Developing America's Workforce

County Roles, Barriers and Solutions ▪ County Case Studies

Harris County, Texas

2021 POPULATION: **4,728,030**
U.S. REGION: **SOUTH**
ARCHETYPE: **URBAN CENTERS AND CORE SUBURBS**

Scan to access the full report and other case studies

The Harris County seat is the City of Houston, one of the country's largest urban centers. With a labor force of over 2 million people and the headquarters of 24 Fortune 500 companies, Harris County operates a variety of programs to serve the diverse industries and individuals that call it home. Featuring over 1,700 square miles of land and 120 languages spoken, Harris County blends local and federal funding to address barriers to workforce development.

Barriers

TRANSPORTATION   FUNDING   CHILD CARE

Solutions

ADDRESSING SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF EMPLOYMENT

Hire Up Harris is an ARPA-funded program that connects residents to both rapid reskilling and upskilling opportunities and wraparound support services that directly address known barriers to career readiness, including child care, transportation and professional attire, especially among the most vulnerable populations. Local workforce development leaders attribute the program's 80 percent completion rate to the availability of wraparound services that address social barriers to participants' success.

INCLUSIVE APPRENTICESHIPS

Apprenticeship Advantage aims to increase the availability of U.S. Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) in high-demand industries such as construction, public transportation, technology and live entertainment. A key focus of this program is outreach to and accessibility for people who are traditionally underrepresented in apprenticeships. For instance, Apprenticeship Advantage has challenged traditional perceptions around the age and gender of apprentices by enrolling more women and older adults. This strategy has effectively created career pathways for those whose jobs were adversely affected during the COVID-19 pandemic.