): Information for human resources departments on having employees who live with HIV
- Job Accommodation Network (JAN): Advice for employers on job accommodations that may be

needed because of the side effects of HIV or its treatment

Resources Outside the US

- The ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work (International Labour Organisation)
- Economic Empowerment (UN Women)

The Well Project is a non-profit organization whose mission is to change the course of the HIV/AIDS pandemic through a unique and comprehensive focus on women and girls across the gender spectrum. Visit their website, https://www.thewellproject.org/, to access fact sheets (English and Spanish), blogs, and advocacy tools, and to join a global community of women living with HIV.

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