Research Report

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Breaking Barriers Rapid Rehousing Program for Justice-Involved Individuals in Los Angeles County

Local Evaluation Report

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About This Report

This report presents our evaluation of the Breaking Barriers program, a rapid rehousing and supportive services initiative for individuals and families who are justice-involved (i.e., affected by the criminal justice system) and at risk of or experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County. The California Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) commissioned this evaluation, and the Los Angeles County Justice, Care and Opportunities Department (JCOD) expanded it through the Care First Community Investment initiative.

In our evaluation, we assessed program implementation, participant characteristics, service utilization, and outcomes related to housing stability and employment. We drew on quantitative program data and qualitative interviews to provide a comprehensive view of program outcomes and areas for improvement. We intend the findings presented in this report to inform service providers, policymakers, and researchers in Los Angeles County and other large urban areas, as well as those at the state level in California. Although this evaluation is grounded in the Los Angeles context, the results may be relevant to similar jurisdictions working to improve reentry, housing, and employment outcomes for justice-involved populations.

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Finally, we extend our gratitude to all the individuals who participated in interviews and contributed their time and insights to this evaluation.

Summary

This report presents our evaluation of the Breaking Barriers program, a rapid rehousing (RRH) and supportive services initiative for individuals and families who are justice-involved (i.e., affected by the criminal justice system) and at risk of or experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County. Two nonprofit organizations jointly operate the program: Brilliant Corners, which provides rental subsidies, case management, and housing services, and Chrysalis, which provides employment services, including job readiness training, career planning, and transitional employment. The California Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) commissioned this evaluation, and the Los Angeles County Justice, Care and Opportunities Department (JCOD) expanded it through the Care First Community Investment (CFCI) initiative. In the evaluation, we assessed program implementation, participant outcomes, and areas for improvement.

Issue

Incarceration places individuals at high risk of housing insecurity upon release. Many people exit incarceration without a safe and secure place to stay the night. Finding stable, long-term housing is an even greater challenge. To fill this gap, it is common for people reentering society after incarceration to rely on family members or informal social networks to meet their housing needs.[1] In Los Angeles County, the challenges faced by people reentering after incarceration are further compounded by exceptionally high housing costs, a shortage of affordable rental options, and systemic obstacles to housing and employment. In this report, *systemic* obstacles or barriers refers to those embedded in laws, policies, or institutional practices—such as mandatory background checks and gaps in work history—that limit opportunities for justice-involved individuals. Without targeted support, many individuals experience homelessness, unemployment, and increased risk of recidivism. Breaking Barriers addresses these issues by providing RRH, rental assistance, and wraparound supportive services, including employment support. In this evaluation, we examined whether the program improves housing stability, employment, and income for participants, and we identified factors associated with successful outcomes.

Approach

We conducted a mixed-method evaluation of the Breaking Barriers program to assess program implementation and outcomes. We analyzed administrative data for all individuals who received

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[1] Jocelyn Fontaine and Jennifer Biess, "Housing as a Platform for Formerly Incarcerated Persons," Urban Institute, April 2012.

services from the program between March 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025 (n = 460).[2] Outcome and process metrics are reported for BSCC-funded participants, JCOD/CFCI-funded participants, and the overall program population, as appropriate and as indicated throughout the report. We also collected qualitative data through semistructured interviews with program staff and participants to capture perspectives on program strengths, program challenges, and participant experiences. We present findings from both approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of program performance and improvement.

Key Findings

- **Strong program infrastructure and collaboration underpin implementation success:** Breaking Barriers demonstrated robust capacity through highly engaged staff, strong coordination between Brilliant Corners and Chrysalis, individualized case management, and flexible financial supports. Participants reported valuing responsive communication and tailored assistance. Quality-improvement steps that have been taken since the pilot have directly addressed earlier implementation challenges, strengthening program delivery.
- **Persistent external barriers limit progress despite effective service delivery:** Staff and participants faced ongoing structural constraints—high housing costs, a shortage of affordable units, stagnant wages, limited employer willingness to hire individuals with criminal records, and legal restrictions on certain jobs.
- **Program performance met or exceeded most BSCC process goals:** In the first year, Breaking Barriers processed 72 BSCC referrals (goal: 60), delivered case management to 193 participants (goal: 100), and placed 94 participants in employment or education (goal: 50). The program also submitted 157 housing applications (goal: 90) and provided rental assistance to 106 participants, 92 of whom were housed by month 21 (goal: 90). The only unmet benchmark was the pace of housing placements: An average of 7.4 participants were housed per quarter, which is below the goal of 15 per quarter.
- **Housing stability outcomes were strong:** The program exceeded its target of maintaining a housing retention rate above 80 percent at month 12: Eighty-two percent of BSCC participants and 83 percent of all subsidized participants remained housed after one year, demonstrating sustained stability among those assisted.
- **Exits to stable housing improved markedly during the evaluation period compared with the pilot, though employment gains were uneven:** The share of participants exiting to stable housing rose from 28 percent in the pilot to 46 percent overall in this evaluation (36 percent for BSCC participants). Incarceration-related exits to stable housing declined substantially (8 percent of program exits in this evaluation, down from 32 percent of program exits in the pilot). Although most employed participants earned above minimum wage, the program narrowly missed its goal of 80 percent earning above the threshold at exit (74–75 percent

[2] This number includes both participants who enrolled during the evaluation period and those who enrolled prior to the evaluation period and were still receiving services as of March 1, 2023.

achieved). Roughly one-quarter of exit outcomes remain indeterminate because of missing data.

Recommendations

Program Administrators and Service Providers

- Leverage the strengths of referral and enrollment processes to ensure that all participant groups benefit from timely and seamless access to services.
- Continue providing individualized case management and flexible supports, which deliver value for justice-involved individuals.
- Increase targeted supports for high-risk subgroups, such as individuals under Assembly Bill 109 supervision,[3] older adults, and women who are unemployed at entry.
- Expand access to permanent supportive housing for participants with higher needs by partnering with local housing agencies.
- Monitor rent-to-income ratios to identify participants who need counseling or financial support to maintain affordability.
- Improve data collection and follow-up to reduce missing outcome data and strengthen future evaluations.

Policymakers and Program Funders

- Because program-specific interventions might not fully address high housing costs, consider additional efforts to address the affordability gap, such as supporting policies that improve living wages and facilitate the development of affordable housing in the region.
- Consider how such program features as strong cross-agency collaboration, individualized case management, and flexible supports may inform decisions about funding, expanding, designing, and implementing reentry and housing initiatives for justice-involved populations.

[3] Assembly Bill 109, Criminal Justice Alignment, April 4, 2011.

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Chapter 1

Introduction and Background

For many individuals leaving incarceration, finding stable housing can be a daunting process. Without a safe and reliable place to live, an individual can find it difficult to pursue employment, access services, or successfully reintegrate into the community. The Breaking Barriers program addresses these challenges by using a rapid rehousing (RRH) model to help individuals and families in Los Angeles County who are justice-involved (i.e., affected by the criminal justice system) quickly exit homelessness and receive crucial supportive services, including case management and employment support. RRH is a short-term housing intervention that provides time-limited rental assistance and supportive services to help people secure and maintain housing.

Breaking Barriers is intended to create a foundation from which participants can address other reentry needs, including employment, health, and family stability. (*Reentry* refers to the transition from incarceration back into the community.) In this evaluation, we aim to explore how Breaking Barriers supports participants as they navigate reentry, whether the program achieves its intended outcomes, and how its approach might contribute to broader efforts to reduce homelessness and recidivism. This chapter provides background on the program, describes the barriers faced by the population it serves, and introduces the goals and questions guiding the evaluation.

Overview of Approaches to Rapid Rehousing and Reentry

For individuals who exit the carceral system, housing instability is a central barrier to successful reentry. Research has established a clear link between housing instability and reincarceration,[4] and more-recent data underscore the severity of this "revolving door." Individuals exiting prison are estimated to be 13 times more likely to experience homelessness than the general population.[5] In this context, access to stable housing is not simply one of many needs at reentry: It is a foundation that supports successful reintegration.

The Breaking Barriers program supports individuals exiting jail or state prison by helping them quickly secure stable housing through RRH, alongside wraparound supportive services. RRH is

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[4] Ahmad Y. Bashir, Noreen Moloney, Musaab E. Elzain, Isabelle Delaunois, Ali Sheikhi, Patrick O'Donnell, Colum P. Dunne, Brendan D. Kelly, and Gautam Gulati, "From Nowhere to Nowhere. Homelessness and Incarceration: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis," *International Journal of Prisoner Health*, Vol. 17, No. 4, 2021; Catarina Gouvis Roman and Jeremy Travis, "Where Will I Sleep Tomorrow? Housing, Homelessness, and the Returning Prisoner," *Housing Policy Debate*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 2006.

[5] Lucius Couloute, *Nowhere to Go: Homelessness Among Formerly Incarcerated People*, Prison Policy Initiative, August 2018.

designed to help individuals experiencing temporary housing insecurity restabilize by offering time-limited housing that individuals can quickly be placed in, typically within 30 days.[6]

This housing support is paired with the provision of wraparound services, a coordinated, team-based approach to service delivery that emerged in the 1980s and emphasizes collaboration across providers.[7] The types of services offered may vary by program, but RRH programs typically include housing location services, support with monthly rent and move-in costs, and supportive services, such as case management.[8] Breaking Barriers participants receive case management, employment services, and rental and move-in assistance, and they may also receive referrals to additional providers, such as for legal aid, mental health and substance use treatment, family reunification and child-care resources, public benefit assistance, and vocational training programs. Together, these services are designed to support housing stability while addressing other needs related to reentry.

Housing and Employment Barriers After Incarceration

Individuals transitioning out of the carceral system encounter barriers that hinder housing and employment prospects. The U.S. housing market has a long-standing history of documented discrimination.[9] The passage of the Fair Housing Act of 1968 was intended to address long-standing discriminatory practices around the country, but despite this legislation, discriminatory practices persist and continue to evolve in today's housing market.[10] For people reentering society after incarceration, these barriers are compounded. In addition to experiencing broader forms of housing discrimination, individuals with criminal records face further exclusion, as background checks and disclosure of prior convictions are standard requirements in the private rental market, further limiting access to stable housing during reentry.[11]

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[6] Thomas Byrne, Minda Huang, Richard E. Nelson, and Jack Tsai, "Rapid Rehousing for Persons Experiencing Homelessness: A Systematic Review of the Evidence," *Housing Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 4, 2023.

[7] John VanDenBerg, Eric Bruns, and John Burchard, "History of the Wraparound Process," *Focal Point*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 2003.

[8] Daniel Gubits, Korrin Bishop, Lauren Dunton, Michelle Wood, Tom Albanese, Brooke Spellman, and Jill Khadduri, *Understanding Rapid Re-Housing: Systematic Review of Rapid Re-Housing Outcomes Literature*, Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, July 7, 2018.

[9] Claudia Aranda, "Housing Discrimination in America: Lessons from the Last Decade of Paired-Testing Research," testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Subcommittee, 2019a; Sun Jung Oh and John Yinger, "What Have We Learned from Paired Testing in Housing Markets?" *Cityscape*, Vol. 17, No. 3, September 2015; Margery Austin Turner, "Recommitting to the Promise of the Fair Housing Act 50 Years Later," Urban Institute, April 3, 2018.

[10] Public Law 90-284, Civil Rights Act of 1968, April 11, 1968, Title VIII; Claudia Aranda, "Fighting Housing Discrimination in 2019," Urban Institute, April 1, 2019b; Claudia L. Aranda and Diane K. Levy, "How the Fair Housing Act's Role in Combating Discrimination Will Continue to Evolve," Urban Institute, May 2, 2018; Lauren Karpinski, "The Discriminatory Impacts of AI-Powered Tenant Screening Programs," *Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law & Policy*, July 12, 2025; Diane K. Levy, Doug Wissoker, Claudia L. Aranda, Brent Howell, Rob Pitingolo, Sarale Sewell, and Rob Santos, *A Paired-Testing Pilot Study of Housing Discrimination Against Same-Sex Couples and Transgender Individuals*, Urban Institute, June 2017.

[11] Hensleigh Crowell, "A Home of One's Own: The Fight Against Illegal Housing Discrimination Based on Criminal Convictions, and Those Who Are Still Left Behind," *Texas Law Review*, Vol. 95, 2017; Douglas N. Evans, Kwan-Lamar Blount-Hill, and Michelle A. Cubellis, "Examining Housing Discrimination Across Race, Gender and Felony History," *Housing Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 5, 2019.

Nationally, over 27 percent of formerly incarcerated individuals are unemployed.[12] Several factors contribute to this staggeringly high unemployment rate, beginning with stigma in the hiring process. Prospective employees often face immediate bias when criminal records are surfaced during mandatory background checks.[13] Even when employers are willing to hire, individuals who have been incarcerated suffer from a disconnection from the labor market or gaps in their résumés. Moreover, work experience gained while incarcerated is often undervalued in comparison with that gained in traditional jobs, leaving candidates at a competitive disadvantage.[14] Skills may become outdated during incarceration because of industry or technological changes.[15] People reentering after incarceration may have lower literacy and numeracy skills than those without criminal justice system involvement. A 2024 study revealed that people incarcerated in California typically read at an eighth-grade level and have sixth-grade–level math skills.[16] While data on literacy and numeracy skills for the reentry population were not available, those who do reenter with limited reading and math skills face additional barriers in competitive job markets, such as Los Angeles.

Beyond professional hurdles, logistical constraints, such as transportation and child-care responsibilities, are common barriers to employment among the reentry population,[17] particularly in geographically sprawling regions, such as Los Angeles. Finally, these challenges are often compounded by supervisory requirements associated with probation that may conflict with standard work schedules, creating a structural barrier to maintaining long-term employment.[18]

Barriers to employment make it difficult for formerly incarcerated individuals to access secure and stable housing, perpetuating a cycle of instability. Unemployment for formerly incarcerated individuals is nearly five times higher than unemployment rates for individuals without a history of incarceration.[19] One study found that one year of incarceration was associated with a 13-percent cumulative reduction in annual earnings over a five-year period after reentry.[20] The reduced wages and increased likelihood of unemployment experienced with a history of incarceration affect individuals' ability to meet the income requirements for rental applications, which typically are that applicants earn at least three times the rent each month. Landlords may also screen out rental applicants with

[12] Lucius Couloute and Daniel Kopf, *Out of Prison & Out of Work: Unemployment Among Formerly Incarcerated People*, Prison Policy Initiative, July 2018.

[13] Jennifer M. Miller, "The Mark of a Criminal Record: Unpacking Stigma and Barriers to Reentry," *Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, Vol. 2, No. 2, April 29, 2025.

[14] Erica Bryant, "The Challenge of Finding a Job After Prison," Vera Institute of Justice, September 5, 2025.

[15] Joe Russo, Michael J. D. Vermeer, Dulani Woods, and Brian A. Jackson, *Leveraging Technology to Support Prisoner Reentry*, RAND Corporation, RR-A108-12, 2022.

[16] Heather Harris, Brandon Martin, and Sean Cremin, *California Prison Programs and Reentry Pathways*, Public Policy Institute of California, June 2024.

[17] Marina Zhavoronkova, Allie Preston, Justin Schweitzer, and Akua Amaning, *How to Improve Employment Outcomes for Young Adults Leaving Incarceration*, Center for American Progress, March 16, 2023.

[18] Lynn M. Clark, "Landlord Attitudes Toward Renting to Released Offenders," *Federal Probation*, Vol. 71, No. 1, June 2007.

[19] Couloute and Kopf, 2018.

[20] Andrew Garin, Dmitri Koustas, Carl McPherson, Samuel Norris, Matthew Pecenco, Evan K. Rose, Yotam Shem-Tov, and Jeffrey Weaver, "The Impact of Incarceration on Employment, Earnings, and Tax Filing," *Econometrica*, Vol. 93, No. 2, March 2025.

criminal records.[21] Institutional policies, such as crime-free housing ordinances and certain public housing regulations, further reinforce this bias by discouraging or explicitly prohibiting leasing to formerly incarcerated individuals.[22] Practical financial and administrative obstacles further narrow housing options. Incarceration can create a "rental gap," leaving applicants without recent rental history, positive landlord references, or strong credit scores, which most competitive markets, such as Los Angeles, require.[23] Furthermore, these housing challenges are inextricably linked to economic status, as employment barriers limit an individual's income and make it challenging to meet the financial qualifications for most market-rate housing.[24]

In summary, individuals reentering the community after incarceration face several systemic barriers that obstruct access to stable housing and employment. Although many reentry programs incorporate supportive services, such as employment coaching, housing assistance, and case management, these interventions might not counteract the magnitude of systemic barriers that individuals face. Even with personalized support and vocational training, individuals face substantial barriers to a successful transition to long-term stability. This is particularly acute in high-rent areas, such as Los Angeles, where the income required to achieve self-sufficiency is increasingly out of reach for people with limited earning potential.

In Los Angeles County, where homelessness has increased to staggering numbers and the rental market is at an all-time high, the population exiting justice settings remains disproportionately vulnerable. In 2018, the Los Angeles County Office of Diversion and Reentry reported that approximately 20 percent of the county jail population was homeless.[25]

The Evolution of and Evidence for Rapid Rehousing

RRH emerged in the 2000s, when different municipalities began offering limited-term housing assistance, shifting away from preparing individuals for housing in shelter settings to placing people in housing as quickly as possible. The model gained momentum in 2009 with the launch of the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program, funded through the American Recovery

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[21] Evans, Blount-Hill, and Cubellis, 2019; Wonyoung So, "Which Information Matters? Measuring Landlord Assessment of Tenant Screening Reports," *Housing Policy Debate*, Vol. 33, No. 6, 2023.

[22] Max Griswold, Stephanie Brooks Holliday, Alex Sizemore, Cheng Ren, Lawrence Baker, Khadesia Howell, Osonde A. Osoba, Jhacova Williams, Jason M. Ward, and Sarah B. Hunter, *An Evaluation of Crime-Free Housing Policies*, RAND Corporation, RR-A2689-1, 2023; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Are Applicants with Felonies Banned from Public Housing or Any Other Housing Funded by HUD? Do the Public Housing Agencies (PHAs), State, or Landlords Have Any Discretion in the Process That Could Bar Certain Felonies?" webpage, January 2022.

[23] Couloute, 2018; Michael McLaughlin, Carrie Pettus-Davis, Derek Brown, Chris Veeh, and Tanya Renn, "The Economic Burden of Incarceration in the U.S.," Washington University in St. Louis, October 2016.

[24] Dallas Augustine and Margot Kushel, "Community Supervision, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness," *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 701, No. 1, May 2022.

[25] Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, *Report and Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness*, December 2018. The most-recent data available on housing status at incarceration in Los Angeles are from 2018. However, this estimate is consistent with more-recent national data showing that approximately 20 percent of people are unhoused when booked in local jails (Leah Wang, "Jailing the Homeless: New Data Shed Light on Unhoused People in Local Jails," Prison Policy Initiative, February 11, 2025). These data may be an undercount because housing status is not always recorded at booking.

and Reinvestment Act of 2009.[26] This federal investment signaled a move away from costly, facility-based transitional housing toward a more flexible approach centered around three core components: housing identification, short-term financial assistance, and stabilizing case management.

The evidence base for RRH was solidified by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's landmark Family Options Study (2010–2016). This large-scale experiment compared various housing interventions for families experiencing homelessness and found that while long-term vouchers provided the highest level of stability, RRH was significantly more cost-effective than transitional housing, moving families out of emergency shelters much faster and at a lower cost per exit.[27] This study fundamentally shifted federal policy, positioning RRH as a primary tool for addressing crisis-level homelessness.

Rapid Rehousing as a Reentry Strategy

Beyond its application to families, RRH has been recognized as a promising mechanism for disrupting the "homelessness-jail cycle" wherein individuals move back and forth between homelessness and incarceration.[28] For the reentry population, RRH may serve as a critical bridge, mitigating the immediate risk of recidivism through access to stable housing during the high-risk period following release.

Although early evaluations of RRH for reentry are encouraging, outcomes remain mixed because of variations in implementation and the complex needs of the population. Some recent studies have reported successful outcomes. For example, an evaluation of a reentry RRH program in San Francisco found that more than half of participants increased their incomes before exiting the program and 70 percent experienced nonnegative exits, meaning that they did not return to homelessness or incarceration before the program ended.[29] However, researchers caution that these positive outcomes can be difficult to generalize, since individuals deemed eligible for RRH may already possess a higher baseline potential for employment than the broader reentry population.[30] Despite these challenges, RRH remains a cornerstone of innovative efforts to replace the revolving door of incarceration with a pathway toward successful reintegration.

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[26] Public Law 111-5, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, February 17, 2009; National Alliance to End Homelessness, *Rapid Re-Housing: A History and Core Components*, April 22, 2014.

[27] Daniel Gubits, Marybeth Shinn, Michelle Wood, Stephen Bell, Samuel Dastrup, Claudia D. Solari, Scott R. Brown, Debi McInnis, Tom McCall, and Utsav Kattel, *Family Options Study: 3-Year Impacts of Housing and Services Interventions for Homeless Families*, Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, October 2016.

[28] Sarah Gillespie, Samantha Batko, Ben Chartoff, Zach VeShancey, and Emily Peiffer, *Five Charts That Explain the Homelessness-Jail Cycle—and How to Break It*, Urban Institute, September 16, 2020.

[29] Samantha Batko, Sophie McManus, Kaela Girod, Pear Moraras, Libby Doyle, and Mari McGilton, *Evaluation of Step Up to Freedom: A Chronic Homelessness Initiative Rapid Rehousing Pilot in San Francisco for Individuals with Incarceration and Homelessness Histories*, Urban Institute, June 2023; Lance R. Hignite and Darlene R. Haff, "Rapid Rehousing of Formerly Homeless Jail and Prison Inmates," *Housing, Care and Support*, Vol. 20, No. 4, 2017.

[30] Hignite and Haff, 2017.

The Breaking Barriers Program Model

Breaking Barriers is a program implemented by Brilliant Corners and Chrysalis that supports justice-involved individuals and families experiencing or at imminent risk of homelessness in Los Angeles County.[31] Brilliant Corners is a nonprofit organization that manages a variety of housing services, including rental subsidy programs, tenancy support services, and affordable housing development and property management.[32] For Breaking Barriers participants, Brilliant Corners provides a monthly rental subsidy, case management, and housing retention services. Brilliant Corners pays the subsidy directly to the property provider. Participants who have income also pay a portion of their rent directly to the property provider. The participant's rent portion is based on their income, and as participants remain enrolled in Breaking Barriers, the amount they contribute toward rent increases over time while the rental subsidy decreases. Chrysalis is a nonprofit employment agency dedicated to helping individuals overcome barriers to employment through job-readiness training, individualized case management, and transitional job opportunities.[33] Breaking Barriers is intended to help participants transition to permanent housing by taking over rent payments, reuniting participants with family, or connecting participants to longer-term housing options following program participation.

Breaking Barriers is supported by funding from two main organizations: the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) and the Los Angeles County Justice, Care and Opportunities Department (JCOD) through the Care First Community Investment (CFCI) grant. While eligibility for both funding streams requires participants to be justice-involved and experiencing or at imminent risk of homelessness, the primary distinction lies in their specific legal histories: BSCC-funded participants must have served time in a California state prison. Participants funded by JCOD qualify under broader criteria that include any justice-involved individuals, not just those who served time in state prison. *Justice-involved* can mean going to jail and being placed on formal felony probation, going to jail and being placed on summary probation, being placed on federal probation, being arrested and enrolled in a diversion program, or having any interaction with the criminal justice system. To qualify for the program, both BSCC-funded and JCOD-funded participants need to be willing and able to work. Members of the Breaking Barriers team collaborate to assess willingness and ability to work based on a holistic assessment of a participant's employment history, personal goals, and physical and mental health. Under both grants, the program supports participants in reaching financial independence within 18 months, but there is flexibility to extend to 24 months or beyond.

Breaking Barriers Pilot Program, Pilot Evaluation, and Program Changes

In 2015, Brilliant Corners launched the Breaking Barriers pilot through a public-private partnership with the Los Angeles County departments of probation and health services, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, Chrysalis, and the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. Following

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[31] Breaking Barriers defines *imminent risk of homelessness* as couch surfing, living in overcrowded units, or staying with family and friends without a permanent arrangement (Breaking Barriers staff, email to the authors, March 18, 2026).

[32] Brilliant Corners, homepage, undated.

[33] Chrysalis, homepage, undated.

the pilot's success, the program transitioned from philanthropic backing to a formalized countywide initiative. Over the subsequent decade, Breaking Barriers scaled up its operations and diversified its funding streams; as of 2025, the program is supported by BSCC and JCOD. During the 2025 calendar year, the program served a total of 359 enrolled clients.

RAND researchers previously evaluated the Breaking Barriers pilot,[34] which followed 343 participants enrolled during the program's initial 17 months (June 2015 to October 2016) and tracked their progress over a two-year period.[35] The evaluation found that

- for participants receiving the full suite of services, the felony reconviction rate was lower than that for the general felony offender population in California (13 percent versus 22 percent)
- 82 percent of participants obtained housing through the program
- of participants who received a rental subsidy through the program, most (62 percent) were still receiving a subsidy two years after program enrollment
- of the 41 participants who exited the program, 27 percent were stably housed, 32 percent were incarcerated, and 41 percent were in an unknown, unstable, or neutral setting
- the majority of participants were not employed at program entry or exit, and the average wage at exit was $12.00 per hour.

Drawing on these findings, the researchers recommended refining eligibility criteria, increasing employment and job-readiness support, and improving team collaboration to streamline service delivery.

Since then, Breaking Barriers has made significant changes to the program design to address areas of growth identified in the pilot evaluation. The program now matches participants' income levels to housing eligibility through a tiered housing model. In this model, the size of the housing unit a participant can access depends on their income. This approach serves two purposes: It motivates participants to increase their incomes by offering access to larger units as earnings rise, and it ensures that rent contributions are realistically aligned with what participants can afford. The rental contribution and tier structure were further refined based on insights from the initial pilot evaluation. To help participants prepare to take full responsibility for their rent, the program now requires a rent contribution of 50 percent of income starting at month 13 (rather than month 18, as in the pilot phase). This earlier transition is intended to build financial readiness and was implemented in response to the finding from the pilot evaluation that participants were contributing a relatively small share of rent by the end of the original subsidy period.

Additional program improvements include creating a program associate position and revising the quarterly need assessment process. The program associate focuses on identifying housing leads and building relationships with property managers to expedite placements and address housing access challenges. The updated quarterly assessment brings together the case manager, housing coordinator, and employment specialist to strengthen coordination and support more-holistic service planning. Breaking Barriers also enhanced its screening and eligibility tools by adding questions that help assess

[34] Sarah B. Hunter, Adam Scherling, Melissa Felician, Sangita M. Baxi, and Matthew Cefalu, *Breaking Barriers: A Rapid Rehousing and Employment Pilot Program for Adults on Probation in Los Angeles County: Evaluation Report*, RAND Corporation, RR-4316-BRC, 2020.

[35] Hunter et al., 2020.

participants more objectively and determine whether RRH is the best fit for their needs. A comparison of outcomes between the current and pilot evaluations is provided in Chapter 5.

Referral, Assessment, and Enrollment Processes

JCOD currently provides all referrals to the program; previously, multiple sources, such as Chrysalis and the Los Angeles County Probation Department, made referrals. A JCOD employee conducts the initial screening process with a prospective participant using a checklist of five to ten basic questions about housing status, employment status, and current program enrollment. This screening takes place before the eligibility meeting. After the initial screening, the participant completes a more detailed eligibility assessment, which evaluates housing needs, work history, willingness and ability to work, and vulnerability indicators using the Vulnerability Index–Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT). Staff use general guidelines to determine whether a prospective participant is well suited for the program, but they also exercise flexibility to account for individual circumstances. If staff find a participant ineligible for the program, they refer that individual to other supportive services, including the Coordinated Entry System, Developing Opportunities and Offering Reentry Solutions (a JCOD program), and other JCOD initiatives. Once enrolled, participants complete housing and employment assessments, and Breaking Barriers staff develop and revise a comprehensive service plan for each client every 90 days. Staff begin transition planning approximately one year after enrollment.

Program Model and Services Overview

The program uses an RRH model that combines time-limited rental subsidies with wraparound services to promote long-term housing stability and financial independence. Each participant receives a coordinated support team consisting of a case manager and a housing coordinator from Brilliant Corners and an employment specialist from Chrysalis. Services include

- housing services: unit search assistance, move-in support (security deposits and furniture), and ongoing tenancy support
- employment services: orientation, job readiness training, career planning, résumé development, and connections to transitional employment opportunities
- case management: wraparound support linking participants to public benefits, legal services, financial counseling, child-care assistance, and soft skill development.

After graduating from the program, participants receive case management services for three months to further support their transition. Chapter 3 provides an in-depth look at the enrollment process, the comprehensive array of services and supports offered, and program operations, drawing extensively on the experiences and perspectives of staff and participants.

Rental Subsidy Structure

The program is intended to transition participants to stable, independent housing through a structured, graduated rental subsidy model. Participants are typically enrolled for 12 to 24 months, during which they assume an increasing share of their monthly rent. This incremental approach is intended to build financial management skills and prepare participants to sustain housing independently after program completion. Table 1.1 outlines the pre-2022 and 2022–2025 rental subsidy schedules for Breaking Barriers participants.

Table 1.1. Pre-2022 and Current Rental Subsidy Schedules for Breaking Barriers Participants

Period	Pre-2022 Schedule: Participant Contribution	2022–2025 Schedule: Participant Contribution
Months 1–6	30% of income	30% of income
Months 7–12	30% of income	40% of income
Months 13–18	40% of income	50% of income
Month 19 and after	50% of income	50% of income

Another feature of the program is the use of rent ceilings, which are determined by unit size, household composition, and a client's current monthly income. Rent ceilings were not part of the original program design but were implemented in 2022 based on an analysis of program costs and to help clients prepare to take over their full rent when they graduate. These ceilings are directly linked to participants' income levels, ensuring that housing placements remain affordable both during and after program participation. Participants who increase their incomes during the program may be eligible to move to a larger unit at the end of their initial lease, provided that they remain enrolled and meet the income requirements. Table 1.2 presents the maximum allowable rent and corresponding monthly income requirements for both single occupants and families. Case managers and housing coordinators work with participants to identify units that meet these criteria, supporting long-term housing stability.

By linking rent ceilings to income requirements, the program is intended to ensure that participants are not placed in units that would be unaffordable once they transition to paying the full rent themselves. This approach is intended to reduce the risk of housing instability and promote successful exits from the program.

Table 1.2. Maximum Allowable Rent and Monthly Employment and Income Requirements for Single Occupants and Families

Unit Size	Maximum Price per Month	Income Requirements (Single Occupant)	Income Requirements (Family)
2 bedrooms	$2,600	• Not applicable	Supervisor approval required; case by case
1 bedroom	$2,000	• Employed at least 32 hours per week • Income: $2,600–$2,800 or above	Supervisor approval required; case by case
Studio	$1,750	• Employed part-time • Income: $2,150 or above	Not applicable
SRO/single	$1,300	• General relief • Income: $221 or above	Not applicable
Room for rent	$1,000	• No income (must have own lease, cannot sublease)	Not applicable

NOTE: SRO = single-room occupancy.

Program Theory and Logic Model

Breaking Barriers' theory of change connects housing stability, employment, and supportive services to improved reentry outcomes. The program's logic model (Figure 1.1), as presented in the Cohort 3 Local Evaluation Plan submitted to BSCC, summarizes how program resources and activities are expected to lead to improved housing retention, financial stability, and reduced justice system involvement.

Figure 1.1. Breaking Barriers Logic Model from BSCC, Cohort 3 Local Evaluation Plan

Inputs

Funding
- $2.5 Million ARG grant (rental subsidies)
- $1.5 Million CFCI grant (ICMS costs, including staff, participant expenses, supportive services)

Staff:
- 7 Case Managers
- 4 Housing Coordinators
- 4 Employment Specialist
- Housing Acquisitions Team

Housing units in the private market

Participants
- Justice-impacted individuals who are homeless or precariously housed

External Partners
- LA County Probation (Screen and submit referrals to program)
- Chrysalis (Employment partner)
- LA County Justice, Care and Opportunities Department (Program design, management, auditing, oversight)
- Reentry Intensive Case Management Services (RICMS) (community resources and linkage)
- Baby2Baby (family needs)

Evaluation
- RAND Corporation

Activities

Eligibility Meetings
- Screen referrals and determine appropriate care

Case Management
- Provide linkages to community resources, referrals for basic needs, and assist with life skills
- Complete monthly visits for ongoing support and to identify needs
- Complete individualized service plan and quarterly needs assessments

Employment
- Assist with employment related services, including resume, cover letter and direct hire positions
- Linkage to financial and educational services

Housing Services
- Identify appropriate housing needs and services for participant
- Assist with rental applications and move in costs
- Complete quarterly retention visits for ongoing housing support and stability

Outputs

Eligibility Meetings
- Process 60 referrals and provide services to target population

Case Management
- Increase housing retention rate
- 100 participants given case management services over course of grant
- Link 100 participants to basic needs and community resources

Employment
- 50 participants linked to employment and educational services over the course of the grant
- 80% of participants earned above minimum wage

Housing Services
- Process 90 Brilliant Corners Housing Applications
- Provide rental assistance to at least 90 participants by month 21 of the grant period
- House at least 15 participants per quarter
- 80% of participants maintain housing retention at month 12

Outcomes

Program Enrollment
- Increase number of enrollments in Breaking Barriers program

Case Management
- Improve basic life skills
- Increase access to community resources

Employment
- Improve financial stability
- Increase access to training and education
- Increase long-term housing sustainability

Housing Services
- Improve housing retention
- Increase access to affordable housing

Impacts

Improve participant outcomes
- Financial Stability
- Housing status
- Employment
- Generational impact and family systems

Reduce involvement with law enforcement and justice system

NOTE: ARG = Adult Reentry Grant; ICMS = intensive case management services; LA = Los Angeles. The outputs presented in the logic model pertain specifically to the BSCC-funded portion of the Breaking Barriers program.

Evaluation Goals and Research Questions

This evaluation provides a comprehensive assessment of how the Breaking Barriers initiative supports justice-involved individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County. We explore the extent to which Breaking Barriers achieves its central aims: increasing housing stability, promoting employment and financial independence, and reducing recidivism among its participants.

Evaluation Scope and Funding

BSCC initially commissioned this evaluation to examine outcomes for individuals supported through the Adult Reentry Grant Program. This evaluation focuses on the third cohort of participants funded by the BSCC Adult Reentry Grant Program (BSCC Cohort 3), representing the latest phase of BSCC-supported implementation. JCOD later provided additional funding through the CFCI initiative, which allowed us to expand the scope of the evaluation to include all Breaking Barriers participants, regardless of funding source. (CFCI emerged as a result of Measure J, a Los Angeles County initiative that allocates 10 percent of unrestricted county funds to alternatives to incarceration.) While JCOD did not specify unique evaluation metrics, we applied the BSCC-defined metrics to the entire program population to ensure consistency and comparability across participant groups.

To address the requirements of both funders and to provide a nuanced understanding of program outcomes, we

- analyzed outcomes for BSCC-funded participants separately, to meet BSCC reporting requirements
- present findings for the full Breaking Barriers population, including those supported by JCOD/CFCI, using the same metrics for consistency, comprehensive assessment, and increased statistical power.

Research Questions and Approach

Our process and outcome evaluation employs a mixed-method design, integrating quantitative analysis of program data with qualitative interviews to capture both measurable outcomes and the lived experiences of participants and staff.

The process evaluation answers the following research questions:

1. Did the program achieve its process objectives of
    a. processing 60 referrals by month 12 of the grant period
    b. providing case management to 100 participants
    c. linking 100 participants to basic needs and community resources
    d. linking 50 participants to employment and educational services

    e. processing 90 Brilliant Corners housing applications
    f. providing rental assistance to at least 90 participants by month 21 of the grant period
    g. housing at least 15 participants per quarter?

2. Who is served by the program, in terms of demographics, family status (married or living with domestic partner, dependent children), housing prior to program entry, income at program entry, and employment status at program entry?
3. Which program resources and linkages are most frequently utilized? How does usage of program resources and linkages differ between BSCC Cohort 3 and earlier cohorts?

In the process evaluation, we also track participant flow through each program stage; assess performance on core process objectives, such as referrals, enrollment, service delivery, and housing placements; and provide detailed quantitative findings on participant demographics, service utilization, and housing outcomes for both BSCC Cohort 3 and all program participants during the evaluation period (March 1, 2023–December 31, 2025).

In the outcome evaluation, we use descriptive statistics to examine participant housing, employment, income, and reincarceration outcomes. The outcome analysis answers the following research questions:

4. Do participants change their status in terms of employment, income, and housing stability over the course of the program?
    a. What percentage of participants retain housing at 12, 18, and 24 months after receipt of the rental subsidy? Did the program meet its goal of maintaining a housing retention rate above 80 percent at month 12 of the participants' rental subsidy?[36]
        i. For program participants who did not maintain housing, what were the reasons for loss of housing?
        ii. What percentage of participants take over their rent?
    b. What percentage of participants earned minimum wage at or before program exit? Did the program meet its goal of 80 percent of participants earning above minimum wage at or before program exit?
    c. How are participant demographic characteristics associated with outcomes at the end of the program period?
    d. What is the association between employment and housing retention?
    e. What is the association between participant engagement (e.g., phone contacts, home visits, community visits) and outcomes at the end of the program period?
    f. What is the rate of program exit due to incarceration?

[36] For participants who enrolled toward the end of the enrollment period, sufficient time might not have passed to examine 12-, 18-, and 24-month outcome periods. Table 5.1 in Chapter 5 summarizes housing retention for all participants and for BSCC Cohort 3 in response to research question 4a. Denominators include only those who received a subsidy and had sufficient follow-up: 212 and 92 at 12 months, 150 and 57 at 18 months, and 117 and 41 at 24 months, for all participants and BSCC Cohort 3, respectively.

5. How do the outcomes of participants enrolled in the current Breaking Barriers program compare to a prior cohort of Breaking Barriers participants who were enrolled between June 2015 and October 2016 (i.e., the pilot period)?[37]

We also provide detailed analyses of housing retention rates, wage outcomes, and program exit reasons in the outcome evaluation. Additionally, we contextualize findings with breakdowns by demographic factors, engagement levels, and trends over time.

In addition to quantitative analysis, qualitative interviews with program staff and participants provide context and insight into the following topics:

- program enrollment
- types of services received
- participant exits and outcomes
- program strengths and challenges.

Table 1.3 summarizes the key characteristics, sample sizes, funding sources, and analytic roles of each participant group discussed in this report. It also shows which groups were included in the evaluation. This overview is intended to help readers understand the distinctions between BSCC Cohort 3, JCOD/CFCI, all participants, and the pilot cohort, as well as clarify which groups are included in the various components of the evaluation, including both the quantitative and qualitative analyses.

[37] Hunter et al., 2020.

Table 1.3. Participant Groups and Evaluation Components, by Research Question

Group	Sample Size	Enrollment Dates	Funding Source(s)	Included in Evaluation?	Evaluation Components, Qualitative Findings, and Research Questions Addressed
BSCC Cohort 3	193	March 1, 2023–December 31, 2025	BSCC (Cohort 3)	Yes	• Process metrics (RQ 1) • Participant characteristics (RQ 2) • Resource use (RQ 3) • Outcome metrics (RQ 4) • Comparison with pilot (RQ 5) • Qualitative findings
JCOD/CFCI	267	March 1, 2023–December 31, 2025	JCOD/CFCI	Yes	• Included in all-participant analyses (RQs 2–5) • Not separately analyzed for process metrics (RQ 1) • Qualitative findings
All participants	460	March 1, 2023–December 31, 2025	BSCC, JCOD/CFCI	Yes	• RQs 2–5 • Qualitative findings
Pilot cohort	228	June 2015–October 2016	Hilton Foundation/Los Angeles County	No (comparison only)	• Used for historical comparison (RQ 5) • Qualitative findings do not apply

NOTE: RQ = research question. BSCC Cohort 3 grant period: October 1, 2022–April 30, 2026. Services provided under BSCC Cohort 3 grant: March 1, 2023–December 31, 2025. The final four months of the grant were for evaluation and audit only. BSCC Cohort 3 enrollment: March 1, 2023–December 31, 2025; includes 20 to 25 "rollover" clients from Cohort 2, as well as new enrollees.

Chapter 2

Methods

We used a mixed-method approach to assess the implementation and outcomes of the Breaking Barriers program. We combined quantitative analysis of administrative program data with qualitative interviews of staff and participants. This approach allowed us to examine both measurable outcomes and the lived experiences of those involved in the program.

Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis

As part of the evaluation, we conducted interviews with Breaking Barriers staff members and program participants. Between June and August 2025, we interviewed ten staff members from Brilliant Corners and Chrysalis, representing a variety of tenures, roles, and lived experiences. Between October and December 2025, we interviewed nine program participants, representing a variety of enrollment durations and program experiences. Each Breaking Barriers participant who took part in an interview received a $50 gift card. We conducted staff interviews until we reached thematic saturation. Participant interviews approached saturation for most themes, except for areas of program improvement, which did not reach saturation because participants often said that there was nothing they would change about the program.[38] The themes discussed and the corresponding interview questions are noted in Table 2.1.

We developed two semistructured interview protocols, one for Breaking Barriers staff and one for participants, to allow both flexibility and comparability across interviews.[39] We conducted all interviews remotely, by phone or videoconference. We did not record interviews, but two research team members attended each interview whenever possible, with one leading the discussion while the other took detailed notes. We analyzed interview data using both deductive and inductive approaches.[40] We preidentified some themes based on the interview protocol, while others emerged as we reviewed interview notes. One team member completed the qualitative coding and regularly consulted with the other team member, who was present for all of the interviews, to discuss emerging themes and ensure analytical rigor.

[38] Benjamin Saunders, Julius Sim, Tom Kingstone, Shula Baker, Jackie Waterfield, Bernadette Bartlam, Heather Burroughs, and Clare Jinks, "Saturation in Qualitative Research: Exploring Its Conceptualization and Operationalization," *Quality & Quantity*, Vol. 52, No. 4, July 2018.

[39] Petros Karatsareas, "Semi-Structured Interviews," in Ruth Kircher and Lena Zipp, eds., *Research Methods in Language Attitudes*, Cambridge University Press, 2022.

[40] Jennifer Fereday and Eimear Muir-Cochrane, "Demonstrating Rigor Using Thematic Analysis: A Hybrid Approach of Inductive and Deductive Coding and Theme Development," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2006.

Table 2.1. Themes and Corresponding Interview Questions

Theme	Staff Interview Questions	Participant Interview Questions
Effective program components	• Can you describe the [participant referral process/case management services/rental assistance/housing placement services/housing retention services]? What aspects of this process are effective? • In your opinion, what are the most effective parts of the Breaking Barriers program?	• Can you tell us about your experience as a Breaking Barriers program participant? • In your experience, what parts of the Breaking Barriers program are working well? • Is there anything else we should have asked or any other feedback you would like to share about the program?
Program challenges	• Can you describe the [participant referral process/case management services/rental assistance/housing placement services/housing retention services]? What aspects of this process could be improved? What common challenges are encountered when providing this service? • Are there aspects of the program that you would like to see change or that could be improved? If so, what are they?	• Can you tell us about your experience as a Breaking Barriers program participant? • Are there any aspects of the program that you would like to see changed? • Are there any additional services or support resources that you think you would benefit from? • Is there anything else we should have asked or any other feedback you would like to share about the program?
Program enrollment	N/A	• How did you first learn about the program?
Types of services received	• What resources or services offered by Breaking Barriers are most frequently used by participants? Why do you think these resources are used so frequently? • Can you describe the [participant referral process/case management services/rental assistance/housing placement services/housing retention services]? What aspects of this process are effective? What aspects of this process could be improved? What common challenges are encountered when providing this service?	• What has your experience working with your case manager been like? • What type of support have they offered? • Have they connected you to any other resources? • How was your experience working with an employment specialist from Chrysalis during your time enrolled in Breaking Barriers? What types of support did they provide? • How has your experience receiving rental assistance gone? Has it gone smoothly, or have you encountered any issues? • What was your experience searching for housing like? Did you receive support finding housing?
Participant exits and outcomes	• How frequently are Breaking Barriers participants able to increase their wages over the course of their work with Chrysalis program? • We understand that some participants may lose their housing while enrolled in	• Has your income increased while enrolled in Breaking Barriers? Why or why not? • How confident are you that you can remain stably housed after graduating

Theme	Staff Interview Questions	Participant Interview Questions
	Breaking Barriers. Have you seen this happen? What are the most common reasons for participants to lose their housing? • Can you describe the exit process for Breaking Barriers participants who graduate or leave the program? • We understand that some participants may lose their jobs while enrolled in Breaking Barriers. Have you seen this happen? Does this impact the participant's housing?	from the Breaking Barriers program given your current income? • What is your current housing situation? If participant is currently housed: How long have you been in your current unit? Is the unit supported by Breaking Barriers? • Have you moved or relocated units at any point during the Breaking Barriers program? How did that go? • Have you lost your housing at any point while enrolled in Breaking Barriers? This does not include relocation, where you are moving from one residence to another. We're interested in knowing whether there have been any times during the program when you have not had permanent housing.
Programmatic changes over time	• Has Breaking Barriers undergone any programmatic changes since you joined? If so, what were they?	N/A
Participant subpopulations	• Do you notice any difference in participant needs or outcomes between individuals exiting county jail and those exiting state prisons?	• Are Breaking Barriers staff sensitive to your cultural background and experience?
Participant satisfaction	N/A	• In your experience, what parts of the Breaking Barriers program are working well? • Are there any aspects of the program that you would like to see changed? • Are there any additional services or support resources that you think you would benefit from? How about others in the program?

NOTE: N/A = not applicable.

Quantitative Data and Analysis

Program Data

Brilliant Corners and Chrysalis provided administrative data to address research objectives regarding program participation and outcomes. We used multiple datasets, including the following:

- Participant-level data for all individuals enrolled in Breaking Barriers between March 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025.[41] This information included funding sources; demographic characteristics (i.e., age, race, ethnicity, and gender); supervision status; housing at entry and exit; employment status, including wages at entry and exit; move-in and move-out dates; engagement with program services, including program enrollment and exit dates; and incarceration dates. Rental subsidy values and required contributions were not provided.
- Job placement reports for participants who started jobs while in the program, including hours per week, starting rate, job title, and duration.
- Chrysalis and Brilliant Corners engagement events and aggregated supportive services counts.

Breaking Barriers program staff anonymized all datasets and linked the participant-level and job placement report datasets through a unique participant identifier, allowing comprehensive tracking of participants' program experience and outcomes.

Quantitative Analytic Approach

We examined program progress, participant characteristics, and factors related to outcomes, including incarceration, housing stability, employment, and income. Analyses included

- **descriptive statistics** to summarize participant characteristics, service utilization, and key process and outcome metrics, such as time between program milestones
- **multivariable regression methods** to examine associations between participant characteristics and outcomes; these methods included
  - **logistic regression** to estimate the probability of binary outcomes (e.g., obtaining housing, securing employment, exits due to incarceration)
  - **Cox proportional hazards models** to analyze time-to-event outcomes, such as duration of housing retention, while accounting for right-censoring due to the study end date.

In the outcome evaluation, we explored whether participant characteristics (including age, gender, race/ethnicity, and supervision status) were related to housing obtainment, employment, wage, and

[41] The full BSCC grant funding period was October 2022 to April 2026; this included time for Breaking Barriers to make preparations for additional participant enrollments and an evaluation of BSCC-funded participants. The participant data contained only those participants who received services from the Breaking Barriers program between March 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025, covering both previously enrolled participants who were still in the program and participants who enrolled within the evaluation period.

risk of exit to incarceration. We also examined the association between program engagement and service utilization on these outcomes.

Because the evaluation did not include a comparison group, all analyses are descriptive or associational. We cannot attribute causality to the program, but we can identify which participant characteristics and program factors are associated with more- or less-favorable outcomes. The analysis also highlighted groups for which the intersection of different characteristics may indicate a need for additional support.

The analytic sample consisted of all 460 individuals who participated in Breaking Barriers during the study period (March 1, 2023–December 31, 2025), including 193 individuals in BSCC Cohort 3. We included participants regardless of whether they completed the full 24-month rental subsidy, ensuring that findings reflect the full range of program experiences. We limited analyses of outcomes at 12, 18, and 24 months to outcomes for participants with sufficient follow-up time. The survival analysis accounts for right-censoring from the data cutoff of December 31, 2025.

Table 2.2 summarizes our quantitative data sources, methods, and measures.

Table 2.2. Quantitative Data Sources, Methods, and Measures, by Project Component

Project Component	Data Sources and Methods	Measures
Receive and process referrals from Los Angeles County Probation to Breaking Barriers program (60 by month 12)	• Administrative datasets from Brilliant Corners and Chrysalis, including data from eligibility meeting • Summary statistics	• Number of participants referred • Number of participants enrolled • Supervision status and referral source
Provide rental assistance to target population through the Breaking Barriers program (90 by month 21)	• Administrative datasets from Brilliant Corners and Chrysalis • Summary statistics	• Move-in and move-out date • Current housing status
Support program participants in retaining housing once they are housed (retention rate above 80 percent at month 12)	• Administrative datasets from Brilliant Corners and Chrysalis • Summary statistics • For further analysis on housing retention: logistic and Cox proportional hazards regression to estimate probability of losing housing • Demographic characteristics: age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, supervision status, referral source, and association with participation in certain services provided by Brilliant Corners and Chrysalis, such as job preparation and financial aid workshops	• Housing status • Move-in and move-out date • Probability of exit from housing and exit from program

Limitations

This evaluation is subject to some limitations. First, the absence of a comparison group means that we cannot determine what would have happened to participants in the absence of the program and that causal effects cannot be attributed to Breaking Barriers. Second, some participants had limited follow-up time or incomplete data, which may affect estimates of long-term outcomes. Third, we do not know whether clients participated in job training while incarcerated, which might have played a role in reentry employment outcomes. Finally, qualitative findings are based on a convenience sample and might not be fully representative of all staff or participant experiences. This convenience sample did not include participants who exited the program prematurely or who did not engage with service providers, so the qualitative data might not fully represent the broader program population or capture perspectives on program barriers and issues with program fit.

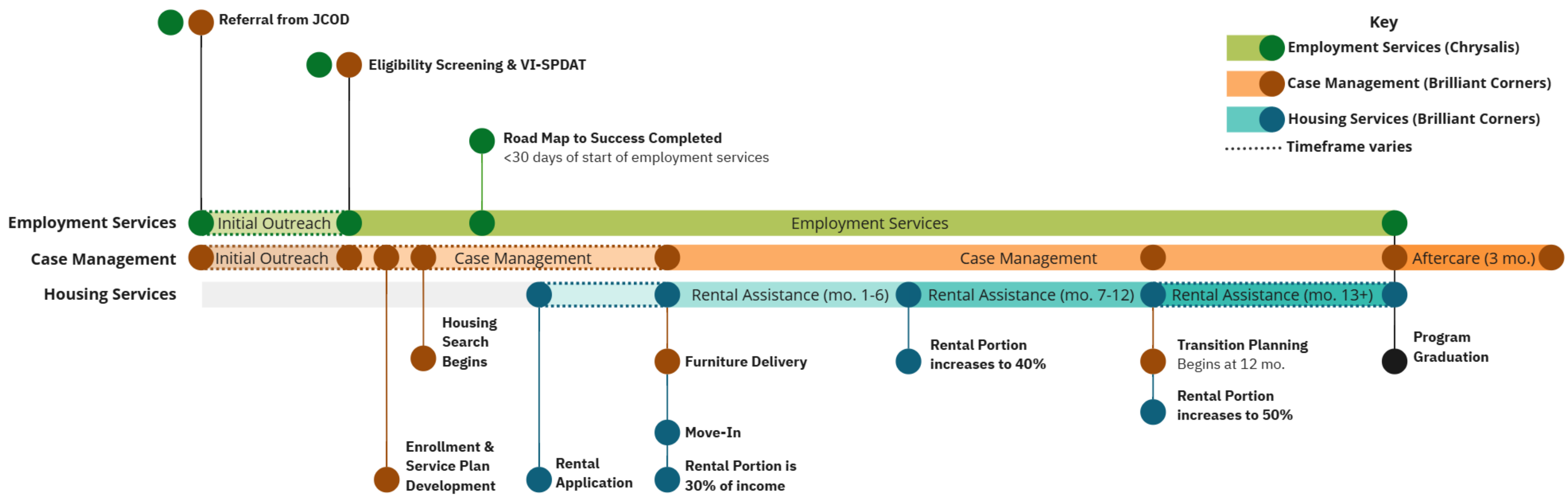
Chapter 3

Qualitative Findings on Program Implementation and Stakeholder Perspectives

In this chapter, we present findings from qualitative interviews with Breaking Barriers staff and program participants, offering an in-depth look at how the program operates in practice and how those involved experience it. We organize the qualitative findings by theme. In this project, we defined a *theme* as a recurrent pattern in the data that helps answer the primary research questions. Most themes include findings from both staff and participant interviews.

Figure 3.1 is a process map of the Breaking Barriers program, summarizing the key stages and activities that participants experience, from referral through program completion and aftercare. We developed the process map based on interviews, documentation that program staff shared, and meetings with program leadership. The figure illustrates the roles of Chrysalis, which provides employment services, and Brilliant Corners, which provides case management and housing services. The figure depicts the sequence of eligibility screening, service delivery, housing subsidy steps, and transition planning described in the sections that follow.

Figure 3.1. Breaking Barriers Process Map



Program Enrollment

Findings from interviews with both Breaking Barriers staff and program participants provide insight into the program's participant screening and enrollment processes. Staff discussed how the current procedures are designed to ensure that participants are well positioned to succeed in a time-limited model, while participants shared how they first learned about and entered the program. Together, these perspectives highlight an enrollment system that is intended to produce both efficiency and fit for participants.

Participant Screening and Eligibility

Staff described Breaking Barriers' enrollment criteria as focused on identifying individuals who are most likely to achieve housing and employment stability within the program's time-limited framework. In 2020, after observing that some participants faced employment barriers that limited long-term housing retention, Breaking Barriers leadership revised the screening criteria to more rigorously screen for participants who were well positioned and willing to work. Previously, Breaking Barriers had enrolled participants with severe mental and physical health issues who might not have been as well suited for a time-limited housing assistance program. Staff now prioritize eligibility for participants who express willingness to work and demonstrate capacity to assume their rent after program support ends. Staff use program-specific screening questions, as well as the VI-SPDAT, which is an assessment tool that the homelessness services sector uses to screen and help prioritize people who are the most vulnerable. The Breaking Barriers screener includes questions about the interviewees' last job and factors that might affect employment, such as community service hours. When staff encounter participants who do not meet Breaking Barriers' eligibility requirements, they connect them to other supportive services and housing programs, such as the Coordinated Entry System, Developing Opportunities and Offering Reentry Solutions, or other JCOD programs.

Under Breaking Barriers' current referral system, all referrals flow through the county's JCOD system. Although referrals can originate from other sources, such as probation officers or Chrysalis staff, all referrals are submitted to JCOD for initial review. After JCOD reviews and forwards referrals to Breaking Barriers, Breaking Barriers staff contact each referred participant up to three times to initiate the eligibility process before closing out the referral if there is no response. Once a client has been contacted, a senior employment specialist and a senior case manager work together to schedule the initial eligibility meeting in person at Brilliant Corners' offices. The eligibility meeting consists of an assessment that covers a ten-item employment screener addressing participant needs, work readiness, and interest in employment; a vulnerability assessment; and a housing assessment. To assess vulnerability, Breaking Barriers uses the VI-SPDAT assessment for single adults, American version 2.01,[42] typically targeting a score of 5 or lower, though staff stress that there is some flexibility to

[42] OrgCode, "Vulnerability Index–Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT): Prescreen Triage Tool for Single Adults," American version 2.0, 2015.

account for individual circumstances.[43] Staff use the housing assessment to collect information about the participant's housing needs and history and later incorporate that information into the Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool (FHSP) application as part of the housing process. Brilliant Corners operates the FHSP, a locally funded rental subsidy program in Los Angeles County that provides rental assistance and tenancy support services to individuals experiencing homelessness.[44] Once Brilliant Corners approves the FHSP application internally, staff and the participant begin the housing search.

After a client completes the eligibility meeting and staff determine that the client is eligible for the program, staff assign a case manager. The case manager and the employment specialist work closely with the client to develop an individualized service plan and complete enrollment paperwork. Staff revise the service plan every 90 days to adjust for any changes in the participant's needs. Service plans outline participant goals, including housing and employment, and often address related issues, such as transportation or child care.

Participant Pathways into the Program

Staff discussed recent updates to the participant referral process, which was implemented in 2025 and had been used for about six weeks at the time of the interviews. Previously, staff received referrals directly from three sources—Chrysalis, Probation, and JCOD—and held more-frequent meetings to review them. Under the new system, JCOD passes all referrals to Breaking Barriers. However, referrals still originate from multiple sources. For example, Chrysalis staff or Probation Department employees can still initiate referrals, but JCOD first reviews and screens those referrals before sending them to Breaking Barriers. Staff noted that the implementation of this change initially slowed the process, resulting in a temporary decrease in referrals. As often happens with the adoption of any new system, staff reported technical challenges, such as difficulties accessing and approving referrals. Breaking Barriers leaders are hopeful that as they refine the process and staff become more familiar with it, the referral rate will increase.

Participants described learning about Breaking Barriers through multiple sources, including referrals from Chrysalis staff, Los Angeles County Probation Department staff, sober living facilities, and community colleges, as well as word-of-mouth recommendations from peers and friends. Several participants first heard about Breaking Barriers while incarcerated, while others were introduced to it after release through community networks. Participants spoke positively about the enrollment experience, describing staff as transparent and supportive throughout eligibility interviews and assessments.

Types of Services Received

Interviews with staff and participants highlighted the broad array of supports offered through Breaking Barriers' coordinated service model. Both groups described a system built around housing,

[43] A score of 5 or lower is indicative of lower acuity, meaning that the client needs less intensive support. For example, a higher acuity score is needed to be eligible for permanent supportive housing, which is designed for people with chronic health conditions and homelessness experiences.

[44] Los Angeles County Department of Health Services, "Programs," webpage, undated.

employment, and financial stability, complemented by tailored assistance and ongoing needs assessments. Staff emphasized the systematic structure of multidisciplinary teams and the use of service delivery processes to administer rental subsidies, case management, and employment support, while participants reflected on how these services met their diverse needs and facilitated successful reentry.

Coordinated Services Teams

Staff explained that every participant receives support from a collaborative team that typically includes a case manager and a housing coordinator from Brilliant Corners and an employment specialist from Chrysalis. Each team member contributes distinct expertise while coordinating closely with the others to ensure that participants receive consistent and comprehensive support. Case managers serve as the central link across multiple service providers and agencies. Housing coordinators manage landlord relations and lease and utility setup and maintain property compliance. The Breaking Barriers program associate helps search for units that may be a good fit for participants, and case managers share these potential rental listings with clients and help them apply for units. Breaking Barriers participants also play an active role in the search process, and some may need less support with the search and application processes than others. Employment specialist staff deliver individualized employment support.

Case managers visit participants at least monthly, and housing coordinators and employment specialists connect with participants at least quarterly. Staff conduct visits regularly and more frequently when needed to maintain engagement and respond to emerging challenges. Case managers, housing coordinators, and employment specialists aim to meet participants in person. However, if a participant is unable to meet in person, these team members are also available to provide support and check in by email, text message, and phone. Sometimes, staff organize joint visits that include the case manager, housing coordinator, and employment specialist.

Apart from scheduled joint visits, case managers, housing coordinators, and employment specialists frequently contact one another about their clients to help provide coordinated care. During interviews, staff described changes to the ways these team members work together to promote more-effective communication. As of 2021, Breaking Barriers was holding a quarterly joint meeting between Chrysalis and Brilliant Corners staff. Additionally, the Breaking Barriers team has started using group chats with participants and their support teams to improve coordination between the case management, housing, and employment teams.

Participants described the team-based approach as essential for staying organized and connected throughout the program. They reported frequent contact with staff, and some noted that they spoke with staff every week. Participants also highlighted timely follow-up on issues and appreciated the strong coordination between housing and employment staff, which ensured that the participants' needs were consistently addressed.

Housing Services

Staff and participants described a wide variety of housing services that help participants find and retain housing. Staff described an intensive array of supports offered through Breaking Barriers, including monthly rental subsidies, dispute mediation between tenants and landlords, assistance with unit searches, help with move-in logistics, and financial support for deposits, furniture, and utility setup. Every Breaking Barriers participant receives a monthly rental subsidy paid by Brilliant Corners directly to the property provider. Both Brilliant Corners and the participant pay a portion of the rent each month. The participant's rental subsidy is based on their income and length of time, and the participant's rental portion increases over time. Rental subsidies follow a tiered structure; participant contributions and unit eligibility are outlined in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 in Chapter 1. If a participant does not have any income when they first enroll in the program or because of job loss, then Breaking Barriers covers the full monthly rent during this time.

Several aspects of Breaking Barriers' housing services were redesigned in 2022 to support a more realistic approach to housing placement, including restricting eligibility for one-bedroom units to participants with sufficient income, given the difficulty of assuming full rent after program exit. One staff member described the change as follows:

> After looking at data, we've realized that to set up a participant for success, their housing opportunity is based off of their income. If they have no income, they're only eligible for a room for rent. If they only have GR [General Relief], they're eligible for a room for rent or SRO—so it's like a small studio without a bathroom. If they have income, they're eligible for a one-bedroom or studio.[45]

The rate at which the participant's rental portion increased changed in 2022 as well. The program adjusted the rental steps such that participants contribute more earlier so that they can get used to budgeting while still enrolled in the program (see Table 1.1 in Chapter 1).

Throughout Breaking Barriers' program tenure, there have also been changes to the housing search process. Previously, Brilliant Corners was able to assign units to Breaking Barriers participants from its portfolio of scattered site units. Now, case managers work with participants to search for housing, and Breaking Barriers program associates help support case managers by identifying housing leads and sharing them with the team.

Participants described the housing component as essential to their stability. Many said that staff helped identify listings, schedule viewings, accompany them to tours, and guide them through the application process. They expressed clear understanding of how their rent contribution would change over time and reported valuing the transparency around expectations. Move-in assistance, including furniture and household goods, helped make new units livable and eased the transition. Several participants credited Breaking Barriers with keeping them housed during difficult periods, reinforcing the effectiveness of the program's mix of tangible and relational housing supports.

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[45] Unless otherwise indicated, the quotations in this chapter are from interviews that we conducted with Breaking Barriers staff members and program participants. The interviews with staff members took place between June and August 2025, and the interviews with program participants took place between October and December 2025. Interviewees are not named.

Employment Assistance

Staff described employment services provided by Chrysalis as central to Breaking Barriers' holistic design. All participants receive support pursuing sustainable careers through orientation sessions, job readiness training, résumé development, and motivational interviews to clarify goals. Chrysalis Enterprises offers transitional employment in such roles as maintenance and security for up to a year, providing a supportive environment in which to build workplace skills where staff handle setbacks with coaching rather than immediate dismissal.

Additional optional supports include stipends for participants enrolled in certification programs, job leads, computer literacy workshops, and assistance with employment-related expenses, such as interview clothing, transportation, uniforms, tools, and certification fees. One unique resource is a dedicated staff member who cultivates relationships with local employers to expand job opportunities. The program also offers transportation to interviews and targeted job application support.

In early 2025, Chrysalis implemented changes to the workforce training component of the program. All program participants must complete Chrysalis's Roadmap to Success, which is a series of employment training coursework. While the Roadmap to Success was always part of the Chrysalis curriculum, participants are now required to complete the Roadmap to Success coursework within 30 days of enrolling in the program. The new timeline helps participants complete this portion of the training early on so that they can benefit from it throughout their time in the program. Chrysalis also changed aspects of how it supports the job search process by placing a larger emphasis on participant buy-in and by developing career plans that align with participants' long-term career goals.

Participants said that Chrysalis staff regularly shared information about job openings, interviews, and hiring fairs. Staff helped participants secure work supplies, such as tools or work boots, and professional clothing for interviews. Some participants gained direct work experience through employment with Chrysalis Enterprises and described this experience as a valuable opportunity, particularly for individuals whose prior jobs had had inconsistent hours or unreliable schedules. Participants interested in pursuing education noted that Chrysalis offered help covering school-related costs, fees, and supplies, allowing the participants to invest in career pathways that aligned with their long-term goals.

Financial Assistance

Both staff and participants discussed the importance of flexible financial supports that help participants maintain stability amid unexpected costs. Material supports range from grocery and gas gift cards to furniture, e-bikes, transit passes, utility or rental payment late fees, diapers, court fees, child-care expenses, and car seats, some supplied through community partnerships, such as Baby2Baby. Staff stressed that flexible support, especially for financial emergencies, such as unexpected car repairs, helped participants maintain stable employment and housing.

Participants' accounts illustrate how these flexible funds reduce day-to-day stress and prevent setbacks. Many participants shared examples of receiving grocery or gas gift cards, help with car registration fees, or small emergency payments that allowed them to stay on track with work or housing. They viewed the flexibility of Breaking Barriers' financial support as an important safeguard, distinguishing it from programs with more-rigid limits.

Linkages to External Resources

When participants' needs extend beyond the program's scope, staff arrange connections to additional services, such as family reunification programs, mental health care, food pantries, clothing closets, legal aid for charge reduction or expungement, and assistance applying for public benefits. Staff said that financial counseling, credit repair, and tax filing support were also common referrals. For participants nearing program exit, staff sometimes facilitate transfers to other housing assistance programs or affordable housing units. Brilliant Corners provides three months of aftercare case management postgraduation, continuing to link participants with relevant community resources during this transition.

Participants confirmed frequent referrals and coordination with community resources. Many accessed outside services through Breaking Barriers' connections, receiving help with expungement and access to food pantries. This breadth of linkages made participants feel well supported and able to tackle challenges that might otherwise have hindered progress.

Soft Skill Development

An important, though less tangible, service area is soft skill development. Staff explained that successful reentry requires more than housing and employment: It depends on participants' ability to communicate effectively, manage conflicts, and adapt to workplace expectations. Coaching in these areas often uses motivational interviewing techniques to help participants reflect on personal goals and relationship dynamics. As one staff member observed, "I try, at least personally, to work on all of my participants' soft skills. . . . Like, we'll get them a referral for employment, but they may not know how to communicate with a supervisor when they have a disagreement."

The nine program participants whom we interviewed for this evaluation often reflected on how program engagement improved their confidence and interpersonal skills. Some described learning to advocate for themselves with employers or landlords, manage disagreements, and approach challenges more constructively. These experiences illustrate how Breaking Barriers' holistic model extends beyond immediate practical support to foster long-term personal growth.

Ongoing Needs Assessment

Staff assess needs during intake and reevaluate them regularly to adjust services in response to changes in housing, employment, health, or family circumstances. Staff conduct biweekly or monthly check-ins, and formal assessments occur every 90 days, covering mental and physical health, housing, employment, and family reunification. Staff update employment plans using motivational interviewing to ensure alignment with participant interests.

Participant Exits and Outcomes

Interviews with Breaking Barriers staff and program participants consistently indicated that Breaking Barriers supports lasting improvements in housing stability, employment, and self-sufficiency. Both groups described exit planning and outcomes as individualized processes designed to help participants sustain progress after program completion. Staff emphasized structured transition activities and case management practices, while participants reported tangible benefits and growing confidence in maintaining independence.

Transition Planning

Staff described transition planning as a key feature of Breaking Barriers' service model. Starting around the one-year point in a participant's program journey, case managers begin discussing independent housing plans for after graduation, including whether participants will remain in their current units or move elsewhere. These conversations are informed by quarterly needs assessments that track progress toward financial and employment goals and identify emerging challenges. Staff viewed this proactive planning as critical for smoothing the shift from subsidized housing to self-sufficiency.

Participants' experiences reflected this preparation. Many participants said that their case managers helped them set realistic goals, budget for future rent payments, and plan next steps beyond Breaking Barriers. Several talked about building savings or working toward promotions in anticipation of covering full rent independently. Others described receiving guidance on affordable housing options or connection to supplemental supports, such as vouchers or shallow subsidies (time-limited payments that cover part of a person's rent), to maintain stability. Some discussed exploring family reunification options. Across interviews, participants expressed gratitude for the structured, forward-looking approach to exit planning, which made the transition feel achievable.

Housing Stability, Housing Loss, and Rehousing

Both staff and participant perspectives highlighted the central role of Breaking Barriers in maintaining housing stability. Staff noted that most participants successfully retain housing throughout their time in the program. Staff said that instances in which participants lose their housing are typically related to lease violations, unauthorized guests, or behavioral health challenges. When these situations arise, housing coordinators and case managers work to help participants maintain their housing, and, if that is not possible, case managers assist participants in exploring alternative housing options or connect them to intensive behavioral health or substance use treatment. Staff explained that rehousing decisions depend on timing and program capacity; for example, participants nearing graduation are less likely to be placed in new units that they would soon have to vacate. However, if a participant loses housing and still has a substantial period left in the program, such as a year or more, rehousing is typically possible and supported.

Participants overwhelmingly reported being stably housed for most or all of their time in Breaking Barriers. Several described instances in which program staff helped them avert housing loss following unexpected challenges, such as injury or job loss, highlighting staff responsiveness and problem-solving as protective factors. One participant explained, "If it wasn't for them, I would have lost my housing." A few participants expressed interest in moving to a new apartment or neighborhood in the future, while others emphasized their satisfaction with their current housing and the communities in which they lived. One participant shared that they were interested in moving because they had safety concerns about their neighborhood, but overall, most of the interviewed participants were satisfied with their housing.

Employment Outcomes

Staff and participants shared that Breaking Barriers' integrated employment component contributes directly to improved financial stability and readiness for independence. Program staff noted measurable increases in participant income, as well as qualitative changes, including enhanced confidence and motivation. They attributed these improvements to Chrysalis's focus on sustainable employment and ongoing support to address barriers that justice-involved individuals face.

Participants confirmed these impacts, reporting that their incomes had remained stable or increased during program participation. Several participants had secured new jobs or advanced into higher-paying positions, while others were pursuing training or certification programs to expand career options. Participants viewed Breaking Barriers' employment supports, résumé development, job coaching, and access to tools or work clothing as practical and empowering steps toward long-term career growth.

Graduation and Other Exit Pathways

Staff reported that the majority of participants successfully graduate from Breaking Barriers by assuming full responsibility for rent in their existing units. For those unable to meet full rent obligations, staff leverage connections to Section 8 and other subsidy programs or help arrange transitions to sober living, residential facilities, or family reunification. As noted above, the program supports ongoing stability by providing all graduates continued case management and linkages to community resources for at least three months after exit.

Participants described feeling optimistic and prepared for graduation. Many said that with their current incomes and budgeting support, they could manage rent independently. Others were awaiting approval for external housing programs or continued to work with Breaking Barriers staff to secure additional supports. While staff acknowledged less common exit scenarios, such as disengagement caused by incarceration or hospitalization, participants' accounts centered more on successful completions and concrete post-program plans.

Across both staff and participant interviews, the evidence points to Breaking Barriers being a program that produces meaningful gains in housing, employment, and overall well-being. Staff described structured exit planning, consistent monitoring, and thoughtful postgraduation support as tools that sustain those outcomes. Participants' testimonies of improved income, stable housing, and confidence in managing life independently underscore the effectiveness of this design. Together, these perspectives highlight a model that not only stabilizes participants during reentry but also equips them for long-term success after program participation.

Locating and Reengaging Missing Clients

The program has defined protocols to attempt to reengage and locate participants who fall out of contact with Breaking Barriers. If a participant is identified as out of contact, the full Breaking Barriers team convenes for a case conference to ensure that all staff have the most current contact information and that outreach efforts are well coordinated. If contact cannot be reestablished after a review of internal records, staff initiate several search steps. The team first checks the inmate locator system and, when appropriate, contacts the local coroner's office. Outreach is also made to the emergency contact provided by the participant at enrollment. If these efforts fail to locate or reestablish communication and no contact has been made for 90 days, the participant is placed on the exit list and formally discharged from the program. For participants who were housed at the time they became unreachable, the same search procedures are followed. The team also conducts multiple on-site visits (called *pop-ups*) to the participant's housing unit. In addition, a 24-hour wellness check is completed in coordination with the property manager, who provides notice and enters the unit to determine whether it is occupied or abandoned or to identify any other information relevant to the participant's whereabouts.

Participant Satisfaction

Participants expressed overwhelmingly positive experiences with the Breaking Barriers program. Many reflected on their personal growth and the progress they had made since enrolling, describing Breaking Barriers as having a transformative impact on their lives that improved not only their housing and employment stability but also their overall well-being and relationships with family, friends, and other support networks. One participant shared, "Before sober living and prison, I was on the street and had nothing. Now I have something. My parents respect me. My friends respect me. My brother said I'm so different now. It's a lot when people say this to you." Another said, "It's a great program. They really helped me a lot. I'm blessed to be able to be part of the program."

Participants also discussed how Breaking Barriers shaped their engagement with the broader community. One participant explained that the program "helps you become an independent and responsible person in society." Many participants said that they had recommended Breaking Barriers to others and expressed hope that the program could expand within and beyond Los Angeles to serve more people.

Across accounts, participants expressed deep gratitude for the opportunity to take part in Breaking Barriers and for the staff who make the program possible. Additionally, several participants said that they hoped to give back in the future and support others in their recovery and growth.

Differences in Support Needs and Reentry Experiences for BSCC- and CFCI-Funded Participants

During staff interviews, interviewees were asked about differences between BSCC-funded participants and CFCI-funded participants. As noted above, BSCC-funded participants must have served time in a California state prison, while CFCI-funded participants qualify under broader criteria. Justice involvement for CFCI eligibility can include a variety of experiences, such as going to jail and being placed on formal felony probation.

Some staff said that they did not notice any differences between participants exiting jail and those exiting the state prison system. However, others said that participants reentering after longer periods of incarceration sometimes need more support, noting that participants exiting the prison system have typically been incarcerated for longer than those exiting jail. For example, one staff member shared their experience working with a participant who was released after being incarcerated for decades. When the participant was released, all of their relatives had passed, and they struggled to use technology, such as phones and computers, that they did not have prior experience with. The interviewee said that for some people, such as this participant, two years was not enough time to adjust, and participants may need more long-term support but that slots for a long-term subsidy with case management—i.e., permanent supportive housing (PSH)—are limited.

Program Strengths

Interviews with both Breaking Barriers staff and program participants consistently underscored that Breaking Barriers' success is driven by a combination of dedicated personnel, a flexible and participant-centered program model, and strong collaboration across partner agencies. While staff tended to emphasize organizational processes and implementation factors, participants highlighted their firsthand experiences with communication, individualized support, and staff cultural competency. Staff interviewees attributed Breaking Barriers' effectiveness primarily to the quality and commitment of program personnel and the collaborative, structured program model that underpins service delivery. Program strengths are summarized in Table 3.1 at the end of this chapter.

Highly Engaged, Skilled Staff

Many staff interviewees emphasized that the success of Breaking Barriers stems from having highly engaged, skilled employees who care deeply about their participants. Staff pointed to their colleagues' willingness to learn and grow, low turnover, and the inclusion of staff with lived experience as critical strengths that promote trust and relatability with participants. Participants overwhelmingly described their case managers and employment specialists as empathetic, dependable, and proactive in addressing barriers. They appreciated that staff provided both practical help, such as resolving housing or job issues, and emotional encouragement during the transition out of incarceration. Participants also noted that Breaking Barriers staff were respectful, understanding, and sensitive to their lived experiences. Participants felt that Breaking Barriers staff demonstrated cultural competency, treated everyone equally, and demonstrated a genuine understanding of the challenges that justice-involved individuals face during reentry. One Breaking Barriers participant, describing their experience working with staff, said that "you can genuinely tell that they care, and I appreciate that."

During interviews, staff members also highlighted changes to Breaking Barriers' staffing structure. Since the last RAND evaluation, Breaking Barriers has hired more staff and switched to a new way of handling its funding.[46] Previously, the program received a set fee for each service it provided. Now, it uses a cost reimbursement model, which means that the program pays for services up front and then gets reimbursed for those costs. This new approach gives Breaking Barriers more flexibility to support participants financially, but it also means that the program needs to carefully track and plan spending. To help manage these changes and serve more people, Breaking Barriers has brought on an associate director and a program associate. Interviewees shared that the extra staff have helped the program grow and run more smoothly.

Collaborative, Client-Centered Program Model

Staff highlighted collaboration among Breaking Barriers' implementing partners (Chrysalis and Brilliant Corners) and the participant-centered model as key to the program's success. They described regular meetings, shared communication channels, and cross-agency teams as mechanisms that enhance coordination and problem-solving. Staff also noted that the participant-centered approach helps promote stability and realistic goal setting. They pointed to such features as rigorous screening, a graduated rent contribution structure, and flexibility to assist participants during crises.

Participants echoed many of the providers' views regarding the importance of staff dedication and collaboration but described these themes through the lens of their lived experiences in the program. Participants felt that the individualized attention they received, from practical support to emotional encouragement, was one of the program's greatest strengths. In particular, participants highlighted the reliability and responsiveness of Breaking Barriers staff. They appreciated the frequent check-ins, the multiple communication methods available (e.g., calls, texts, and letters), and the multiple staff members available to provide support. Participants also described how Breaking Barriers was able to provide tailored support based on their changing circumstances, such as offering support after unexpected financial hardships (e.g., losing a job or needing car repairs). One participant described Breaking Barriers staff as "only one phone call away" when they needed support. Consistent follow-through and coordination among staff helped build participants' trust in the program.

Program Challenges

Interviews with Breaking Barriers staff and participants identified several categories of challenges, including external contextual factors, internal operational constraints, and resource limitations. While staff discussed how systemic and logistical barriers affect service delivery, participants generally

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[46] The source of funding for the Breaking Barriers program has also changed, leading to small differences in the populations served now from those served in previous evaluations of the program's performance in 2015–2016. The initial program received funding from the Los Angeles County Probation Department through California's Senate Bill 678 mechanism, which provided funding for adults on felony probation (California Senate Bill 678, Community Corrections Performance Incentives Act of 2009, October 11, 2009). The initial program also received philanthropic funding from the Hilton Foundation.

Currently, many individuals enrolled in Breaking Barriers are funded through BSCC funding to community-based organizations, such as Breaking Barriers; the BSCC funding targets a slightly different population of individuals released from state prison (and on parole, community supervision, or probation after conviction or sentencing in a California state prison). Additional funding supports individuals returning to communities in Los Angeles County after incarceration through Los Angeles County's JCOD/CFCI initiative.

described fewer obstacles, noting that most issues were minor and situational. Across both perspectives, challenges centered on the tension between Breaking Barriers' responsive program model and the realities of limited housing, employment, and funding environments in Los Angeles County. An overview of program challenges is outlined in Table 3.1.

External Challenges

Staff and participants both recognized that external factors, especially housing affordability, labor market restrictions, and broader socioeconomic and political conditions, create constraints that shape the program's effectiveness.

Staff highlighted the high cost of housing and stagnating wages in Los Angeles as structural barriers to RRH. They noted that when Breaking Barriers was first implemented, local rental rates were substantially lower, allowing participants to reach stability within the program's time-limited framework. As housing costs rose and wages failed to keep pace, this model became increasingly difficult to sustain. Staff observed that many participants now need assistance for longer periods than the current program cycle allows because of the difficult labor and housing market conditions.

Both staff and participants referenced employment barriers associated with justice involvement. Staff described how participants often encounter legal restrictions that limit access to certain professions. Participants echoed this, noting that criminal records can narrow job prospects and lead to discouragement despite Breaking Barriers' employment support.

Interviewees also pointed to psychological and environmental stressors that influence participant well-being. Staff described working with participants who experience trauma, anxiety, or low motivation when coping with job loss, housing instability, or mental health concerns. Broader local issues, such as heightened immigration enforcement activity, were mentioned as compounding stress among participants and their families. Participants, while generally positive, acknowledged that external barriers sometimes made their progress feel precarious, even with Breaking Barriers' assistance.

Internal Challenges

Although collaboration was widely viewed as a strength, both staff and participants identified specific internal areas in which operations could improve. Staff cited coordination and communication across agencies as an ongoing difficulty. Because Brilliant Corners, Chrysalis, and county partners use different case management systems, sharing information and case notes can be challenging. Scheduling constraints and workload pressures sometimes limit opportunities for joint meetings, and staff felt that these gaps could affect the efficiency of move-ins or follow-up with landlords.

Participants, by contrast, largely experienced administrative processes as smooth but noted occasional communication lapses, such as delayed responses from a case manager, minor payment issues, or late furniture deliveries. Although isolated, these experiences illustrate how coordination challenges at the program level can manifest as small but noticeable delays for participants.

Staff noted that the recent transition to routing all referrals through a single county department, JCOD, is intended to enhance data accuracy and reliability. Although intake times have been longer during this adjustment period, staff are optimistic that these changes will ultimately streamline the referral process. The current pace is expected to improve as the team becomes more familiar with the new system and continues to refine its procedures.

Resource and Capacity Constraints

Both groups pointed to resource limitations as a persistent challenge. Staff described encountering constraints in both internal and external resources available to participants. Limited funding within Breaking Barriers sometimes prevents the program from moving participants up to higher levels of care, such as into PSH, when needed. Staff noted lengthy waiting lists for legal, mental health, and substance use services, as well as incomplete information about the capacity of external agencies. Staff also emphasized the need for improved coordination across county systems and funding dedicated to tiered support so that participants requiring intensive assistance can transition seamlessly.

Participants also perceived resource scarcity, but their focus was on day-to-day material supports. Several participants suggested expanding the program's budget to cover offering certain resources, such as gas and grocery gift cards, more frequently. Some recommended extending program duration beyond 24 months or scaling Breaking Barriers so that more individuals can participate. These recommendations reflect appreciation for Breaking Barriers' structure paired with recognition that the program's current funding limits the breadth and longevity of support.

Table 3.1. Key Program Strengths and Challenges

	Theme	Description
Program strengths	Highly engaged, skilled staff	• Staff are skilled at providing various types of support, including technical assistance with employment and housing goals and emotional support that helps participants remain engaged and motivated. • Staff are culturally competent and inclusive and have a nuanced understanding of the challenges participants face at reentry. • Recent staffing additions have increased program capacity.
	Collaborative, client-centered program model	• Rigorous screening targets participants who are well positioned for success. • The program emphasizes realistic, achievable goal setting. • Staff are dependable, responsive, and easy to reach. • Services are individualized through client-specific service plans.
Program challenges	External challenges	• The tight rental market limits access to affordable housing. • Labor market barriers (e.g., low wages, biases, and restrictions against hiring justice-involved individuals) hinder income stability. • Reentry-related and behavioral health stressors can affect engagement.
	Internal challenges	• Busy schedules can complicate cross-agency coordination. • Adjusting to a new referral process has slowed intake.
	Resource and capacity constraints	• Limited PSH slots can prevent program transfer to a higher level of care for participants who need additional support. • Resource constraints limit expanded supports or longer enrollment.

Chapter 4

Quantitative Findings on Process Metrics

This chapter presents quantitative findings on key process metrics for the Breaking Barriers program, including participant flow, demographics, and program performance. The analysis focuses on BSCC Cohort 3 participants, and additional findings for all participants are provided in Appendix A. Results address core process objectives, describe participant characteristics, and summarize the frequency of resource utilization. Most findings are organized by research question and program objective, and we provide detailed breakdowns of participant flow, exit outcomes, and service engagement.

Participant Flow and Exit Outcomes

Figure 4.1 summarizes participant flow from referral through eligibility assessment, enrollment, housing, and status two years post-enrollment for participants funded through the California BSCC Adult Reentry Grant (Cohort 3), henceforth referred to as *BSCC Cohort 3* or *BSCC participants* (n = 193).

We categorize program exits as *negative* (return to homelessness or incarceration), *neutral* (temporary housing), *unknown*, or *positive* (stably housed—i.e., long-term housing placement). We count deceased participants separately. Chapter 5 provides a detailed discussion of exit categories and housing outcomes.

During the evaluation period (March 1, 2023–December 31, 2025), 106 BSCC Cohort 3 participants (55 percent) obtained housing through Breaking Barriers. All BSCC Cohort 3 participants were referred to Breaking Barriers by the end of December 2024, and as of December 31, 2025, there were only two participants who were not housed and were still enrolled in the program, suggesting sufficient time for attendees to have a chance to be housed or exit the program.

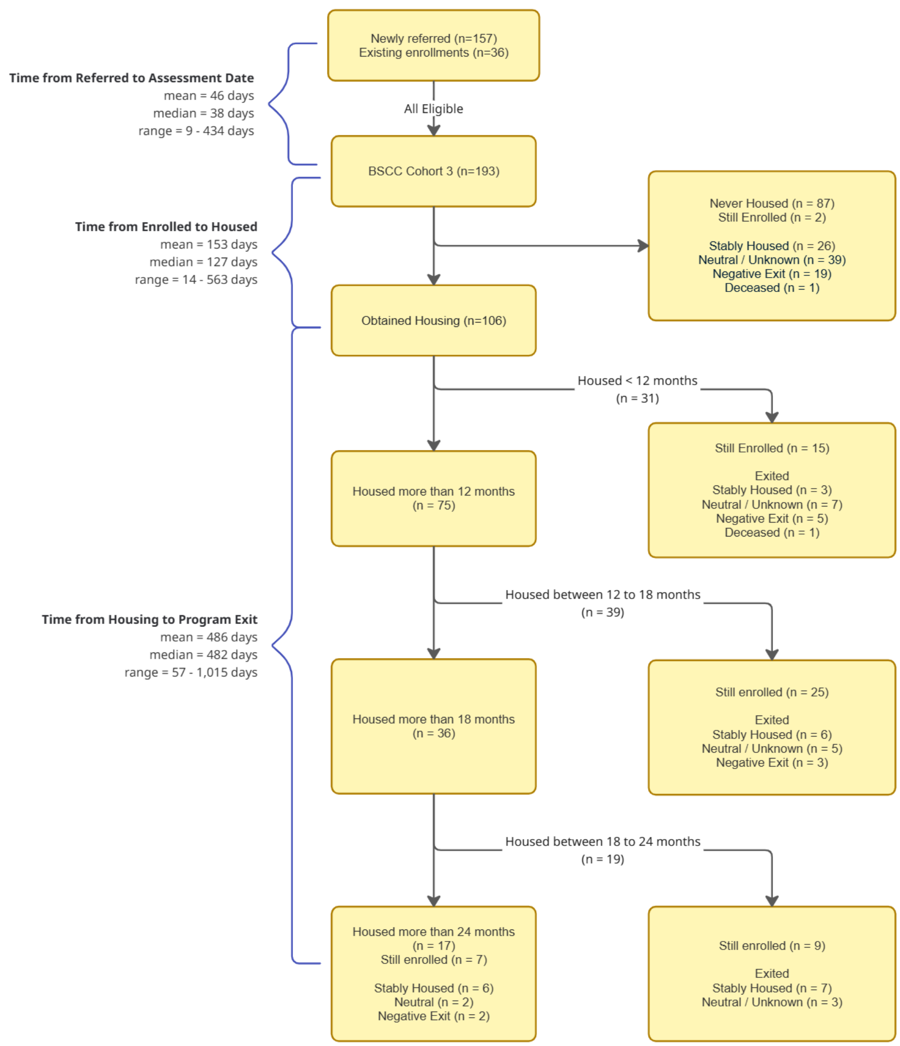
By the end of the evaluation period, 58 BSCC Cohort 3 participants (30 percent) remained enrolled, 84 (44 percent) exited without obtaining housing through the program,[47] 39 (20 percent) exited after being housed for less than two years, and ten (5 percent) exited after being housed for more than two years. Of the 49 participants who exited after being housed, 22 (45 percent) had positive exits to stable housing, ten (20 percent) had negative exits without sustaining permanent housing, and 17 (35 percent) had neutral or unknown exits. Among the 84 participants who exited

[47] Forty-four percent of all BSCC Cohort 3 participants had not obtained housing through the program as of December 31, 2025. Among those who exited and were not deceased, 84 BSCC Cohort 3 participants (representing 63 percent of all BSCC Cohort 3 exits) and 163 participants overall (representing 56 percent of all program exits) left the program without being housed.

and did not obtain housing through Breaking Barriers, 26 were stably housed (31 percent), 19 had negative exits (23 percent), and 39 had neutral or unknown exits (46 percent). Among all BSCC Cohort 3 participants who exited (n = 135), 48 individuals (36 percent) had positive exits to stable housing, 29 (21 percent) had negative exits, 56 (41 percent) had unknown or neutral exits, and two (1 percent) were deceased.

Negative exits were less frequent among participants housed for longer periods. For example, among those housed for 18 to 24 months, there were no negative exits, though one participant passed away during this period.

Figure 4.1. Flow of BSCC Cohort 3 Participants Through Breaking Barriers Program Stages and Housing Outcomes



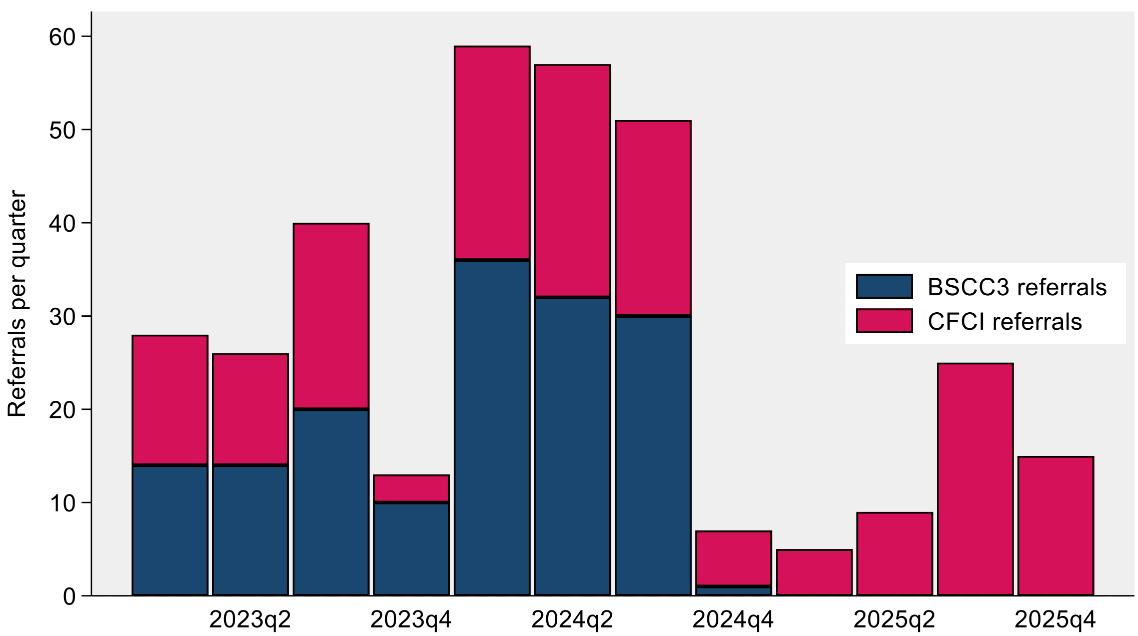
NOTE: n = 193. *Stably housed* refers to participants who found long-term housing solutions (e.g., taking over rent; renting a new apartment; living in shallow subsidy units, PSH units, Section 8 units, or affordable housing units; or permanently staying with family or friends). *Negative exit* refers to a return to homelessness or incarceration. *Neutral/unknown* refers to temporary housing without guaranteed long-term access (e.g., temporary residence with family or friends, residential treatment facilities, sober living, transitional housing, hospitals, assisted living).

Referral, Eligibility Assessment, and Enrollment

To address **research question 1a**, we examined whether the program processed at least 60 referrals by month 12 of the grant period. **Breaking Barriers processed 72 BSCC Cohort 3 referrals, exceeding the objective by 20 percent (128 referrals across all funding sources).** As shown in Figure 4.2, referral rates were uneven across time.

BSCC Cohort 3 referrals peaked in the first quarter of 2024 (*n* = 37), declined in the second and third quarters of 2024, and dropped sharply to two in the fourth quarter of 2024, and none were received in 2025. This decline reflects the anticipated end of the BSCC grant in December 2025; participants enrolled through BSCC in 2025 would not receive the full two-year subsidy, so staff shifted new enrollments to CFCI funding and redirected effort from outreach toward capacity-building and service delivery. The average time from referral to enrollment date was 46 days for BSCC Cohort 3 (median: 38, range: 9–434) and 50 days for all participants (median: 33 days, range: 2–462).

Figure 4.2. Stacked Referral Rates, by Program Quarter



NOTE: BSCC3 = BSCC Cohort 3; q = quarter. *n* = 322.

Enrollment rates (presented in Appendix A) closely tracked referral rates, offset by the time between referral and enrollment. BSCC enrollments peaked at 38 in the second quarter of 2024, dropped at the end of 2024, and fell to two in 2025 (both individuals had been referred in 2024).

To address **research question 1b**, we examined whether the program provided case management to at least 100 participants during the grant period. All enrolled participants received case management: 193 in BSCC Cohort 3 and 460 total. This number includes 335 individuals enrolled during the evaluation period (157 newly enrolled in Cohort 3). **Case management to Cohort 3**

exceeded the original objective by 93 percent, and by 57 percent when we consider only new BSCC participants.

To address **research question 1c,** we assessed whether the program linked at least 100 participants to basic needs and community resources. The administrative data do not show numbers of unique participants linked to each service but do provide aggregate counts and average engagement frequency. The average BSCC participant engaged 56 times with Brilliant Corners and Chrysalis services (median: 53, range: 1–172).[48] Brilliant Corners provided necessities 133 times and life-skills supportive services 295 times; Chrysalis provided basic needs support 171 times and employment support 94 times. (Full counts of all distinct services are shown in Figures 4.4 and 4.5 later in this chapter.) Given the program model to link all enrollees with supportive services and the high engagement observed, **it is likely that the program substantially exceeded this objective**.

To address **research question 1d**, we examined whether the program linked at least 50 participants to employment and educational services. Educational services, including training incentives, stipends, vocational training (Chrysalis), and general education support (Brilliant Corners), were delivered 292 times. Employment services are offered by Chrysalis, which recorded 105 instances. Chrysalis also tracked job placement outcomes, recording 94 unique BSCC participants (49 percent of Cohort 3, 40 percent of recorded placements) placed into 168 part-time and full-time roles.[49] **These results demonstrate that the program far surpassed its target of linking 50 participants to employment and educational services.**

To address **research question 1e**, we examined whether the program processed at least 90 housing applications through Brilliant Corners. Breaking Barriers served 193 BSCC participants over the grant period, and processing a housing application was taken to refer to the enrollment of new participants between March 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025 (*n* = 157). The 36 participants enrolled prior to March 1, 2023, were still counted in other analyses but did not have new applications processed over the evaluation period. **Brilliant Corners processed 157 FHSP applications from Cohort 3 participants (47 percent of 335 total FHSP applications), far exceeding the target**, and 178 from other funding sources. Fifty percent of BSCC applicants (*n* = 78) were successfully housed.

To address **research question 1f**, we examined whether the program provided rental assistance to at least 90 participants by month 21 of the grant period. **Rental assistance was provided to 106 BSCC participants who moved into subsidized housing during the study period, and 92 participants housed by month 21 (102 percent of the objective).** Of the 92 housed by month 21, three had also moved out by December 31, 2024 (month 21).

To address **research question 1g**, we examined whether Brilliant Corners housed at least 15 participants per quarter. As shown in Figure 4.3, **an average of 7.4 BSCC participants were housed each quarter during the evaluation period (50 percent of the target)**. Across all funding sources, an average of 17 participants were housed per quarter. Most placements occurred in quarters 2 through 4 of 2024, reflecting earlier referral and enrollment peaks. The shortfall for BSCC-only participants

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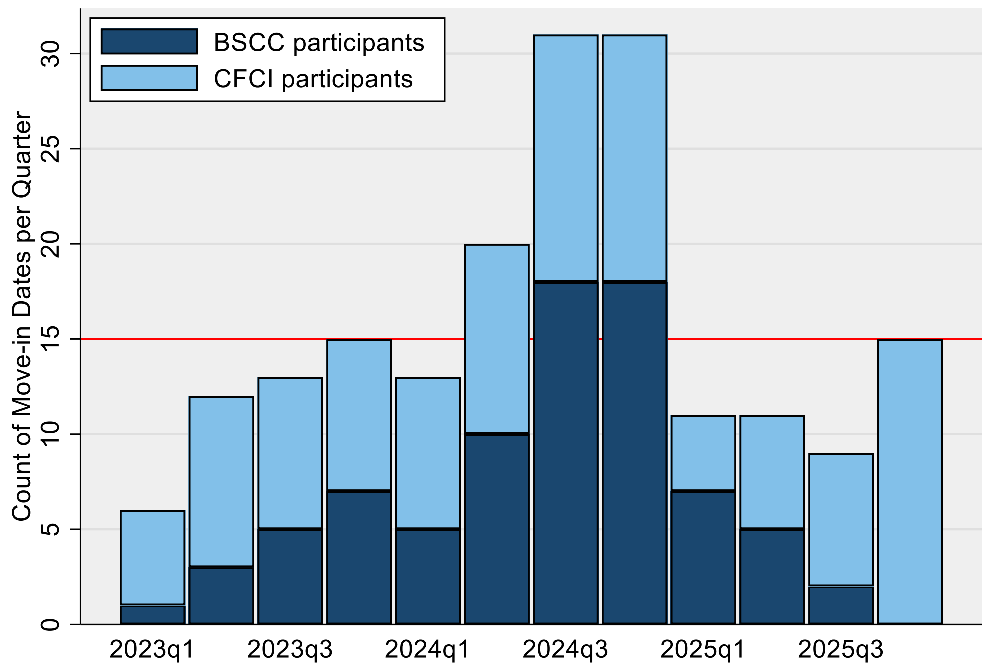
[48] Metrics for the entire enrolled population are not substantially different with a mean engagement of 58 counts (median = 52, minimum = 1, maximum = 196).

[49] Employment was discussed in 490 Brilliant Corners participant engagement meetings. However, these brief employment discussions are not included toward the program's objective of providing targeted employment support, which is provided by Chrysalis.

likely reflects the enrollment decline in 2025 due to the anticipated grant end. In most periods, the number of participants housed was below the target rate of 15 participants per quarter, reflecting the cyclical nature of referrals, enrollments, and program provision. While some periods had more than 15 participants housed, the total number of BSCC participants housed was still under the total implicitly required if the objective was an average greater than 15 per quarter.

Figure 4.3. Participants Housed, by Program Quarter



NOTE: *n* = 187. The evaluation period began in March 2023, so the first quarter of 2023 includes data for only one month.

Description of Participants

To address **research question 2** ("Who is served by the program?"), **we examined the demographic and background characteristics of participants served by the program between March 2023 and December 2025 (Table 4.1).** We compared the characteristics of BSCC Cohort 3 with those of JCOD/CFCI participants enrolled in the program during the evaluation period. The two groups were similar in age, racial composition, parental status, and engagement counts. However, BSCC Cohort 3 participants had a higher proportion of male participants and participants on Assembly Bill (AB) 109 supervision and a somewhat higher proportion of Hispanic/Latino participants.[50]

[50] AB 109 shifted supervision of individuals convicted of nonviolent, nonserious, and nonsex offenses from state parole to county probation departments. These individuals serve their sentences in county jails and, upon release, report to local probation officers rather than state parole officers. See AB 109, Criminal Justice Alignment, April 4, 2011; Los Angeles County Probation Department, "AB 109," webpage, 2021.

Table 4.1. Characteristics of Program Enrollees

Characteristic	BSCC (*N* = 193)	JCOD/CFCI (*N* = 267)	*p*-Value
Age			0.86
Minimum	24	23	
Median	39	37	
Maximum	65	69	
Gender			<0.01
Female	15.0%	32.6%	
Male	85.0%	67.3%	
Race			0.86
Black	41.5%	44.6%	
White	26.9%	26.2%	
AAPI	1.6%	1.9%	
Other or unknown	30.0%	27.3%	
Ethnicity			0.12
Hispanic/Latino	49.7%	42.3%	
Non-Hispanic/Latino	50.3%	57.7%	
Supervision status			<0.01
AB 109	59.1%	25.1%	
Probation	19.2%	45.3%	
Parole	13.0%	4.9%	
Not on supervision	8.8%	24.7%	
Parental status			0.96
Has children	51.8%	52.1%	
No children	48.2%	47.9%	
Engagement counts			0.43
Minimum	1	1	
Median	53	51	
Maximum	172	196	
Funding source			—
BSCC 3	100%	—	
CFCI I (2022 grant)	—	82.4%	
CFCI II (2023 grant)	—	17.6%	

NOTE: AAPI = Asian American or Pacific Islander.

Of the 193 BSCC Cohort 3 participants, 9 (4.7 percent) had no supervision data recorded. Among the remaining 184, 114 (59.1 percent) were on the AB 109 caseload; 37 (19.2 percent) were in other categories, including 31 labeled Los Angeles County and six on federal probation, felony probation, or joint parole and probation; 17 (8.8 percent) were on parole; and 16 (8.3 percent) were no longer under supervision.

Table 4.2 shows participants' self-reported housing situations in the six months before program entry.

Table 4.2. Housing Situation at Program Entry, by Participant Group

Housing at Entry	BSCC Only (*n* = 193)	All Participants (*n* = 460)	Enrolled During Evaluation Period (*n* = 335)
Family or friends	69 (36%)	158 (34%)	91 (27%)
Living outdoors	14 (7%)	57 (12%)	41 (12%)
Transitional housing	77 (40%)	154 (33%)	135 (40%)
Residential treatment facility	5 (3%)	25 (5%)	20 (6%)
Halfway house	3 (2%)	7 (2%)	4 (1%)
Other location (e.g., hotel, motel, homeless shelter)	25 (13%)	59 (13%)	44 (13%)

[a] *Enrolled in evaluation period* refers to participants who were newly enrolled between March 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025, while *BSCC Only* and *All Participants* also include participants who enrolled prior to March 1, 2023, but were still enrolled and were being served by the Breaking Barriers program at some point between March 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025.

Finally, of the 193 BSCC Cohort 3 participants, 153 (79 percent) reported employment at intake—112 (58 percent) full-time and 41 (21 percent) part-time. Additionally, 154 participants (79 percent) reported some form of income: Fifteen (8 percent) received California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) or General Relief, and eight (4 percent) received unemployment benefits. The average wage among participants was $19.39 per hour; participants receiving benefits averaged $680 per month.

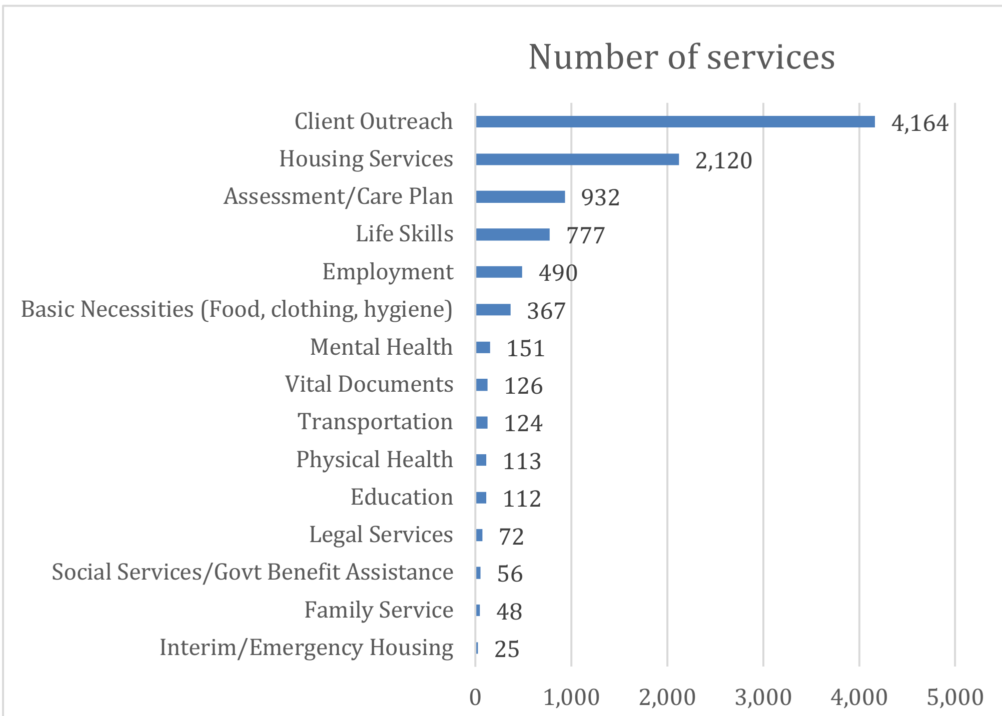
Program Resources Most Frequently Used

To address **research question 3** ("Which program resources and linkages are most frequently utilized? How does usage of program resources and linkages differ between Cohort 3 and earlier cohorts?"), we analyzed the frequency of service utilization by Breaking Barriers participants. **The most frequently provided services from Brilliant Corners and Chrysalis were participant outreach and basic needs support.** We could not separate resources used by BSCC-funded and CFCI-funded participants, as staff counted supportive services separately from funding sources.

Brilliant Corners Supportive Services

Brilliant Corners provided participant outreach 4,164 distinct times, housing support services 2,120 times, and an assessment or care plan 932 times. The least frequently used Brilliant Corners supportive services were interim or emergency housing (25 times), family services (48 times), and help with accessing social services and qualifying for government benefits (56 times). Figure 4.4 provides a full comparison of all supportive service counts for Brilliant Corners between March 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025.

Figure 4.4. Program Resources Most Frequently Used—Brilliant Corners

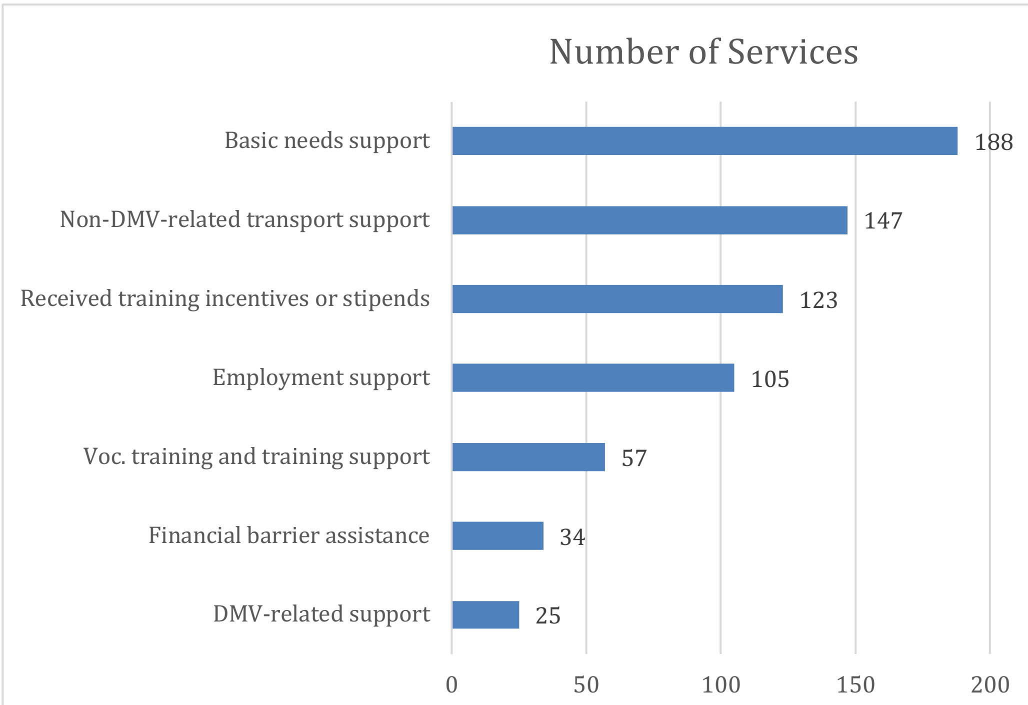


NOTE: Govt = government.

Chrysalis Supportive Services

Figure 4.5 provides a full comparison of Chrysalis's supportive service counts for the period between March 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025.

Figure 4.5. Program Resources Most Frequently Received—Chrysalis



NOTE: DMV = Department of Motor Vehicles; transport = transportation; Voc. = vocational. Definitions for Chrysalis supportive services are as follows: *Basic needs support* refers to help with essential daily living needs (e.g., groceries, hygiene products, bedding, household items). *Non-DMV-related transport support* refers to help with transportation not tied to DMV fees (e.g., gas cards, Transit Access Pass [TAP] cards, Lyft rides). *Received training incentives or stipends* refers to gift cards, stipends, or other small incentives provided for participation in training workshops or programs. *Employment support* refers to assistance with items required for a job search or employment (e.g., interview clothing, work uniforms, tools, union dues, certifications). *Voc. training and training support* refers to support for education or skill-building (e.g., textbooks, supplies, training fees, scrubs, laptops). *Financial barrier assistance* refers to direct help with financial obligations that may pose barriers to employment or training (e.g., phone bills, utilities, restitutions, rent, court fees). *DMV-related support* refers to assistance with driver's licenses or vehicle-related costs (e.g., registration, license replacement, citations, driving under the influence, program fees).

In response to **research question 3**, we sought to compare the usage of program resources and linkages between Cohort 3 and earlier cohorts. We could not make direct quantitative comparisons because the previous RAND evaluation did not systematically track or report counts of specific service contacts.[51] In that earlier evaluation, the most frequently used resources were described qualitatively. Staff noted that "frontline service staff confirmed that there was no shortage of community resources to which participants could be referred directly for counselling, food vouchers, educational support,

[51] Hunter et al., 2020.

substance addictions, and mental health issues" and that Chrysalis provided "internal resources such as bus tokens and Transit Access Pass cards . . . and employed several participants directly through Chrysalis Works."[52] **Both evaluations identified case management, housing support, and employment services as the core services most frequently used by participants.**[53] However, only the current evaluation provides specific counts and frequencies for each service, documenting thousands of instances of participant outreach and hundreds of basic needs supports.

In summary, this chapter has presented quantitative findings on process metrics, including process objectives (**research questions 1a–1g**), participant demographics (**research question 2**), and engagement resources provided by Brilliant Corners and Chrysalis (**research question 3**). All but one of the process objectives evaluated under **research question 1** were achieved: **Research question 1g** asked whether at least 15 BSCC participants were housed per quarter; we found that only 7.4 BSCC participants were housed per quarter on average. Generally, the objectives were achieved for processing referrals, providing case management, linking participants to basic needs and resources, linking participants to employment and education services, processing housing applications, and providing rental assistance. **Research questions 2 and 3** are descriptive and not tied to any specific process objectives.

[52] Hunter et al., 2020, p. 21.

[53] Hunter et al., 2020, pp. 11–12, 19–21.

Chapter 5

Quantitative Findings on Outcome Metrics

This chapter presents the results of our outcome evaluation for the Breaking Barriers program. We examine whether and how participants' employment, income, and housing stability changed during their time in the program and explore factors associated with participant success and program completion. Our analysis is guided by **research question 4** and its subparts:

4. Do participants change their status in terms of employment, income, and housing stability over the course of the program?
    a. What percentage of participants retain housing at 12, 18, and 24 months after receipt of the rental subsidy? Did the program meet its goal of maintaining a housing retention rate above 80 percent at month 12 of the participants' rental subsidy?
        iii. For program participants who did not maintain housing, what were the reasons for loss of housing?
        iv. What percentage of participants take over their rent?
    b. What percentage of participants earned minimum wage at or before program exit? Did the program meet its goal of 80 percent of participants earning above minimum wage at or before program exit?
    c. How are participant demographic characteristics associated with outcomes at the end of the program period?
    d. What is the association between employment and housing retention?
    e. What is the association between participant engagement (e.g., phone contacts, home visits, community visits) and outcomes at the end of the program period?
    f. What is the rate of program exit due to incarceration?

The sections that follow address each of these questions in turn and include additional analyses to contextualize these outcomes, such as detailed breakdowns of exit status, subgroup comparisons, and trends over time.

We used regression modeling to identify significant associations between participant characteristics, program participation, and outcomes for **research questions 4a–4f**. Appendix B presents these analyses, and we discuss the key findings below. To increase the statistical power of the analysis, we used the larger group (n = 460) of all participants served between March 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025, rather than limiting the analysis to BSCC-funded participants (n = 193). Where we obtained a distinctive finding for the BSCC cohort, or where outcomes differed by cohort, we identify and discuss those differences.

Housing Outcomes

Housing Retention Rates

To address **research question 4a**, which is related to housing retention, we examined outcomes for all participants who received a program housing subsidy (BSCC: *n* = 106, total population: *n* = 258). Table 5.1 presents our findings. *Housing retention rate* is defined as the proportion of participants receiving the subsidy at the end of a defined period out of all the participants still enrolled in the program who received the subsidy at the start of the period.[54] We limited 12-, 18-, and 24-month outcomes to participants who first received the subsidy early enough to reach these milestones by the end of the evaluation period.

Ninety-two BSCC participants received program housing subsidies for more than 12 months before December 31, 2025 (i.e., were housed in 2024 or earlier). Of these, 75 still received the housing subsidy at 12 months, for a 12-month retention rate of 82 percent. **This meets the program goal of maintaining a housing retention rate above 80 percent at month 12.**

For RRH, it is expected that reliance on subsidies will decline after month 12 as clients increasingly assume rent responsibility, producing lower retention rates over time. Retention for BSCC participants fell to 63 percent at 18 months and 41 percent at 24 months. Fifty BSCC participants left the program after being housed; ten of them (20 percent) remained in their units by taking over the rent. Table 5.1 presents these retention results for BSCC participants and for all program participants who received housing subsidies and had reached the 12-, 18-, and 24-month milestones by the end of the evaluation period.

Table 5.1. Housing Retention and Rent Takeover Outcomes for Participants Receiving Program Housing Subsidies

Time Point After Rental Subsidy	BSCC Cohort 3: Retained/Eligible(%)	All Participants: Retained/Eligible(%)
12 months	75/92 (82%)	175/212 (83%)
18 months	36/57 (63%)	107/150 (71%)
24 months (still on subsidy)	17/41 (41%)	60/117 (51%)
Took over rent (any time)	10/50 (20%)	35/129 (27%)

[54] Although some participants may have transitioned off the subsidy by taking over their own rent payments, this information is captured only at the point of program exit. After exit, participant outcomes are no longer tracked, so the records do not indicate whether individuals continue to retain their rental housing over time. As a result, assessing housing retention at specific milestones is possible only using subsidy-based data, given the limitations of available information.

Distribution of Time Housed Among Program Participants

Housing support varied across groups:

- **BSCC Cohort 3 participants (*n* = 193, housed through the program = 106):**
  - minimum: 57 days
  - median: 482 days
  - mean: 486 days
  - maximum: 1,015 days
- **all enrolled participants (*n* = 460, housed through the program = 258):**
  - minimum: 9 days
  - median: 487 days
  - mean: 514 days
  - maximum: 2,041 days.[55]

At the upper end, participants were stably housed shortly after their enrollment and have since transitioned to permanent stable housing situations, such as taking over rent.

Detailed Housing Exit Outcomes

To address the second part of **research question 4a** ("What are the reasons for loss of housing?"), we classified housing outcomes at exit into four categories: *positive*, *negative*, *neutral*, and *unknown*. Figure 5.1 shows that of 258 program participants housed through the program, 129 remained enrolled at the end of the evaluation period and three were deceased. Among the 126 participants who exited housing, 79 (63 percent) had positive exits, 16 (13 percent) had neutral exits, 16 (13 percent) had negative exits, and 15 (12 percent) had unknown exit statuses. (As discussed in Chapter 3, the program has a detailed process for working to reengage or locate clients whose whereabouts are unknown. However, when staff cannot find or contact one of these clients for 90 days, the program discharges them and records their exit status as unknown.) Positive exits included renting an apartment or room, moving to a Section 8 unit, living in PSH, permanently staying with family or friends, living in a shallow subsidy unit, staying in a unit while paying the full rent independently, and moving to an affordable housing unit. Neutral exits included temporary stays with family or friends, transitional housing, residential treatment facilities, sober living homes, hospitals, and skilled nursing or assisted living facilities. Negative exits included being incarcerated, staying in a place not meant for habitation (such as a park or sidewalk), staying in an emergency shelter, and remaining in a unit without paying rent.

[55] Some participants have enrollment times much greater than two years (109 enrolled, 60 housed), including enrollment times of more than five years (three enrolled, one housed). Many such participants are high-acuity clients who have unique circumstances that may require additional support or who may take longer for a successful transition to stable housing following Breaking Barriers.

Figure 5.1. Housing Exit Outcomes for Breaking Barriers Participants

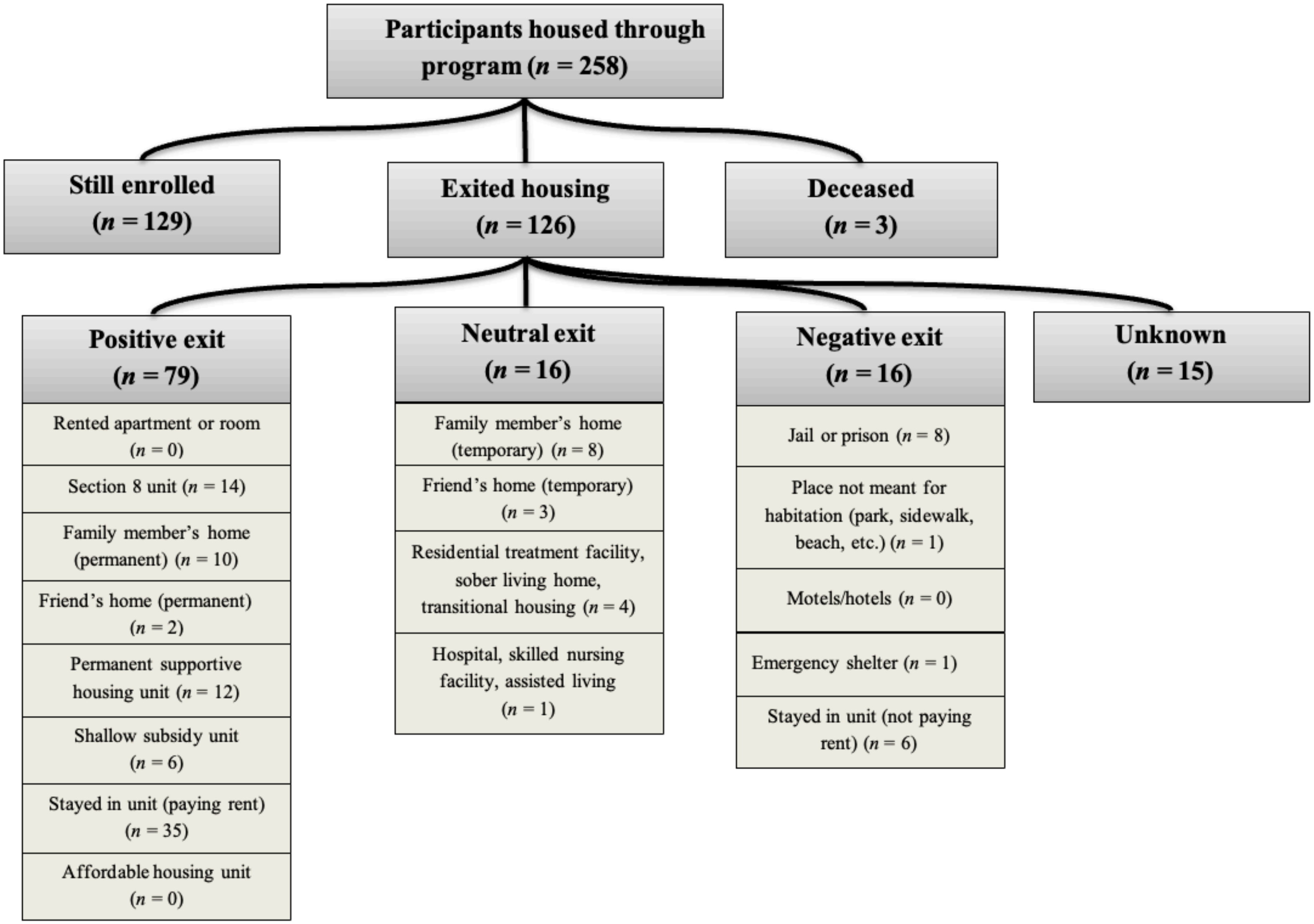


Table 5.2 details housing outcomes and exit statuses for program participants at the end of the evaluation period. The number of participants in each exit category (still enrolled, positive exit, neutral exit, negative exit, deceased, and unknown) is disaggregated by funding cohort and by whether participants were housed or not housed through the Breaking Barriers program. The proportion of participants taking over rent is the proportion who stayed in their housing subsidy unit and continued paying rent: 20 percent for the BSCC Cohort and 27 percent for all participants (answering the final part of **research question 4a**, "What percentage take over their rent?").

Table 5.2. Participant Housing Status, by Funding Type, at End of Evaluation Period (December 2025)

	BSCC		CFCI		Total	
Program and Housing Status	**Housed Through Program (*n* = 106)**	**Not Housed Through Program (*n* = 87)**	**Housed Through Program (*n* = 152)**	**Not Housed Through Program (*n* = 115)**	**Housed Through Program (*n* = 258)**	**All (*n* = 460)**
Still enrolled	53%	2%	48%	31%	50%	36%
Exited from program	*n* = 50	*n* = 85	*n* = 79	*n* = 79	*n* = 129	*n* = 293
Positive exit	45%	31%	73%	38%	61%	—
Renting new unit	—	11%	—	19%	—	—
Remaining in unit obtained through Breaking Barriers	20%	—	31%	—	27%	—
Section 8	—	—	17%	1%	11%	5%
Family (permanent)	11%	15%	6%	9%	8%	11%
Friend (permanent)	—	2%	2%	4%	2%	—
PSH	11%	—	10%	3%	9%	5%
Shallow subsidy unit	4%	—	6%	—	5%	2%
Affordable housing unit	—	—	—	3%	—	0.6%
Neutral exit	14%	14%	11%	14%	12%	13%
Family (temporary)	10%	7%	4%	6%	6%	—
Friend (temporary)	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%	—
RTF, SLH, or TH	2%	5%	4%	6%	3%	5%
Hospital or assisted living	—	—	1%	—	1%	0.3%
Negative exit	19%	22%	8%	9%	12%	14%
Jail or prison	9%	13%	—	6%	6%	8%
Outside	2%	3%	—	—	1%	—
Motel or hotel	—	2%	—	1%	—	—
Shelter	—	3%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Stayed in unit (not paying rent)	11%	—	1%	—	5%	2%

Program and Housing Status	BSCC		CFCI		Total	
	Housed Through Program (*n* = 106)	Not Housed Through Program (*n* = 87)	Housed Through Program (*n* = 152)	Not Housed Through Program (*n* = 115)	Housed Through Program (*n* = 258)	All (*n* = 460)
Deceased	2%	1%	2%	—	2%	—
Unknown	19%	32%	6%	39%	12%	25%

NOTE: RTF = residential treatment facility; SLH = sober living home; TH = transitional housing. As noted above, BSCC-funded participants must be exiting a California state prison, experiencing or at risk of homelessness, and able to achieve enough employment income to pay rent within 18 months. CFCI-funded participants receive the same services but have broader eligibility, including people exiting local jails, not just state prisons. Percentages are used as a ratio of the participant count in each column. As such, they can be compared across columns between participant types and down a column for that participant. Rows will not add up to 100 percent and would need to be normalized to the equivalent count in the "Total" row.

Logistic regression modeling (Tables B.3 and B.4 in Appendix B) shows that AB 109 supervision status is statistically significantly associated with a lower probability of positive exit for the total participant cohort (28 percent with AB 109 supervision status versus 59 percent without). The association is also lower for the BSCC cohort (23 percent with AB 109 supervision status versus 52 percent without), but it is not statistically significant.

For all participants (Table B.4), women were significantly less likely than men to have a negative exit (men: 16 percent; women: 8 percent) or an unknown exit (men: 28 percent; women: 15 percent) in the total participant cohort. Participants with children were more likely to experience a positive exit (49 percent with children, 45 percent without). There was no statistically significant association between parenthood and negative exits (15 percent with children, 14 percent without). These relationships are consistent with the proportions of subpopulations experiencing different exit outcomes in Table 5.2. Negative exits were more frequent among participants with less program engagement, such that a participant with one count of engagement experiences a negative exit 18 percent of the time, dropping to 17 percent at ten engagement counts and 10 percent by 100 counts.

Employment

Earnings Relative to Minimum Wage

To address **research question 4b** ("What percentage of participants earned minimum wage at or before program exit? Did the program meet its goal of 80 percent of participants earning above minimum wage at or before program exit?"), we examined participant wages at both entry and exit in relation to Los Angeles County's minimum wage for employers with 25 or fewer employees.[56] Table 5.3 presents these results.

[56] Minimum wage is higher for employers with 26 or more employees, but data on employer size were not available, so the legal minimum for program participants employed in Los Angeles County was chosen.

Table 5.3. Participants Earning Above Minimum Wage at Entry and Exit

Year	Minimum Wage, in Dollars per Hour	Entry (Above Minimum Wage/ Total Employed)	%	Exit (Above Minimum Wage/ Total Employed)	%
2021	15.00	16/18	88.9	—	—
2022	15.96	77/88	87.5	14/18	77.8
2023	16.90	104/127	81.9	47/60	78.3
2024	17.27	47/74	63.5	46/63	73.0
2025	17.81	33/41	80.5	30/41	73.2
BSCC	—	121/153	79.1	56/76	**73.7**
Total	—	288/362	79.6	137/182	75.3

SOURCE: Minimum wage data are from Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, "State Minimum Wage Rate for California (STTMINWGCA)," webpage, updated January 1, 2026.
NOTE: Los Angeles County minimum wage increases take effect July 1 of each year. Therefore, the "2021" year is really July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022, and so on.

When examining BSCC participants alone, we found that **the program did not quite meet its goal of at least 80 percent of participants earning above minimum wage at or before program exit**. Seventy-nine percent of employed BSCC participants earned above minimum wage at entry, and 74 percent of all employed BSCC participants earned above minimum wage at exit. For the full participant population, just under 80 percent of participants earned above minimum wage at entry, and 75 percent of all employed participants earned above minimum wage at exit.

Appendix A provides additional analysis of participant employment status and wage trends. Figure A.4 in particular highlights wage stagnation for many Breaking Barriers participants, for whom the median wage increased by $1 per hour between entry and exit but the lower-quartile wage increased by only $0.25, from $16.75 per hour to $17 per hour. If a participant was close to the Los Angeles minimum wage at entry in 2023, the minimum wage would have passed them by 2025, leading to a larger proportion of participants being below the minimum wage at exit than at entry.

This analysis indicates that Breaking Barriers supported a substantial share of participants in achieving or maintaining employment and earning at or above minimum wage by program exit. However, the persistence of unemployment and sub–minimum wage earnings for some participants highlights the ongoing barriers faced by this population and underscores the importance of continued support and targeted interventions to promote long-term economic stability. Participants may have temporarily lower wages at program exit if they are enrolled in school or vocational training programs. Participants who enroll in workforce training or education while in Breaking Barriers are eligible for a stipend of $300 per week, provided by Chrysalis, for up to three months. This stipend supports participants pursuing additional education or training that promotes long-term career growth, though in some cases it may be less than what they would earn through full-time employment.

Associations Between Participant Demographics and Employment Outcomes

To address **research question 4c**—how participant demographic characteristics are associated with outcomes at the end of the program period—we conducted multivariate regression analyses. Detailed results are provided in Appendix B (see Tables B.7 through B.10).

Overall, we found that older participants were less likely than their younger counterparts to obtain employment at program exit, particularly those who were unemployed at entry (see Table B.7). Logistic regression modeling predicted that the youngest Breaking Barriers participant, at 23 years old, would have an 85-percent probability of employment at exit; a 40-year-old would have a 55-percent probability; and the oldest participants, at 69 years old, would have a 9-percent probability. However, among those who did secure employment, older individuals were more likely than younger individuals to obtain full-time rather than part-time positions. For example, among those employed at exit, a 60-year-old participant would be employed full-time approximately 89 percent of the time and part-time 11 percent of the time; for a 30-year-old, these probabilities would be 36 percent full-time and 21 percent part-time (see Table B.10).

Women were more likely than men to be employed at exit in the overall sample (77 percent versus 60 percent; see Table B.7). However, among those who were unemployed at entry, women had a lower likelihood of employment at exit than men (42 percent versus 66 percent; see Table B.7).

White participants were more likely than Hispanic/Latino and Black participants to achieve positive employment outcomes. The expected probability of finding employment at exit was 85 percent for White participants, 48 percent for Hispanic/Latino participants, 49 percent for Black participants, and 79 percent for multiracial or other races. The expected probability of full-time employment was estimated to be 47 percent for White participants, 44 percent for Hispanic/Latino participants, and 41 percent for Black participants (see Tables B.7 and B.10). There was no statistically significant difference in employment outcomes between Hispanic/Latino and Black participants.

Participants with AB 109 or probation supervision status were less likely to obtain employment at program exit than participants on parole or no longer on supervision (46 percent for AB 109, 48 percent for probation, and 82 percent for other participants in the base model [Table B.7]; 51 percent for AB 109 compared with 59 percent for other participants in a model accounting for outcome differences by enrollment interval [Table B.9]).

In summary, age, gender, race/ethnicity, and supervision status were all significantly associated with employment outcomes at program exit. Older age, AB 109 or probation status, and being Hispanic/Latino, Black, or female (among those unemployed at entry) were generally associated with less favorable employment results, while being female in the overall sample was associated with more-favorable employment outcomes.

Associations Between Participant Demographic Characteristics and Housing Outcomes

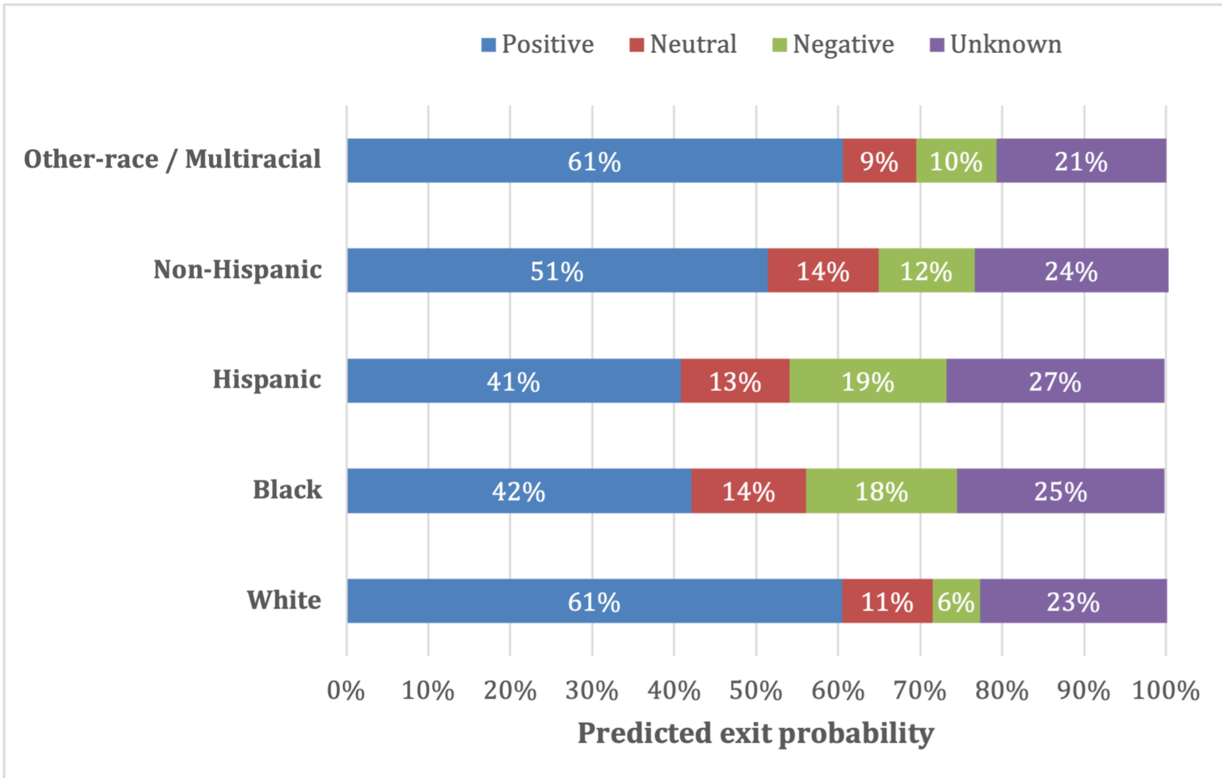
To address the remaining component of **research question 4c**—how participant demographic characteristics are associated with outcomes at the end of the program period—we examined the relationship between demographics and housing outcomes using multivariate models; full results are presented in Appendix B (see Tables B.1 through B.5). However, these results should be considered in the larger context of housing outcomes for different groups at reentry, discussed in Chapter 1. The analysis of housing outcomes across demographic groups is reflective of larger national trends in housing outcomes across race/ethnicity and gender.[57]

In our models, we found that women were significantly less likely than men to experience a negative exit (8 percent versus 16 percent) or an unknown housing exit (15 percent versus 28 percent); see Table B.4. Participants with AB 109 supervision status were significantly less likely than those without this status to achieve a positive housing exit (28 percent versus 59 percent); see Table B.4. However, there was no statistically significant association between AB 109 supervision status and negative exits (33 percent for those with AB 109 supervision status versus 20 percent for those without it). Multinomial logistic regression modeling predicted differences in outcomes between participants based on race/ethnicity (Figure 5.2). Participant age and parental status were not consistently significant predictors of housing outcomes.

In summary, gender and supervision status were the demographic characteristics most strongly associated with housing outcomes at program exit. Women generally experienced more-favorable results, and individuals with AB 109 supervision status faced greater barriers to stable housing. Race/ethnicity was not significantly associated with housing outcomes in these models.

[57] Augustine and Kushel, 2022; Evans, Blount-Hill, and Cubellis, 2019.

Figure 5.2. Association Between Race/Ethnicity and Exit Status



NOTE: Expected exit probabilities are predicted from multinomial logistic regression modeling presented in Table B.4 in Appendix B. Numbers may not add up to exactly 100 percent because of rounding.

Factors Associated with Housing and Employment Outcomes

In this section, we address **research questions 4d and 4e**:

- 4d: What is the association between employment and housing retention?
- 4e: What is the association between participant engagement (e.g., phone contacts, home visits, community visits) and outcomes at the end of the program period?

We analyzed program data using multivariate regression models; detailed results are presented in Appendix B (see Tables B.1, B.5, B.6, and B.8). For **research question 4d**, longer housing retention significantly predicted higher likelihood of employment at program exit among participants housed with a subsidy during the program (Table B.8). Specifically, the probability of being employed at exit increased with the duration of time housed, and this association was statistically significant for the full (total) sample of participants housed with a subsidy. (No significant association was found for the BSCC participant–only sample, potentially because of the smaller sample size.) This is consistent with the possibility that stable housing supports improve employment outcomes.

For **research question 4e**, participant engagement was consistently associated with positive program outcomes. Higher levels of engagement (measured by the number of phone contacts, home visits, and community visits) were significantly associated with a greater likelihood (a 0.25–percentage point increase) of obtaining housing with a subsidy (Table B.1; 40-percent probability at 0 engagement, increasing to 70 percent for 100 counts of engagement), longer subsidized housing retention (Table B.5), and a reduced risk of early program exit as a result of incarceration (Table B.6). Longer subsidized housing retention was also related to levels of engagement for BSCC participants (Table B.5). These relationships held when we controlled for time enrolled. Each count of engagement increases the probability of employment at exit by approximately 0.1 percentage points, a relationship that is not statistically significant (Table B.7).

Program Exits as a Result of Incarceration

Research question 4f asked, "What is the rate of program exit due to incarceration?" There were 135 BSCC Cohort 3 participants who had exited the program by December 31, 2025; of these, **15 (11 percent) exited because of incarceration**. Because of the low sample size, we refrained from estimating factors that made reincarceration more likely for the BSCC cohort. However, we conducted analyses on the broader cohort of all participants enrolled in Breaking Barriers.

Among the 293 participants who exited the program, 24 individuals (8 percent) exited because of incarceration. **The rate of program exit as a result of incarceration was lower among participants who obtained stable housing and among participants who had higher engagement when enrolled.** We also considered the relationships between exits caused by incarceration and other factors, including probation status, age, gender, and race/ethnicity, but found these relationships to be insignificant in the models shown in Table B.6 (in Appendix B). This result may be attributable to low power due to rare events with a low rate of incarceration exits in the sample.

Comparison with Pilot Evaluation Metrics

To address **research question 5**—"How do the outcomes of participants enrolled in the current Breaking Barriers program compare to a prior cohort of Breaking Barriers participants who were enrolled between June 2015 and October 2016 (i.e., the pilot period)?"—we compared key housing, employment, and incarceration outcomes across the two cohorts (see Table 5.4). **Comparable metrics show improvements in participant outcomes in the current evaluation compared with the earlier pilot cohort.**[58]

[58] Hunter et al., 2020.

Table 5.4. Comparison of Key Metrics: Current Versus Pilot Cohort

Metric	Current Evaluation (All Participants, *n* = 460)	Current Evaluation (BSCC Funded Only, *n* = 193)	Pilot Evaluation (n = 228)
Obtained housing through program	56%	55%	82%
Positive exit to stable housing	46%	36%	28%
Not employed at entry or exit	10.2%	9.3%	53.1%
Not employed at entry, employed at exit	11.6%	11.1%	22.8%
Employed at both entry and exit	48.8%	45.1%	15%
Average wage at exit	$18.90 per hour	$19.46 per hour	$12 per hour ($15.07 per hour in 2025 dollars)
Exit as a result of incarceration	8% of all program exits were the result of incarceration.	11% of all program exits were the result of incarceration.	32% of all program exits were the result of incarceration.

NOTE: Features information from Hunter et al. (2020).

The percentage of participants who obtained housing through the program was lower in the current evaluation (BSCC: 55 percent; total: 56 percent) than in the pilot cohort (82 percent).[59] However, the proportion of participants who exited to stable housing (positive exit) increased from 28 percent in the earlier cohort to 46 percent in the current evaluation (36 percent in the BSCC cohort).[60] (Among participants housed through the program, 45 percent of BSCC participants and 73 percent of CFCI participants exited to stable housing.) This suggests that, although fewer participants overall obtained subsidized housing through the program, a greater proportion of those who exited did so to stable housing, indicating improved housing stability among those who completed the program.

The proportion of participants not employed at either entry or exit dropped from 53.1 percent in the pilot cohort to 10.2 percent in the current evaluation (9.3 percent in the BSCC cohort).[61] The share employed at both entry and exit increased from 15 percent to 48.8 percent (45.1 percent in the BSCC cohort).[62]

[59] Hunter et al., 2020, p. 36.

[60] Hunter et al., 2020, p. 32. See Figure A.2, later in this report, which shows the exit statuses of participants (i.e., positive, neutral, negative, unknown, and still enrolled) by demographic characteristics. There were 293 total exits and 135 positive exits: 135/293 = 46 percent.

[61] Hunter et al., 2020, p. 33.

[62] Hunter et al., 2020, p. 33.

In the current evaluation, the average wage at exit was $18.90 per hour, compared with an equivalent $15.07 per hour (in 2025 dollars) in the pilot evaluation ($12.00 in 2018 dollars).[63] To provide a rough comparison, we adjusted the earlier average wage for inflation. Outcome data in the first evaluation were collected up to 2018. (The last participants enrolled in October 2016 and were tracked for up to two years.) Twelve dollars in 2018 is equivalent to approximately $15.07 in 2025 dollars. (This adjustment uses an inflation factor of 1.256, calculated from the change in the annual average Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers from 251.107 in 2018 to 315.285 in 2025.)[64] **Therefore, more-recent Breaking Barriers participants are earning more at program exit than earlier participants on average.**

Program exits caused by incarceration declined in the current evaluation; 8 percent of total exits were attributed to incarceration among the total sample, compared with 32 percent of exits in the pilot evaluation.[65]

As noted above, the pilot evaluation found that only 13 percent of participants who received the full Breaking Barriers intervention had a new felony conviction within two years of enrollment. We cannot report this metric for the current cohort because we do not have access to Probation Department conviction data for these participants.

[63] Hunter et al., 2020, p. ix.

[64] Social Security Administration, "CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers," webpage, undated.

[65] Hunter et al., 2020, p. 31.

Chapter 6

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Summary of Findings

Breaking Barriers addresses complex, interconnected challenges facing justice-involved individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County. External factors, including Los Angeles's housing market—one of the most expensive rental markets in the country[66]—and wages in the area that have failed to keep pace with rising housing costs,[67] have created significant challenges for the implementation of the Breaking Barriers program. We found that, despite these external challenges, Breaking Barriers achieved meaningful progress toward its core goals of increasing housing stability, promoting employment and financial independence, and reducing reincarceration among participants.

Program Strengths

Staff and participant interviews revealed strong alignment in perceptions of what makes Breaking Barriers effective. Both groups emphasized the central role of committed, empathetic staff and the value of consistent communication and collaboration. Staff highlighted the organizational systems that support this work, including regular cross-agency meetings, shared case management protocols, and coordinated service planning between Breaking Barriers' primary partners, Brilliant Corners and Chrysalis. These systems facilitate information-sharing, support continuity of care, and allow for rapid response to participant needs. Cross-agency partnerships, such as those with legal aid, mental health, and public benefits organizations, further enhance the program's ability to address the multifaceted needs of participants. Participants described how these systems translate into meaningful, day-to-day support and how staff from different agencies work together to resolve issues, provide timely assistance, and maintain consistent engagement. Together, the perspectives illustrate a program in which structure and compassion reinforce one another, enabling Breaking Barriers to achieve positive outcomes for individuals reentering the community.

[66] Apartments.com, "Rental Market Trends in Los Angeles, CA," webpage, February 2026.

[67] Juan Lopez, "Wages & the Gig Economy in Los Angeles," webpage, Neighborhood Data for Social Change, undated.

Program Challenges

Taken together, staff and participant feedback suggests that Breaking Barriers operates effectively within substantial external and internal constraints. Staff underscored housing affordability, rental screening processes, and employment barriers as core structural challenges. They described a variety of housing barriers, including the high price of rental housing across Los Angeles and a competitive market in which most available units receive many applications. Interviewees also noted that tenant screening practices, such as background checks, can be used to screen out rental applicants who are justice-involved. Other criteria, including requirements for recent rental references, may be difficult for people who are exiting the carceral system and do not have a recent housing history. Employment barriers for justice-involved individuals are multifaceted and include employer reluctance to hire individuals with criminal records, mandatory background checks that can disqualify applicants, and legal restrictions that bar people with certain convictions from working in specific industries. Additionally, because of incarceration, participants often have gaps in work history, limited access to professional networks, and skills that may be outdated or not recognized by employers. These challenges are compounded by practical issues, such as lack of transportation, child-care responsibilities, and the need to comply with supervision requirements that may conflict with standard work hours. Participants generally viewed Breaking Barriers as functioning well, identified only minor logistical issues, and expressed interest in expanded resources. Themes identified across interviews highlight that program challenges stem less from internal inefficiencies than from the broader context in which Breaking Barriers works: an expensive, complex housing and employment environment in which the program's intensive, individualized approach must continually adapt to external pressures.

Service Model

Across both staff and participant interviews, Breaking Barriers' service model emerged as comprehensive, responsive, and individualized. Staff view the coordinated structure and proactive assessment process as essential for balancing stability and participant independence. Participants' experiences affirm that this integrated approach, combining housing, employment, financial support, and personal and professional development, provides the practical and emotional scaffolding needed for successful reentry and long-term stability. Quantitative analysis showed that the program met or exceeded most process objectives, including referral, enrollment, and service delivery targets, as detailed in Table 6.1.

Key Research Questions

To provide a concise overview of the evaluation's scope and results, Table 6.1 summarizes the core research questions and key findings that guided our evaluation of the Breaking Barriers program. Reflecting the priorities of both BSCC and JCOD/CFCI, the table presents process and outcome measures for both BSCC Cohort 3 participants and the broader program population. The table highlights the program's performance on required metrics and contextualizes outcomes for all participants served during the evaluation period.

Table 6.1. Summary of Evaluation Research Questions and Key Findings

Research Question	BSCC Cohort 3 (Report Chapter)	All Participants, Unless Otherwise Indicated (Report Chapter)
1a. 60 referrals processed by month 12?	✓ 72 referrals processed (Ch. 4)	N/A
1b. 100 participants received case management?	✓ 193 participants received case management (Ch. 4)	N/A
1c. 100 participants linked to basic needs/resources?	✓ No unique counts, but aggregate and average engagement data suggest objective exceeded (Ch. 4)	N/A
1d. 50 participants linked to employment and educational services?	✓ 94 participants linked to employment and educational services (Ch. 4)	N/A
1e. 90 Brilliant Corners housing applications processed?	✓ 157 applications for BSCC Cohort 3 participants during evaluation period (Ch. 4)	N/A
1f. Rental assistance to at least 90 participants by month 21?	✓ 92 housed by month 21 (Ch. 4)	N/A
1g. At least 15 participants housed per quarter?	✕ Average 7.4 per quarter for BSCC participants (17 per quarter across all funding sources); met in 2024 Q3 and Q4 (Ch. 4)	N/A
2. Who is served? (demographics, etc.)	Mostly male (85%), median age 39, 50% Hispanic/Latino, 59% AB 109 supervision	JCOD/CFCI participants: Majority male (67%), median age 37, 42% Hispanic/Latino, 25% AB 109 supervision (Ch. 4)
3. Which resources and linkages are most frequently used? Differences by cohort?	N/A—Data not disaggregated by funding source	Outreach, housing support, case management (Ch. 4)
3. How does use of resources and linkages compare with that of earlier cohorts?	No direct comparison possible (Ch. 4)	No direct comparison possible (Ch. 4)
4a. Housing retention at 12, 18, and 24 months? 80% retention at 12 months? Reasons for loss? Rent takeover at 24 months?	✓ 12-month stability: 82% 18-month stability: 63% 24-month stability: 41% Took over rent: 20% (Ch. 5)	✓ 12-month stability: 83% 18-month stability: 71% 24-month stability: 51% Took over rent: 27% (Ch. 5)
4b. Percentage earning above minimum wage at entry or exit? 80% goal met?	✕ 79% (at entry), 74% (at exit) above Los Angeles County minimum wage (Ch. 5)	✓ 80% (at entry), 75% (at exit) above Los Angeles County minimum wage (Ch. 5)
4c. Demographics associated with outcomes?	AB 109 less likely positive; most demographic variables not statistically significant, likely due to small sample size (Ch. 5)	AB 109 less likely positive, female less likely negative/unknown exit (Ch. 5)

Research Question	BSCC Cohort 3 (Report Chapter)	All Participants, Unless Otherwise Indicated (Report Chapter)
4d. Association: employment and housing retention?	Positive association, sample too small to be significant (Ch. 5)	Positive association (Ch. 5)
4e. Association: engagement and outcomes?	More engagement = better outcomes (Ch. 5)	More engagement = better outcomes (Ch. 5)
4f. Rate of program exit due to incarceration?	11% (Ch. 5)	8% (Ch. 5)
5. How do current outcomes compare with those of prior cohort (2015–2016)?	Improved: higher stable housing, employment, lower incarceration (Ch. 5)	Improved: higher stable housing, employment, lower incarceration (Ch. 5)

NOTE: N/A = not applicable; Q = quarter. For most process metrics (research questions 1a–1g), the data are available for all participants (see Appendix A), but the targets (e.g., 60 referrals by month 12) are required for only BSCC. A check indicates that the objective was met; an X indicates that it was not.

Housing, Incarceration, and Employment Outcomes

At 12 months, more than 82 percent of participants who received housing subsidies remained stably housed, meeting the program's retention goal. Although retention declined at 18 and 24 months, a substantial share of participants exited to stable housing or took over their rent, and the proportion of positive exits improved compared with that in the program's pilot phase. Negative exits were less common among participants who were housed through the program than among those who were not housed; notably, among both BSCC Cohort 3 and all participants housed for 18 to 24 months, there were no negative exits, highlighting the association between longer housing retention and reduced risk of negative outcomes.[68]

Program exits as a result of incarceration were lower than in the pilot cohort (8 percent of exits in this evaluation, down from 32 percent of exits in the pilot). Stable housing and higher levels of program engagement were each significantly associated with a reduced risk of program exit caused by reincarceration. Employment outcomes also improved; participants earned an average wage of approximately $18.90 per hour at exit, up from $15.07 per hour (in 2025 dollars) during the pilot.

Areas for Improvement

Along with these successes, the evaluation also identified areas for improvement. First, the program's rent-to-income ratio remains a concern for long-term affordability. This ratio is a calculation of the percentage of a household's monthly gross income dedicated to housing costs; 30 percent is generally considered the affordability threshold. When rent consumes most of a participant's budget, the participant cannot afford other life essentials, such as food, health care, and transportation. Second, program resource constraints limit the ability to provide extended or more-flexible supports. Third, we noted internal challenges related to data integration and the recent

[68] During the evaluation period, 84 BSCC Cohort 3 participants (63 percent of all BSCC Cohort 3 participants who exited) and 163 participants overall (56 percent of all participants who exited) exited the program without being housed.

transition to a centralized referral process. Finally, outcomes were less favorable for certain subgroups, including participants under AB 109 supervision, older adults, and women who were unemployed at entry, suggesting a need for more-targeted interventions.

Overall, the Breaking Barriers program demonstrates a promising model for supporting justice-involved individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The program's integrated approach, strong staff-participant relationships, and commitment to individualized support have contributed to positive outcomes in a challenging environment.

Limitations

This evaluation has several important limitations. The qualitative findings are based on a relatively small interview sample—ten Breaking Barriers staff members and nine program participants—which reflects both the modest size of the staff and the practical challenges of reaching participants who are actively engaged in the program. Breaking Barriers staff referred participants who were interviewed to us. Although we aimed to interview a diverse group, we could not include participants who exited the program prematurely or did not engage with service providers. As a result, the qualitative information we collected from this small, engaged sample (recruited with the help of program staff) might not fully represent the broader program population. Additionally, we may have learned less about participants' perspectives on program barriers or issues with program fit than about participants' perspectives on other program areas, as some interviewees did not address these topics.

Another limitation is that approximately 25 percent of individuals who exited the program had missing or unknown exit destinations, which limits the ability to fully assess program outcomes. Improved tracking of participant exits and post-program status would strengthen future evaluations and provide a more complete understanding of program impact.

Finally, the findings are based on a small set of observable characteristics, such as age, race/ethnicity, family structure, and type of probation or parole status, and do not account for other factors that may influence housing and wage outcomes, such as education level, previous work experience, or health status. The absence of a comparison group also means that causal effects cannot be attributed to the program.

Recommendations

The evaluation findings suggest several directions for program improvement and adaptation. Breaking Barriers should expand options for transferring clients to PSH if they are identified as appropriate for this level of support. Improved screening has helped the program target clients who are well suited to RRH; however, some participants may be better served by PSH, and this need might not be immediately evident at the point of program eligibility screening and enrollment. Breaking Barriers has discussed the possibility of piloting or implementing an approach that allows some clients to be transferred to PSH as needed after program completion. Further research and evaluation of this new program component may offer valuable insight into how to improve housing stability for justice-involved individuals with higher needs.

As noted in the qualitative review, the transition to a new funder temporarily slowed referrals to Breaking Barriers. JCOD, established in November 2022, was created to centralize justice reform efforts and reduce incarceration through community-based care, diversion, and reentry services. JCOD is prioritizing building strong data systems and increasing transparency to support outcome-driven programming. This intentional focus on data accuracy during the transition contributed to short-term referral delays. Throughout this period, Breaking Barriers staff have worked closely and collaboratively with JCOD leadership to align priorities, strengthen processes, and ensure timely access to services for justice-involved individuals who can significantly benefit from the program's housing and supportive interventions. The Breaking Barriers team can continue to monitor and refine the referral process and timeline as it works toward implementing a stronger referral pathway that prioritizes accurate and streamlined data collection.

A notable strength of this evaluation was the work of program staff to track and anonymize individual-level participant data across multiple datasets, which enabled the linkage of records and comprehensive analysis of participants' experiences and outcomes. However, because detailed, individual-level data on the specific services received were not available, we were not able to assess which specific program components (such as basic needs support or financial barrier assistance) were most strongly associated with better outcomes. Collecting more-granular data on the types and timing of services provided to each participant would allow a more nuanced understanding of which program elements are linked to increased housing stability and income. As Breaking Barriers staff continue to strengthen data collection and measurement, they might also consider moving toward a more centralized data system that allows both Chrysalis and Brilliant Corners staff to use the same primary data collection mechanisms. Additionally, because 25 percent of participants who exited the program had unknown housing outcomes, enhanced follow-up and more-complete outcome tracking would help ensure that future evaluations accurately capture participant results. One option is to offer an incentive (e.g., $5) to participants for contacting the program if they change their phone number, move away, or for whatever reason want to be discharged from the program.

The evaluation also surfaced participant feedback about the desire for more-flexible relocation support, particularly for clients who have concerns about safety, and more-frequent access to grocery or gas gift cards. Although these themes were less prominent than the need for PSH transitions and referral process improvements, they nonetheless point to lower-cost opportunities for enhancing participant support and program responsiveness.

The program's target rent-to-income ratio of 50 percent is a significant risk to long-term participant stability. By economic metric standards, this threshold constitutes a "severe housing cost burden"[69]—a state that fundamentally undermines both household and regional economic resilience. Such high fixed costs preclude the accumulation of precautionary savings,[70] leaving participants acutely vulnerable to displacement following minor financial emergencies. Furthermore, this burden necessitates trade-offs wherein essential expenditures—such as nutritious food, health care, and education—are sacrificed to maintain housing. By tracking this metric, the program can provide

[69] U.S. Census Bureau, "Nearly Half of Renter Households Are Cost-Burdened, Proportions Differ by Race," press release, September 12, 2024.

[70] Annamaria Lusardi, Daniel Schneider, and Peter Tufano, *Financially Fragile Households: Evidence and Implications*, Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, Spring 2011.

targeted intervention (e.g., counseling or additional financial support) to ensure that rent does not consume so much of a participant's budget that they cannot afford other life essentials (such as food, health care, and transportation). To ensure sustainable outcomes, future iterations of the program should prioritize strategies that lower the housing cost–to-income ratio. However, meeting this recommendation may be difficult given the realities of the Los Angeles rental market, where average asking rents require an income nearly three times the local minimum wage. In fact, more than half a million low-income renter households in Los Angeles County do not have access to an affordable home, and 80 percent of extremely low-income households are already paying more than half their income on housing costs.[71] Because program-specific interventions might not fully offset high housing costs, policymakers and program funders could consider additional efforts to address the affordability gap, such as supporting policies that improve living wages and facilitate the development of affordable housing in the region.

In addition to the above program-specific recommendations, the evaluation's findings about the Breaking Barriers program offer broader insights for strengthening reentry and housing initiatives. In particular, the report highlights the value of strong cross-agency collaboration, individualized case management, and flexible supports in addressing the complex needs of justice-involved individuals experiencing homelessness. Policymakers may wish to prioritize funding for programs that incorporate coordinated service planning, regular communication between partner organizations, and partnerships with legal aid, mental health, and public benefits providers alongside housing and employment services. Service providers can draw on these lessons by implementing organizational systems that support information-sharing, continuity of care, and rapid response to participant needs. Additionally, adopting an integrated service model that combines housing, employment, and financial supports with personalized case management can help promote stability and successful reentry. These approaches, demonstrated by Breaking Barriers, may be particularly relevant for jurisdictions facing systemic barriers to reentry.

Areas for Further Research

Future evaluations of Breaking Barriers could employ more-rigorous designs to estimate the causal impact of housing and reentry services. A comparison or control group design was not feasible for this evaluation, as Brilliant Corners does not maintain a waiting list or serve a "lighter-touch" population that could serve as a natural comparison group. Although we considered comparing BSCC-funded participants with other Breaking Barriers participants, all participants receive similar housing and employment supports and wraparound services, so this approach would not provide a meaningful contrast in service exposure. As demonstrated in RAND's evaluation of the Los Angeles County Just in Reach Pay for Success program, quasi-experimental methods using matched comparison groups and administrative data can provide credible evidence of program impacts on such outcomes as recidivism, housing stability, and service utilization while remaining cost-effective.[72] Researchers could

[71] California Housing Partnership, *Los Angeles County 2023 Affordable Housing Needs Report*, May 2023; Sarah B. Hunter, Adam Scherling, Matthew Cefalu, and Ryan K. McBain, *Just in Reach Pay for Success: Impact Evaluation and Cost Analysis of a Permanent Supportive Housing Program*, RAND Corporation, RR-A1758-1, 2022.

[72] Hunter et al., 2022.

apply a similar approach to Breaking Barriers by constructing a matched comparison group of justice-involved individuals who are eligible but not enrolled or who receive less-intensive housing assistance through other programs. Where feasible, researchers could also consider a randomized controlled trial or stepped-wedge design to provide the most-rigorous evidence of program effectiveness by minimizing selection bias and isolating the effects of the intervention.

In addition to employing more-rigorous evaluation designs, future research should examine longer-term outcomes for program participants. Key questions remain about what happens after two, three, or four years: Are people able to remain stably housed after the program ends? Do wages stay stagnant, or do they continue to rise? A longer-term evaluation of the program could be useful for understanding the durability of program impacts and whether the intervention is sufficient for participants to achieve lasting self-sufficiency.

There are also elements of the program's logic model that we did not examine in this evaluation. For example, we did not systematically assess the goal of increasing access to training and education, and there are limited empirical or qualitative data on this aspect. Future evaluations would benefit from a more systematic approach to capture and assess information related to education and training access and completion.

Appendix A

Descriptive Analysis of All Program Participants

This appendix first provides a short summary of demographics for all participants. It then presents analyses responsive to **research question 4**—whether participants change their status in employment, income, and housing stability over the course of the program—and related subquestions.

Participant Demographics

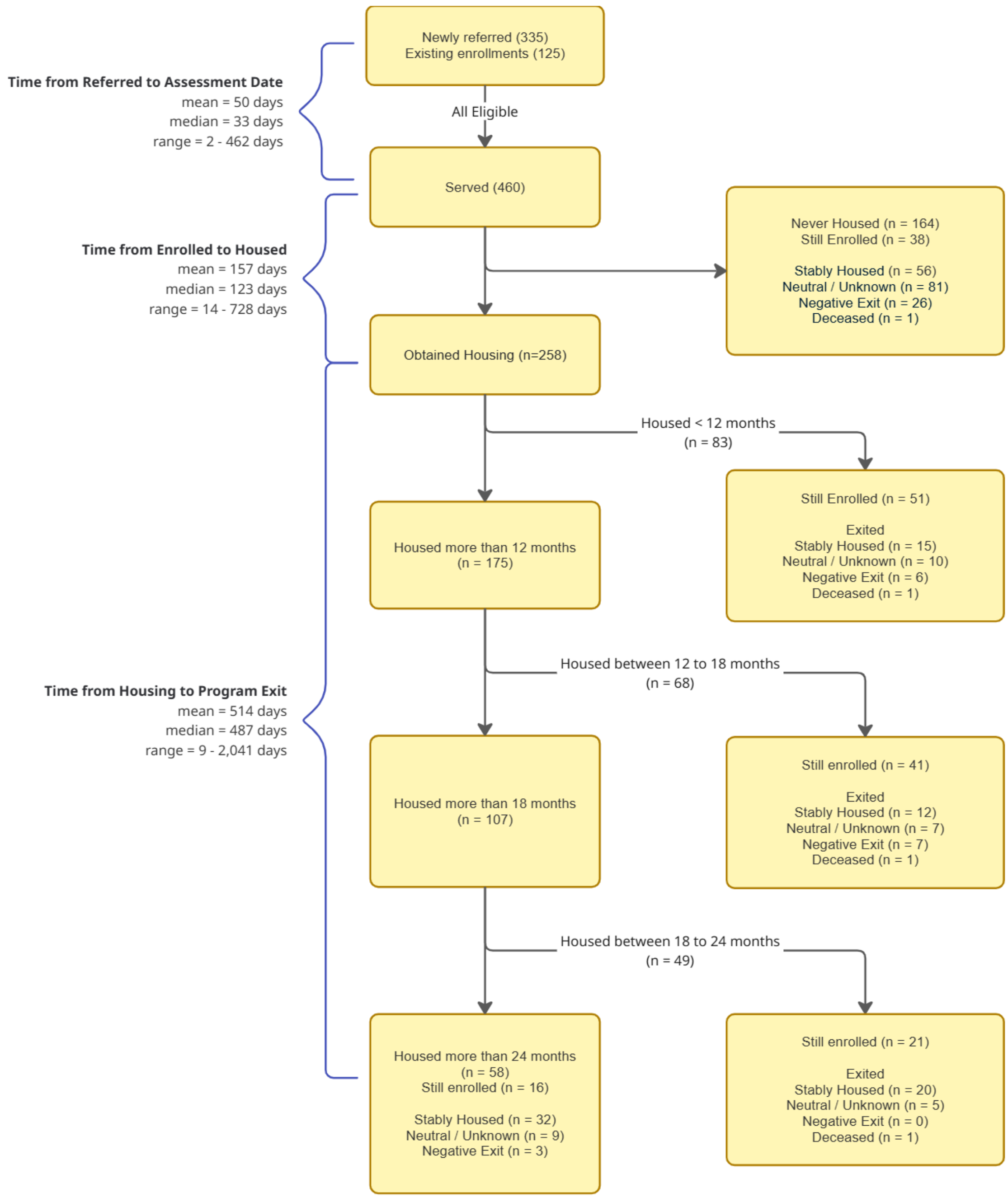
Of the 460 participants enrolled between March 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025, the supervision status varied. There were 28 participants (6 percent) with no data collected on their supervision status. Of the remaining 432 program participants, 181 (41.9 percent) were from the AB 109 caseload; 137 (31.8 percent) were on formal probation from Los Angeles County; 21 (4.9 percent) were in some other category of probation, including federal probation, felony probation, and joint parole and probation; 30 (6.9 percent) were on parole; and 63 (14.4 percent) were no longer on supervision.

Participant Flow and Exit Outcomes in the Breaking Barriers Program

Figure A.1 summarizes participant flow and key process metrics for the Breaking Barriers program, from initial referral through eligibility assessment, enrollment, housing, and status two years post-enrollment. The figure parallels Figure 4.1 in the main report but displays information for all program participants between March 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025 (n = 460).

Participant exits from the program are categorized as *negative*, *neutral*, or *positive* according to the breakdown provided in Figure 5.1. Briefly, negative exits represent a return to being unhoused or incarceration, neutral exits are when housing support is provided but is not a long-term solution, and positive exits encompass a variety of outcomes that promise to provide long-term, stable housing. Unknown housing outcomes are also included in the neutral category. Deceased participants are counted separately. A more detailed discussion of participant housing outcomes is provided in Chapter 5.

Figure A.1. Flow of All Participants Through Breaking Barriers Program Stages and Housing Outcomes



NOTE: *n* = 460. Participant exit outcomes can be positive (stably housed), neutral, or negative exits. *Stably housed* refers to participants who found long-term housing solutions, including taking over rent; renting a new apartment; living in shallow subsidy units, PSH units, Section 8 units, or affordable housing units; or permanently staying in a friend's or family member's home. *Negative exit* refers to a return to being unhoused or incarceration. *Neutral/unknown* refers to temporary housing without guaranteed long-term access (e.g., temporary residence with family or friends, residential treatment facilities, sober living, transitional housing, hospitals, assisted living).

During the evaluation period (March 1, 2023, to December 31, 2025), 258 individuals (56 percent) obtained housing through the program. As of December 31, 2025, 167 participants (36 percent) remained enrolled, 163 (36 percent) had exited the program without obtaining housing,[73] 85 (18 percent) had exited after being housed for less than two years, and 44 (10 percent) had exited after being housed for more than two years. Among those who exited before 24 months, at 24 months, and after 24 months, 135 (47 percent of 289 nondeceased participants who exited) were stably housed at exit; 42 (15 percent) had negative exits, such as incarceration or a return to homelessness; and 112 (39 percent) had unknown or neutral exits.

Negative exits become less frequent among participants who are housed for longer periods. For example, among those housed between 18 and 24 months, there were no negative exits, although one participant in each group passed away during this period.

Figure A.2 shows that of 460 Breaking Barriers participants, 167 (36 percent) remained enrolled at the end of the evaluation period and four were deceased. Among the 289 participants who had exited the program, 135 (47 percent) had positive exits to stable housing, 39 (14 percent) had neutral exits, 42 (15 percent) had negative exits, and 73 (25 percent) had unknown exit statuses. (As discussed in Chapter 3, Breaking Barriers has a detailed process for working to reengage or locate clients whose whereabouts are unknown. However, when staff cannot find or contact these clients for 90 days, the program discharges them and records their exit status as unknown.)

Table A.1 shows the exit statuses of participants (i.e., *positive*, *neutral*, *negative*, *unknown*, and *still enrolled*) by demographic characteristics. Of the 460 participants enrolled in the evaluation period, 258 (56 percent) received housing through the Breaking Barriers program, and a further 56 (12 percent) who were not housed by the program exited to stable housing. The table provides a detailed breakdown of exit outcomes across key subgroups, including age, gender, race/ethnicity, supervision status, funding source, and whether participants lived with children.

[73] This count excludes one participant, who had died.

Figure A.2. Housing Exit Outcomes for Breaking Barriers Participants

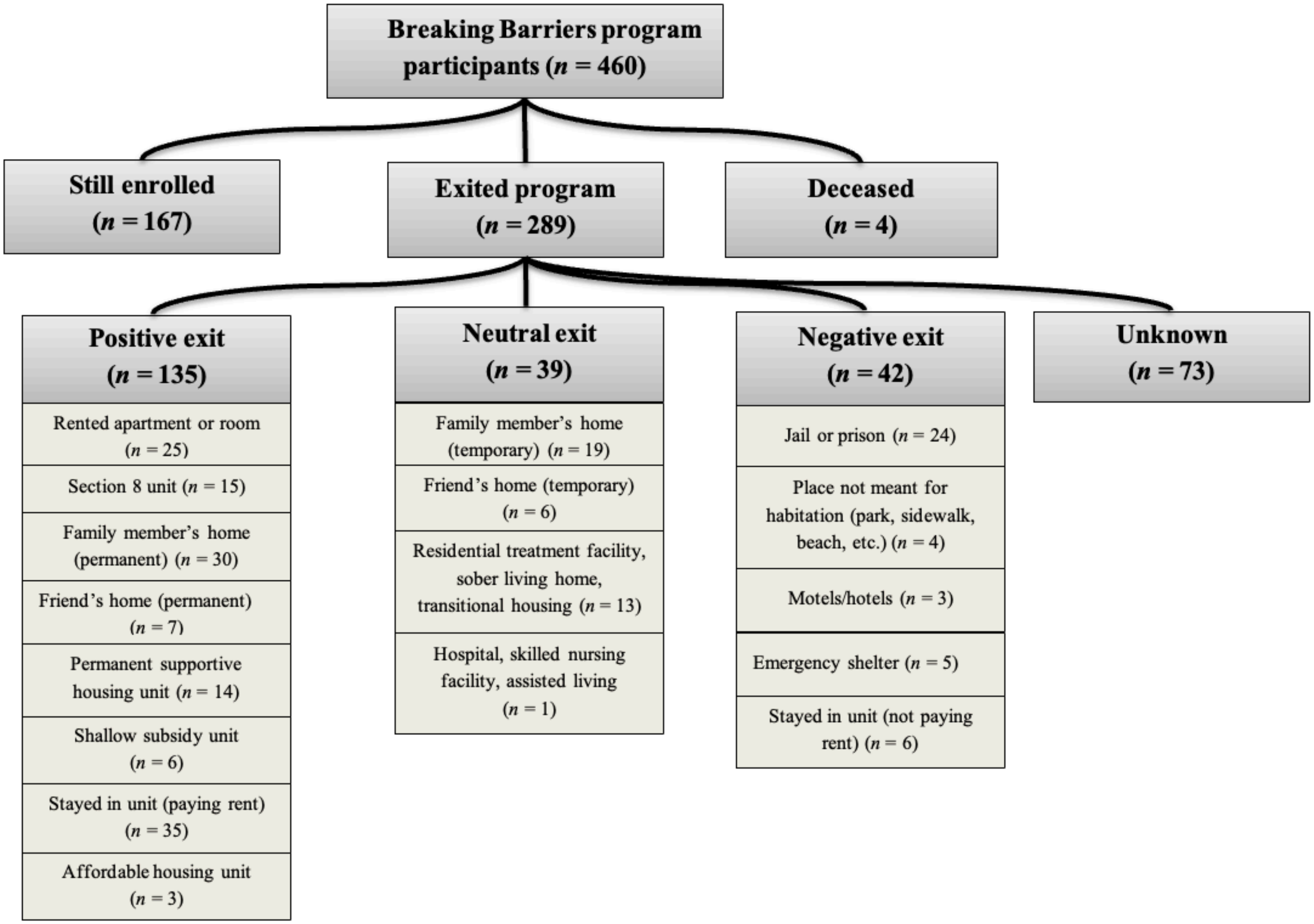


Table A.1. Total Participant Exit Status, by Demographic Characteristic

Variable	*N*	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown	No Exit
Overall	460	135 (29%)	39 (8%)	42 (9%)	73 (16%)	167 (36%)
Transition-age youth (ages 18–25)						
Yes	19	16%	11%	11%	21%	42%
No	421	31%	9%	10%	16%	38%
Gender						
Male	344	29%	8%	11%	18%	32%
Female	116	31%	9%	4%	8%	48%
Nonbinary	2	—	—	—	100%	—
Race/ethnicity						
Black	199	28%	10%	10%	15%	36%
Hispanic/Latino	209	28%	7%	10%	16%	38%
White	122	30%	8%	5%	16%	40%
Other/unknown	139	31%	7%	12%	17%	33%
Supervision status						
AB 109	181	18%	9%	13%	19%	39%
Probation	158	35%	8%	8%	18%	30%
Parole	30	33%	7%	3%	10%	47%
No supervision	91	41%	9%	4%	8%	38%
Funding						
BSCC	193	25%	10%	15%	19%	30%
CFCI	220	33%	8%	3%	12%	43%
CFCI2	47	30%	6%	13%	19%	32%
Children						
Lives with children	97	33%	8%	1%	1%	57%
Parent—not housed with children	142	26%	8%	14%	21%	30%
No children	221	30%	9%	10%	19%	32%

NOTE: AB 109 = AB 109 supervision status; BSCC = Board of State and Community Corrections funding for Cohort 3; CFCI = Care First Community Investment (round 1 funding); CFCI2 = Care First Community Investment (round 2 funding).

To address **research question 1a**, we examined whether the program had processed at least 60 referrals by month 12 of the grant period. Referral and enrollment rates did not occur uniformly over the evaluation period, as shown in Figure 4.2 in the main report. In the first 12 months of the evaluation period, Breaking Barriers had 128 referrals across all funding sources.

Referrals for both BSCC and CFCI participants peaked in the first quarter of 2024 at approximately 0.66 total referrals per day, or 59 in the quarter (37 BSCC and 22 CFCI). The number of BSCC referrals then decreased gradually in quarters 2 and 3 of 2024 before falling sharply; there were only two new BSCC referrals in quarter 4, and there were no BSCC referrals in 2025.

The total number of referrals began accelerating downward at the end of 2024, followed by an increase in the second half of 2025. This corresponds with the decrease in BSCC referrals in 2024, as the increases in 2025 are attributable solely to participants with CFCI funding. BSCC referrals may have decreased because participants enrolled in BSCC would not have been able to access the full two-year subsidy. This pattern may also indicate that, following increased referrals and enrollments in 2024, staff may have shifted focus toward capacity-building and service provision rather than outreach.

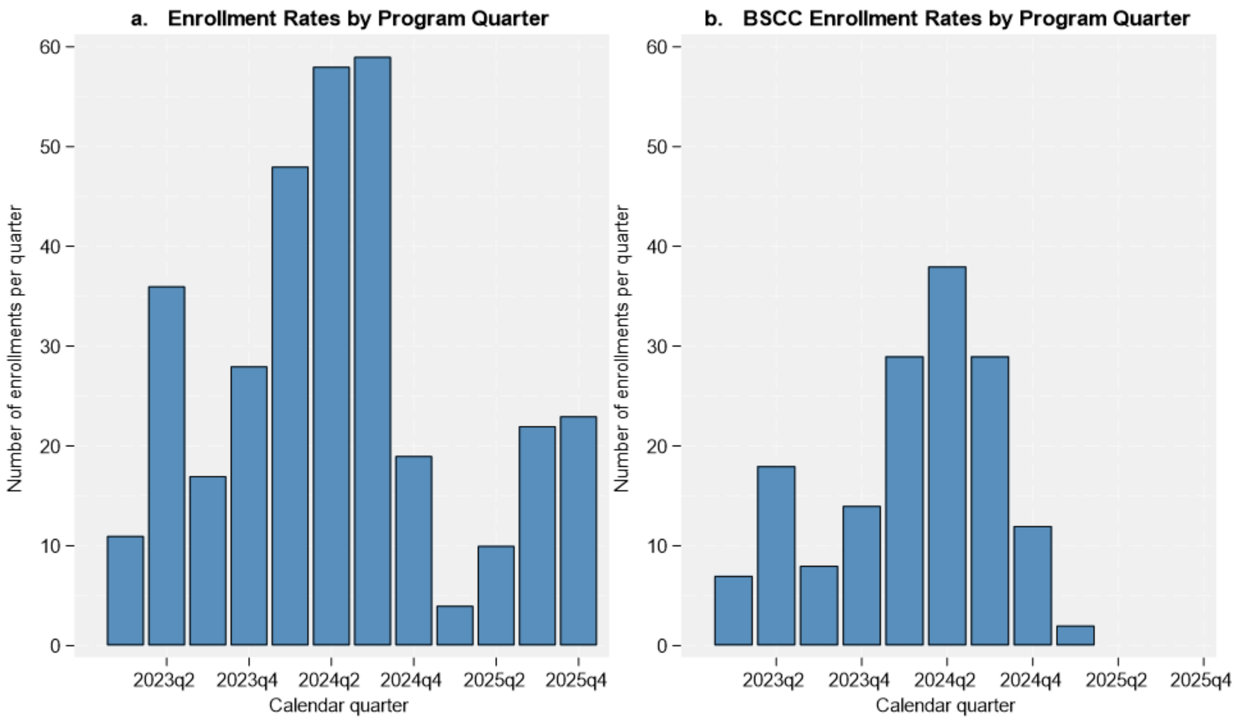
For the BSCC cohort, the average number of days between the referral and the eligibility assessment was 46 days. (The range was nine to 434 days, and the median was 38 days). The average time to assessment for all participants was 50 days (with a range of two to 462 days and a median of 33 days).

Enrollment rates are presented in Figure A.3 for the entire population and the BSCC population. This figure is like Figure 4.2 but shifted by the median 33 days for the entire population and 38 days for BSCC.

There were 14 BSCC enrollments in the first quarter of 2023, seven of which occurred in the observation period from March 2023 onward. BSCC enrollments increased to 38 in the second quarter of 2024, and enrollments were more subdued in quarters 3 and 4 of 2023. BSCC enrollments dropped sharply toward the end of 2024, and there were only two BSCC enrollees in 2025, both of whom were referred to the program in 2024. This may be linked to the end date for the BSCC grant.

While total enrollments increased from ten enrollments in the first quarter of 2023 (March only), the peak of 63 in the third quarter of 2024 is later than the BSCC peak in quarter 2 of 2024. Enrollments from all funding sources fell to five in the first quarter of 2025 but had recovered to 24 per quarter as of the end of 2025. This recovery is solely because of new CFCI participants (n = 57 in 2025).

Figure A.3. Enrollment Rates, by Program Quarter



NOTE: q = quarter. In panel a, *n* = 335. In panel b, *n* = 157.

Research questions 1b–1e are fully explored in the main report. For **research question 1f**, we also considered the rental subsidy provided to all participants enrolled in the program. In the wider population, there were 187 participants who moved into subsidized housing. Of these, 141 were housed by month 21 of the grant term, exceeding the original target. Additionally, 100 participants who enrolled prior to the grant term received rental assistance in the form of FHSP subsidies, and 89 were still housed into 2025 (89 percent).

Housing Retention

To address **research question 4a**, which is related to housing retention, we examined outcomes for all participants who received a program housing subsidy (BSCC: n = 193, total population: n = 258).

BSCC participants had lower rates of housing retention than the total population. A total of 212 participants were housed before January 1, 2025 (more than 12 months before the observation cutoff). For these participants, the 12-month housing retention rate was 83 percent. This meets the program's goal of maintaining a housing retention rate above 80 percent at month 12. The 18-month housing retention rate for the total sample was 71 percent. At the two-year mark, 51 percent of participants were still receiving the housing subsidy.

When we considered exits at 24 months, 23 of 85 participants (27 percent) had taken over full responsibility for their rent payments. An additional 12 of 44 participants (27 percent) who were housed for more than 24 months through the housing subsidy took over rent at exit, indicating that 27 percent of the total number of participants who exited were taking over rent for the housing provided with the subsidy. This result appears to show that increased time housed increases the probability of a positive outcome, since the proportion of participants taking over rent is much higher for participants who were housed for longer than 24 months.

Employment Status and Wage Trends

To provide additional context for wage outcomes, we also examined changes in employment status over the course of the program. Specifically, we assessed participants' employment status at both entry and exit to understand how employment patterns shifted during program participation.

Employment status at program entry was recorded for all 460 enrolled individuals as part of the intake assessment process. Of these individuals, 362 (79 percent) reported having a job—249 (54 percent) full-time and 113 (25 percent) part-time. All 362 participants with a job received a wage or salary; 38 (8 percent) received support through CalWORKs or General Relief, and nine (2 percent) received unemployment benefits. The average wage among participants was $18.90 per hour, while those receiving benefits averaged $607 per month.

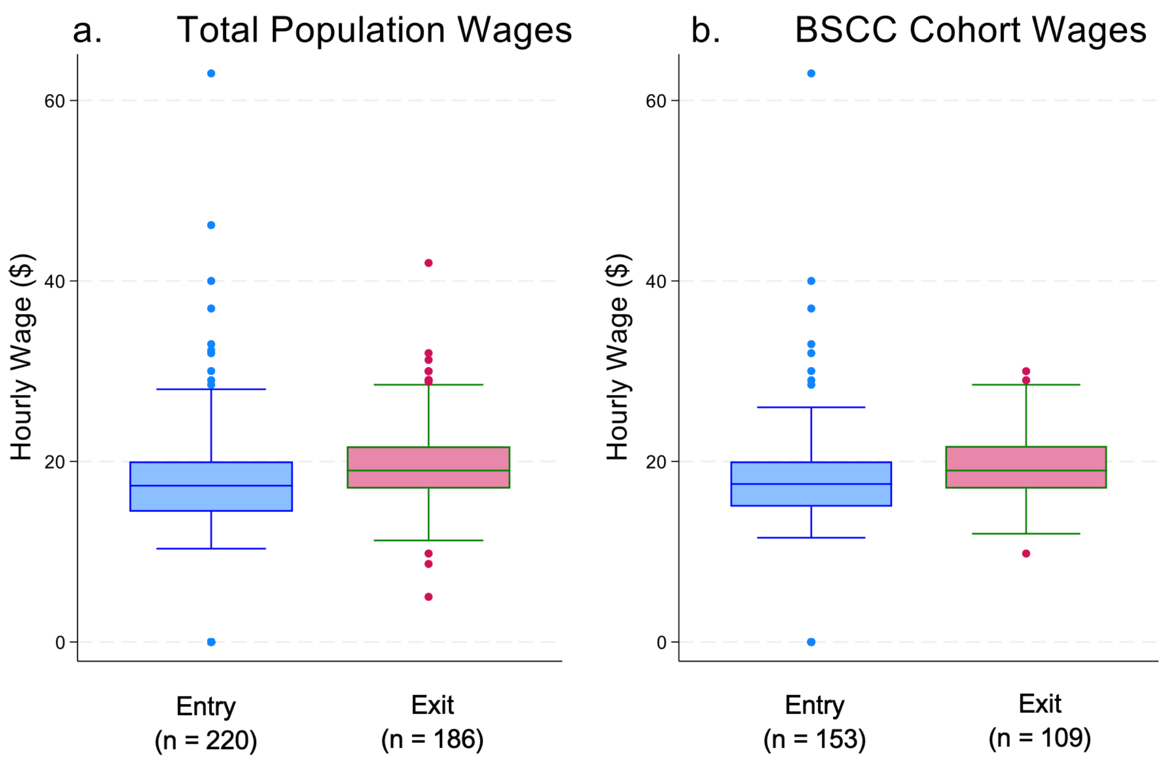
As shown in Table A.2, of the 293 participants who exited the program by December 31, 2025, 143 (48.8 percent) were employed at both entry and exit, while 57 (19.5 percent) were employed at entry but not exit. Conversely, 43 participants (14.7 percent) who were not employed at entry became employed by exit, and 20 (6.8 percent) were not employed at either time point. Employment status at exit was unknown for 30 participants (10.2 percent), including 20 who were employed at entry and ten who were not. (Table A.1 includes only those who had exited the program by December 31, 2025; *n* = 293.)

Table A.2. Employment Status in First and Last Months

First-Day Status	Last Day Employed	Last Day Not Employed	Last Day Unknown
Employed (*n* = 362, exited = 220)	143 (48.8%)	57 (19.5%)	20 (6.8%)
Not employed (*n* = 98, exited = 73)	43 (14.7%)	20 (6.8%)	10 (3.4%)

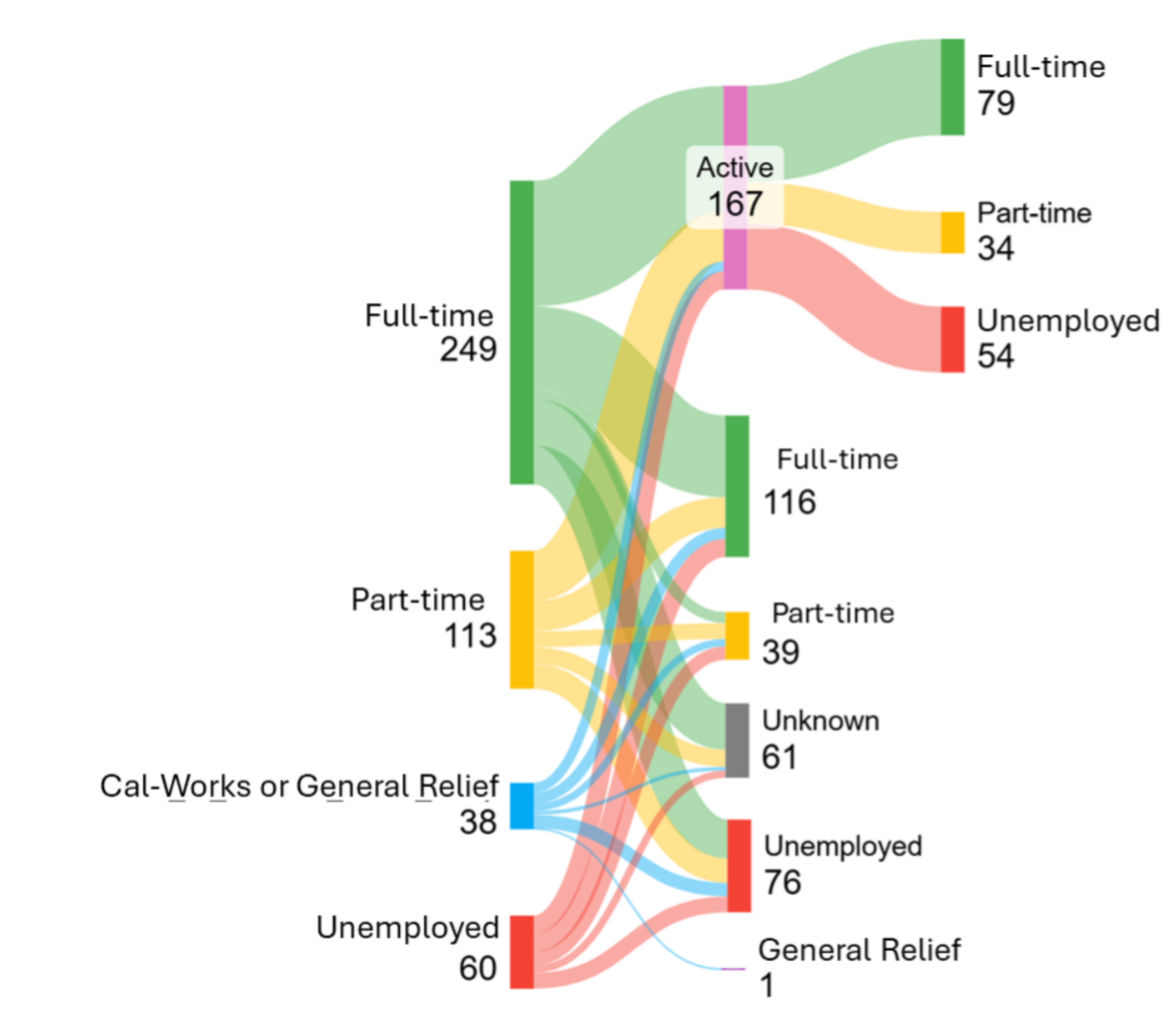
Figure A.4 presents box-and-whisker plots for wages at entry and exit, illustrating that the longer tail at exit reflects that while wages increased for most participants, there remains a sizable minority who have insecure employment below minimum wage at exit.

Figure A.4. Wages at Entry and Exit (Total Employed Participants)



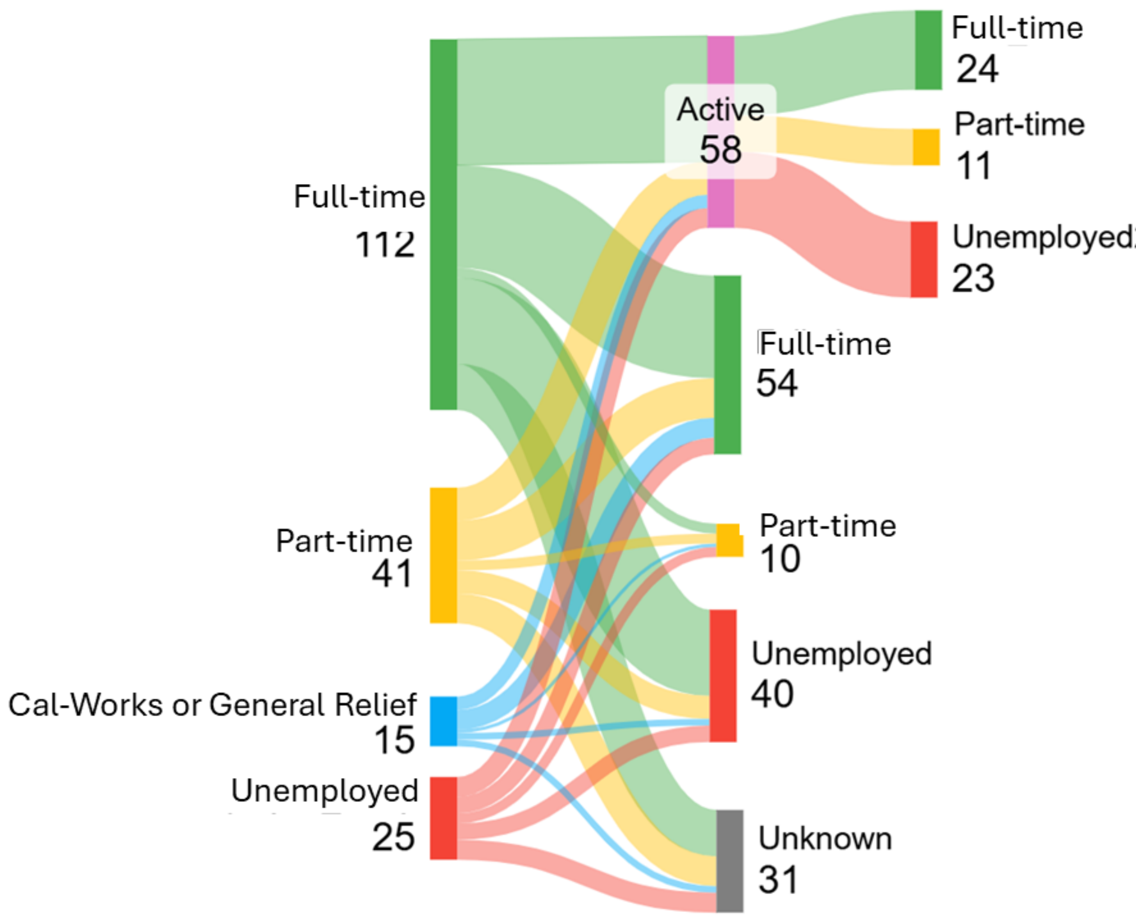
At entry to the program, participants' employment status could be full-time employment, part-time employment, unemployed with no benefits or unemployment benefits only, or receiving General Relief or CalWORKs benefits. The counts and flows for employment status for all participants enrolled in the evaluation period are provided in Figures A.5 and A.6. At the evaluation cutoff of December 31, 2025, data were not available on the employment statuses of all participants who exited the program (unknown status).

Figure A.5. Employment Flows for All Program Participants Enrolled at Some Point Between March 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025



NOTE: n = 460. The figure shows that 13 percent of participants (n = 61) had unknown employment status following program exit. *Active* refers to participants who were still enrolled in Breaking Barriers as of December 31, 2025.

Figure A.6. Employment Flows for BSCC Program Participants Enrolled at Some Point Between March 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025



NOTE: n = 193. The figure shows that 16 percent of BSCC Cohort 3 participants (n = 31) had unknown employment status following program exit. *Active* refers to participants who were still enrolled in Breaking Barriers as of December 31, 2025.

Appendix B

Technical Methods and Regression Model Results

Regression Modeling Approach

To examine which participant characteristics are associated with key outcomes in the Breaking Barriers program, including obtaining housing, securing employment, and avoiding exits due to incarceration, we use two main statistical approaches: logistic regression and Cox proportional hazards models.

Logistic regression is well suited for modeling binary outcomes and allows us to estimate both the direction and the statistical significance of each characteristic's association with the probability of a given outcome. Odds ratios are calculated from the logistic regression coefficients to translate these associations into measures of relative likelihood, making it easier to interpret how much more or less likely an outcome is for one group than for a reference group.

The Cox proportional hazards model is an approach from health care fields that is traditionally used for analyzing survival times in medical data. It is useful for the evaluation of the Breaking Barriers program because it helps us understand the transition of program participants through different program phases (i.e., enrolled, housed, and exiting from the program) and the likelihood that a participant will experience a particular event given data on that participant.

Applying multiple models helps validate our results and provides a fuller picture of how participant characteristics relate to program outcomes for all participants.

We account for the increased false discovery rate of multiple-hypothesis testing by applying the Benjamini-Hochberg procedure to the *p*-values before identifying significant relationships.[74]

Independent or Explanatory Variables

We examine participant characteristics using a consistent set of covariates:

- dummy variables for AB 109 and general probation status (with parole and no supervision status as the reference category)
- age
- a binary variable for female or transgender (with male as the reference category)
- dummy variables for White, Hispanic/Latino, and multiracial or other race/ethnicity (with Black/African American as the reference category)

[74] Yoav Benjamini and Yosef Hochberg, "Controlling the False Discovery Rate: A Practical and Powerful Approach to Multiple Testing," *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, Series B (Methodological)*, Vol. 57, No. 1, 1995.

- dummy variables for housing at entry, including living with family (*family*), living with friends (*friend*), transitional housing (*transitional*), and living in a residential treatment facility or sober living home (*residential treatment facility*) (with participants living in halfway houses, temporary housing [shelters, motels, or hotels], or outside as the reference category)
- a binary variable for whether the participant is a parent and has children under 18 (*have children*)
- a discrete variable for the number of engagements with Breaking Barriers staff, either Brilliant Corners or Chrysalis (*engagement*)
- days enrolled in the Brilliant Corners program, used to control for participants enrolled longer having potentially more engagement (*time enrolled*).

Although employment data are available in the dataset, we do not directly use these data in the common set of covariates used for logit regression and survival modeling because the data are self-reported. However, employment is modeled as an outcome for Tables B.7, B.8, B.9, and B.10.

The reference group in all regression tables is Black male participants who are not Hispanic/Latino, were unhoused at program entry, do not have children, are not on parole and supervision, and have just enrolled in the Breaking Barriers program.

Dependent or Outcome Variables

The dependent variables analyzed are obtaining housing, securing employment, avoiding incarceration, and exit outcomes, according to the classification in Figure 5.1 (positive, neutral, negative, and unknown exits). The regression approaches assess the relationships between the explanatory variables and potential outcomes of the Breaking Barriers program.

A relationship is considered significant when the analysis indicates that the observed association is unlikely to be due to random chance. For example, if there is a significant positive relationship between time enrolled and being housed at the 99-percent confidence level, then in a world in which there is no relationship between time enrolled and being housed (the null hypothesis), the observed value, or one more extreme, would occur 1 percent of the time. Therefore, we can reasonably assume that the longer a participant is enrolled in Breaking Barriers, the greater their likelihood of being housed.

Housing

Factors Associated with Obtaining Housing Through the Program Rental Subsidy

We used logistic regression to model the likelihood of participants obtaining housing through the program (i.e., receiving the rental subsidy). Table B.1 presents results, specifically logit coefficients (column 1), odds ratios (column 2), and p-values, both unadjusted (column 3) and adjusted (column 4), predicting the likelihood of receiving a rental subsidy. Across all models, the coefficient for engagement with program staff is positive and statistically significant (logit: 0.019, odds ratio: 1.019, $p < 0.01$), indicating that each additional engagement is associated with a higher probability of obtaining housing. Each additional interaction with program services increases a participant's probability of receiving the full housing intervention by 0.25 percentage points. At 0 engagement, the probability is 40 percent, and it increases to 70 percent if a participant has 100 counts of engagement. There is also a significant positive relationship between days enrolled and obtaining housing (logit: 0.002, odds ratio: 1.002, $p < 0.01$). The probability of obtaining housing increases directly with days in the program, and each day increases probability by 0.06 percentage points, or 1.8 percentage points per month, so at six months' enrollment a participant who is still enrolled has a 27-percent chance of obtaining housing, while at one year in the program, even if a participant has not yet received housing, their probability is higher, at 45 percent.

Other characteristics are not significant in increasing the probability of obtaining housing. The largest effect size from other characteristics, such as demographics, is for gender (logit: 0.486, odds ratio: 1.626, $p = 0.615$). On average, a woman has a 61-percent chance of obtaining housing through Breaking Barriers, compared with 55 percent for a man.

Table B.1. Regression Models Predicting Receipt of Program Rental Subsidy Among Total Population of Breaking Barriers Participants

Variable	Logit	Odds Ratio	*p*-Value	Adjusted *p*-Value
AB 109	–0.218	0.804	0.560	0.764
	(0.375)	(0.301)		
Probation	–0.356	0.701	0.373	0.764
	(0.400)	(0.280)		
Age	0.010	1.010	0.483	0.764
	(0.014)	(0.0145)		
Female	0.486	1.626	0.164	0.615
	(0.349)	(0.568)		
White	–0.315	0.730	0.439	0.764
	(0.407)	(0.297)		
Hispanic/Latino	0.140	1.150	0.736	0.853
	(0.415)	(0.477)		
Multiracial or other	–0.421	0.657	0.384	0.764
	(0.484)	(0.318)		
Housing at entry: family	0.148	1.159	0.739	0.853
	(0.444)	(0.514)		
Housing at entry: transitional	0.464	1.591	0.258	0.764
	(0.410)	(0.652)		
Housing at entry: friend	0.082	1.085	0.872	0.872
	(0.506)	(0.549)		
Housing at entry: residential treatment facility	0.318	1.375	0.554	0.764
	(0.538)	(0.739)		
Have children	0.055	1.056	0.843	0.872
	(0.276)	(0.291)		
Engagement	0.019***	1.019***	0.000	0.002
	(0.005)	(0.00545)		
Time enrolled	0.005***	1.005***	0.000	0.000
	(0.001)	(0.001)		
Reference	–3.605***	0.027***	0.000	0.000
	(0.809)	(0.0220)		
Observations	460	460		
Pseudo R-squared	0.397	0.397		

NOTE: The robust standard error of each estimate is in parentheses. Asterisks indicate results that are statistically significant after a Benjamini-Hochberg correction for the false discovery rate at the 90-percent level (*), 95-percent level (**), and 99-percent level (***). Each coefficient in the table shows how much more or less likely a participant with that characteristic is to receive a rental subsidy than someone in the reference group. For example, a positive coefficient means a higher likelihood than the reference group; a negative coefficient means a lower likelihood. The reference group is Black male participants who are not Hispanic or Latino, were unhoused at program entry, do not have children, are not on parole and supervision, and have just enrolled in the Breaking Barriers program.

To determine which participants are more likely to engage with the program, we model the associations between covariates and engagement and between covariates and time enrolled to understand predictors of program success at entry. The results of these regression models are presented in Table B.2. Further characteristics associated with duration enrolled in the program are discussed in the survival analysis section of this appendix, including Table B.5 (survival model of days housed) and the Kaplan-Meier survival curves in Figures B.1 to B.7.

Generally, engagement is expected to be lower when a participant is categorized as *multiracial or other* race (ordinary least squares [OLS]: −18.11, $p < 0.05$) and previously lived with friends before program entry (OLS: −16.26, $p < 0.05$). Average engagement for multiracial participants is 45, while it is 63 for other participants. Similarly, expected engagement for participants who couch surfed with friends is 44, compared with 60 for other participants. There is also a large but not significant negative effect size for participants on probation (OLS: −9.73, $p = 0.20$), such that average engagement on probation is 51, compared with 61 for participants not on probation.

Time enrolled is generally lower for participants with housing statuses prior to entry that indicate that the participants may have access to support networks or connections outside the program, including participants who lived in transitional housing or residential treatment facilities or with friends. There are negative significant effects for participants previously living in transitional housing (an average of 436 days enrolled versus 555 for all other participants, OLS: −118.8, $p < 0.1$) or residential treatment facilities (an average of 324 days enrolled versus 537 for all other participants, OLS: −213.2, $p < 0.01$). Living with a friend is not statistically significant but has a large effect size: The average participant who lived with a friend was enrolled in Breaking Barriers for 458 days, compared with 524 days for other participants.

Table B.2. Regression Models Predicting Program Engagement and Duration of Enrollment Among Breaking Barriers Participants

Variable	OLS Engagement	Adjusted *p*-Value	OLS Days Enrolled	Adjusted *p*-Value
AB 109	–5.424	0.351	–62.09	0.295
	(4.643)		(39.16)	
Probation	–9.734	0.196	61.17	0.451
	(5.169)		(48.54)	
Age	0.270	0.301	3.437	0.211
	(0.203)		(1.858)	
Female	6.465	0.301	16.64	0.802
	(4.235)		(40.18)	
White	4.190	0.604	55.94	0.456
	(6.371)		(51.72)	
Hispanic/Latino	8.364	0.301	–10.72	0.837
	(5.979)		(52.09)	
Multiracial or other	–18.11**	0.032	–39.84	0.679
	(6.619)		(62.26)	
Housing at entry: family	–8.180	0.301	–13.54	0.837
	(5.734)		(56.53)	
Housing at entry: transitional	–2.018	0.754	–118.8*	0.055
	(5.349)		(47.48)	
Housing at entry: friend	–16.26**	0.032	–66.34	0.456
	(6.033)		(61.38)	
Housing at entry: residential treatment facility	–7.417	0.393	–213.2***	0.007
	(7.179)		(64.87)	
Have children	1.114	0.754	29.34	0.588
	(3.548)		(35.38)	
Reference	55.90***	0.000	436.3***	0.000
	(10.19)		(99.60)	
Observations	460		460	
R-squared	0.085		0.086	

NOTE: The robust standard error of each estimate is in parentheses. Asterisks indicate results that are statistically significant after a Benjamini-Hochberg correction for the false discovery rate at the 90-percent level (*), 95-percent level (**), and 99-percent level (***). Each coefficient in the table shows how much more or less likely a participant with that characteristic is to stay engaged or enrolled in the program than someone in the reference group. For example, a positive coefficient means a higher likelihood than the reference group; a negative coefficient means a lower likelihood. The reference group is Black male participants who are not Hispanic or Latino, were unhoused at program entry, do not have children, are not on parole and supervision, and have just enrolled in the Breaking Barriers program.

Factors Associated with Housing Outcomes at Program Exit

Tables B.3 and B.4 present multinomial logistic regression models estimating the association between participant characteristics and the probability of each program exit outcome (positive, neutral, negative, or unknown). Coefficients are estimated for positive, negative, and unknown exits, reflecting the likelihood of an outcome occurring compared with a neutral exit.

The multinomial logistic regression adapts the logistic regression for categorical data so that the estimated probabilities sum to 1 across all possible outcomes. For this reason, the population size is 289 participants who exited the program and were not deceased (BSCC; $n = 133$ exits). While the previous logistic and later Cox proportional hazards regressions use the Benjamini-Hochberg procedure to correct for multiple-hypothesis testing, the multinomial logistic regression may be overly cautious to apply the same procedure, given that we can conduct comparisons between outcomes. Therefore, Wald tests are used to identify whether there is a significant difference in the expected outcome based on variables that have a significant p-value at the 90-percent confidence level for at least one outcome.

The model restricted to BSCC participants found no notable statistically significant associations between participant characteristics and program exit outcomes. Although there are no significant racial associations, the signs of the coefficients generally reflect the findings for the total population, discussed in the next paragraph. The one variable that was significant in predicting an individual's exit outcome was whether the individual lived in a residential treatment facility at program entry (positive exit: 11.82; negative exit: 13.77; unknown exit: 12.79; $p < 0.01$). However, this result is likely driven by the fact that only a small number of BSCC participants ($n = 13$) had this background, and none of these participants experienced a neutral exit. The total-population model in Table B.4 does not reflect this trend; *residential treatment facility* has a decreased probability of a positive exit at the 5-percent level of significance.

The results for all participants show that AB 109 supervision status is significantly associated with a lower likelihood of a positive exit (–1.077, $p < 0.1$, joint $p < 0.01$) compared with those without AB 109 supervision status.[75] Women are less likely to achieve a negative or an unknown exit (negative exit: –1.174, $p < 0.1$; unknown exit: –1.124, $p < 0.05$; joint $p < 0.05$). Previously living with family is linked to significantly lower odds of a positive exit (family: –1.573, $p < 0.05$, joint $p < 0.05$). While previously living in a residential treatment facility and previously living in transitional housing are significant for individual outcomes in the multinomial model, these characteristics are not significant predictors of exit outcomes in the Wald test (residential treatment facility, positive exit: –1.918, $p < 0.05$, joint $p = 0.111$; transitional, positive exit: –1.123, $p < 0.1$, unknown exit: –1.297, $p < 0.1$, joint $p = 0.171$). Engagement with program staff is not jointly significant across exit categories (Wald test, $p = 0.23$). However, the individual marginal effects suggest a consistent pattern: Engagement is associated with a lower probability of positive (–0.0132, $p < 0.01$), negative (–0.0179, $p < 0.05$), and unknown exits (–0.0139, $p < 0.1$) and, correspondingly, a higher probability of a neutral exit. This may reflect a selection effect, whereby participants with greater needs engage more intensively with program staff.

[75] Joint p-statistics are calculated with a Wald test at four degrees of freedom to determine whether there is a significant difference in the expected outcome that is dependent on the value of the significant covariate (in this case, AB 109).

Table B.3. BSCC Participants—Characteristics Associated with Program Exit Outcomes

Variable	Positive Exit	Negative Exit	Unknown
AB 109	–0.741	1.482	0.759
	(0.712)	(0.958)	(0.893)
Probation	1.194	2.508	2.123
	(1.147)	(1.332)	(1.263)
Age	–0.0241	–0.0111	0.0104
	(0.0432)	(0.0431)	(0.0439)
Female	–0.626	–0.571	–0.960
	(0.921)	(0.847)	(1.086)
White	0.814	–0.704	0.564
	(0.991)	(1.153)	(1.000)
Hispanic/Latino	0.0404	0.316	–0.662
	(0.926)	(1.151)	(1.013)
Multiracial or other	0.578	0.0617	–0.154
	(1.204)	(1.366)	(1.290)
Housing at entry: family	–3.181	–1.959	–2.539
	(1.642)	(1.713)	(1.598)
Housing at entry: transitional	–1.294	–0.428	–1.832
	(1.258)	(1.359)	(1.296)
Housing at entry: friend	–0.301	–1.047	–0.846
	(1.579)	(1.670)	(1.584)
Housing at entry: residential treatment	11.82***	13.77***	12.79***
facility	(1.284)	(1.484)	(1.311)
Have children	0.0924	–0.559	–1.056
	(0.765)	(0.802)	(0.836)
Engagement	–0.0130	–0.0192	–0.00993
	(0.0154)	(0.0171)	(0.0161)
Housed by Breaking Barriers program	–0.162	–0.350	–1.014
	(0.900)	(0.991)	(0.988)
Days enrolled	0.00205	0.00220	0.00223
	(0.00247)	(0.00259)	(0.00269)
Reference	2.794	0.631	1.523
	(2.263)	(2.441)	(2.201)
Observations	133	133	133
Pseudo R-squared	0.1644	0.1644	0.1644

NOTE: The robust standard error of each estimate is in parentheses. Asterisks indicate results that are statistically significant at the 90-percent level (*), 95-percent level (**), and 99-percent level (***). Correction for multiple-hypothesis testing was not done because comparison between outcome groups is more suited to a Wald testing of differences between outcomes. Each coefficient in the table shows how much more or less likely a participant with that characteristic is to have that exit type (positive, negative, or unknown) than someone in the reference group. For example, a positive coefficient means a higher likelihood than the reference group; a negative coefficient means a lower likelihood. The reference group is Black male participants who are not Hispanic or Latino, were unhoused at program entry, do not have children, are not on parole and supervision, and have just enrolled in the Breaking Barriers program.

Table B.4. All Participants—Characteristics Associated with Program Exit Outcomes

Variable	Positive Exit	Negative Exit	Unknown
AB 109	–1.077*	0.950	0.463
	(0.567)	(0.730)	(0.656)
Probation	–0.283	0.716	0.888
	(0.547)	(0.758)	(0.635)
Age	0.000154	–0.0180	–0.0183
	(0.0217)	(0.0270)	(0.0225)
Female	–0.0562	–1.174*	–1.124**
	(0.459)	(0.694)	(0.544)
White	0.776	–0.956	0.119
	(0.684)	(0.839)	(0.755)
Hispanic/Latino	–0.321	0.536	0.143
	(0.665)	(0.875)	(0.744)
Multiracial or other	1.078	–0.211	0.208
	(0.794)	(0.984)	(0.875)
Housing at entry: family	–1.573**	–1.153	–0.545
	(0.658)	(0.812)	(0.711)
Housing at entry: transitional	–1.123*	–0.489	–1.297*
	(0.656)	(0.714)	(0.722)
Housing at entry: friend	–0.765	–0.944	–0.850
	(0.757)	(0.870)	(0.803)
Housing at entry: residential treatment	–1.918**	–1.122	–1.172
facility	(0.810)	(0.976)	(0.864)
Have children	0.0844	0.0539	–0.326
	(0.406)	(0.480)	(0.447)
Engagement	–0.0132*	–0.0179**	–0.0139*
	(0.00799)	(0.00888)	(0.00838)
Housed by Breaking Barriers program	0.678	0.214	–1.079*
	(0.575)	(0.743)	(0.651)
Days enrolled	0.000560	0.000490	0.000674
	(0.000954)	(0.00118)	(0.00103)
Reference	2.413*	1.544	2.493*
	(1.338)	(1.533)	(1.349)
Observations	289	289	289
Pseudo R-squared	0.1341	0.1341	0.1341

NOTE: The robust standard error of each estimate is in parentheses. Asterisks indicate results that are statistically significant after a Benjamini-Hochberg correction for the false discovery rate at the 90-percent level (*), 95-percent level (**), and 99-percent level (***). Each coefficient in the table shows how much more or less likely a participant with that characteristic is to have that exit outcome (positive, negative, or neutral) than someone in the reference group. For example, a positive coefficient means a higher likelihood than the reference group; a negative coefficient means a lower likelihood. The reference group is Black male participants who are not Hispanic or Latino, were unhoused at program entry, do not have children, are not on parole and supervision, and have just enrolled in the Breaking Barriers program.

Survival Analysis of Housing Retention and Negative Exits

This section summarizes survival analysis findings on housing retention and incarceration among Breaking Barriers participants. Analyses include all program participants with sufficient data (n = 437), and time-housed analyses are restricted to those who received housing (n = 247). The analysis accounts for right-censoring caused by the December 31, 2025, data cutoff so that participants who joined earlier have more opportunity to experience housing exits, or negative exits specifically, than those who joined later. Cox nonparametric hazards models are used, which do not include a constant or an intercept term, and all models use the largest available sample after participants with missing data are excluded.

Housing Retention

Table B.5 presents results from Cox survival models, examining factors associated with housing retention and the risk of negative exits. The Cox proportional hazards model estimates the hazard ratios (relative likelihood) that an individual who has survived to time *t* experiences an event of interest, in this case the hazard of losing housing. Therefore, positive coefficients are variables that increase the likelihood of participants exiting housing once housed, and negative coefficients are factors that decrease the likelihood of exits and correspondingly are associated with longer periods of receiving the housing subsidy.

Cox regressions can lead to biased estimates if there are too many events per variable.[76] Therefore, the models in Tables B.5 and B.6 (later in this appendix) use an adjusted set of predictors to increase parsimony. This includes the combination of the binary AB 109 and probation variables into a single variable (*AB 109/probation*). The BSCC model (model 1) also excludes the housing-before-entry variables (*family*, *transitional*, *friend*, and *residential treatment facility*). Therefore, there are 5.6 (50/9) events per variable in model 1 and 9.9 (129/13) events per variable in the total-population model (model 2). Overfitting of model 1 decreases the power to detect significant relationships. Although model 2 is closer to the ten-events-per-variable rule, it may still encounter some issues if predictors occur infrequently, so only the strongest relationships are detected.[77] Despite potentially decreased power, we still account for multiple-hypothesis testing, as these results are presented in the report alongside other regression modeling for other aspects of program outcomes besides housing retention.

There are a few significant relationships still detected by model 1. Higher program engagement counts are significantly associated with longer housing retention (coefficient: –0.0202, $p < 0.01$) after we control for days since enrollment. BSCC participants on probation or AB 109 supervision have increased rates of housing retention, or decreased likelihood of housing exits (coefficient: –0.909, $p < 0.05$), with no significant association with the probability of a negative exit (Table B.3). This relationship with probation increasing retention is weaker for the wider population, suggesting that it is unique to the BSCC cohort. Survival curves for supervision status and the whole population are provided in Figure B.3.

The Cox model for the whole population (model 2) shows that increased engagement with program staff is significantly associated with longer housing retention (coefficient: –0.0152, $p < 0.01$), indicating that each additional engagement reduces the risk of exiting housing. This result is shown in Figure B.7, reflecting differences in the observed data. There are also significant associations between time housed within the program and previously living in transitional housing (coefficient: –0.740, $p <$

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[76] Emmanuel O. Ogundimu, Douglas G. Altman, and Gary S. Collins, "Adequate Sample Size for Developing Prediction Models Is Not Simply Related to Events per Variable," *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, Vol. 76, August 2016.

[77] For more details on over- and underfitting Cox proportional hazards regressions, see Ogundimu, Altman, and Collins, 2016.

0.05). Time enrolled has a strong significant negative relationship (BSCC: –0.0129, $p < 0.01$; total: –0.00819, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that the probability of a participant exiting their housing or the program after being housed increases over time. This may indicate that participants with prolonged program enrollment are reliant on nonpermanent support systems.

In both models 1 and 2, there is no significant relationship between age, gender, or race/ethnicity and housing retention, but these characteristics do appear to follow similar patterns across both samples. The effect sizes of these characteristics can be interpreted visually using the Kaplan-Meier survival curves for Figures B.1–B.7.

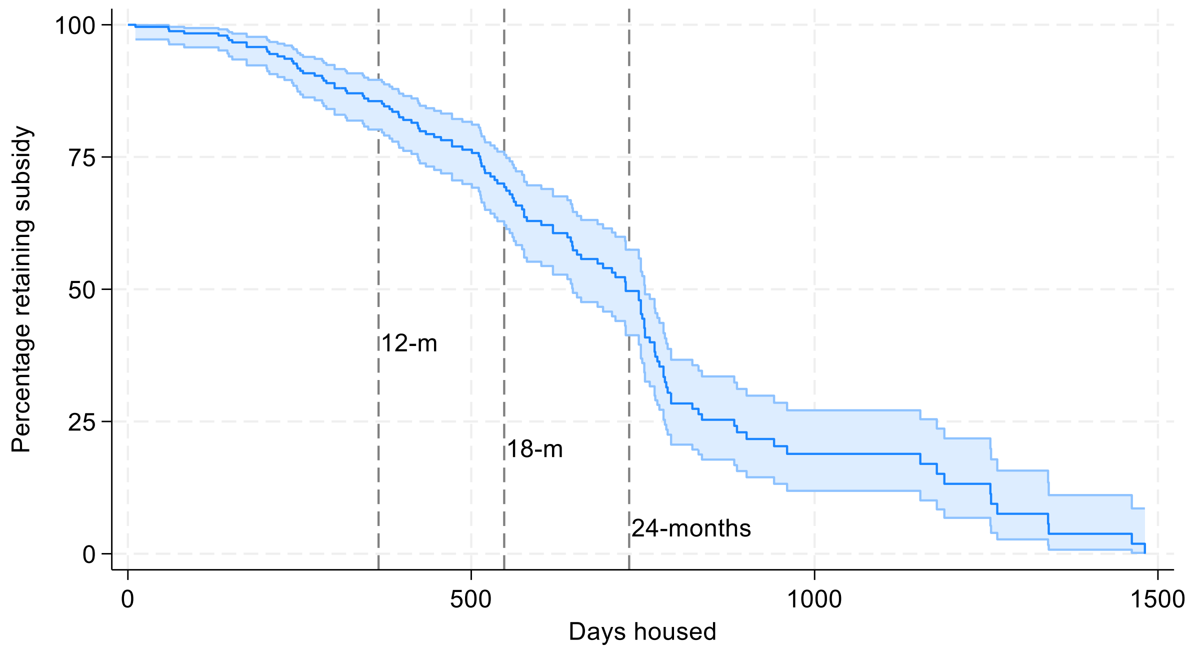
Table B.5. BSCC: Survival Modeling to Housing Exit (by Days Housed)

Variable	Cox BSCC Only	Adjusted *p*-Value	Cox Total Population	Adjusted *p*-Value
AB 109/probation	–0.842	0.041	–0.475	0.132
	(0.342)		(0.232)	
Age	0.0146	0.719	–0.0109	0.411
	(0.0201)		(0.0102)	
Female	–0.848	0.315	–0.0165	0.944
	(0.575)		(0.236)	
White	0.0782	0.999	0.354	0.372
	(0.681)		(0.292)	
Hispanic/Latino	–0.408	0.721	–0.102	0.933
	(0.701)		(0.301)	
Multiracial or other	0.00126	0.999	0.0292	0.944
	(0.783)		(0.358)	
Housing at entry: family			–0.314	0.373
			(0.261)	
Housing at entry: transitional			–0.740**	0.035
			(0.279)	
Housing at entry: friend			–0.436	0.372
			(0.310)	
Housing at entry: residential treatment facility			–0.588	0.372
			(0.434)	
Have children	0.250	0.719	–0.0558	0.933
	(0.353)		(0.209)	
Engagement	–0.0202***	0.000	–0.0152***	0.000
	(0.00457)		(0.00272)	
Time enrolled	–0.0129***	0.000	–0.00819***	0.000
	(0.00189)		(0.000787)	
Observations	106		258	

NOTE: The robust standard error of each estimate is in parentheses. Asterisks indicate results that are statistically significant after a Benjamini-Hochberg correction for the false discovery rate at the 90-percent level (*), 95-percent level (**), and 99-percent level (***). Each coefficient in the table shows how much more or less likely a participant with that characteristic is to exit housing than someone in the reference group. For example, a positive coefficient means a higher likelihood than the reference group; a negative coefficient means a lower likelihood. The reference group is Black male participants who are not Hispanic or Latino, were unhoused at program entry, do not have children, are not on parole and supervision, and have just enrolled in the Breaking Barriers program.

Figure B.1 shows that the percentage of participants who remained housed declined steadily over time; about half were still housed at around 600 to 700 days.

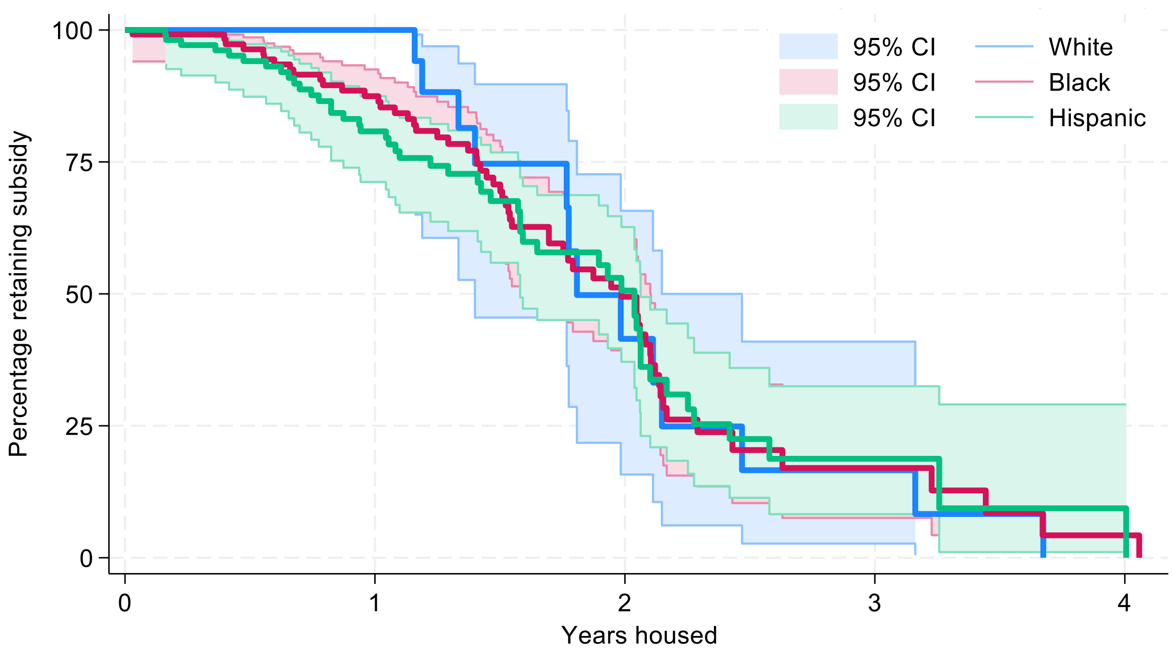
Figure B.1. Survival Curve for Days Housed Among All Participants Receiving Rental Housing Subsidy



NOTE: *n* = 258.

Housing retention was broadly similar for White (*n* = 40), Black (*n* = 195), and Hispanic/Latino (*n* = 209) participants. Sixteen participants who are not Black, White, or Hispanic are excluded from the graph because of the small sample of such participants (Figure B.2).

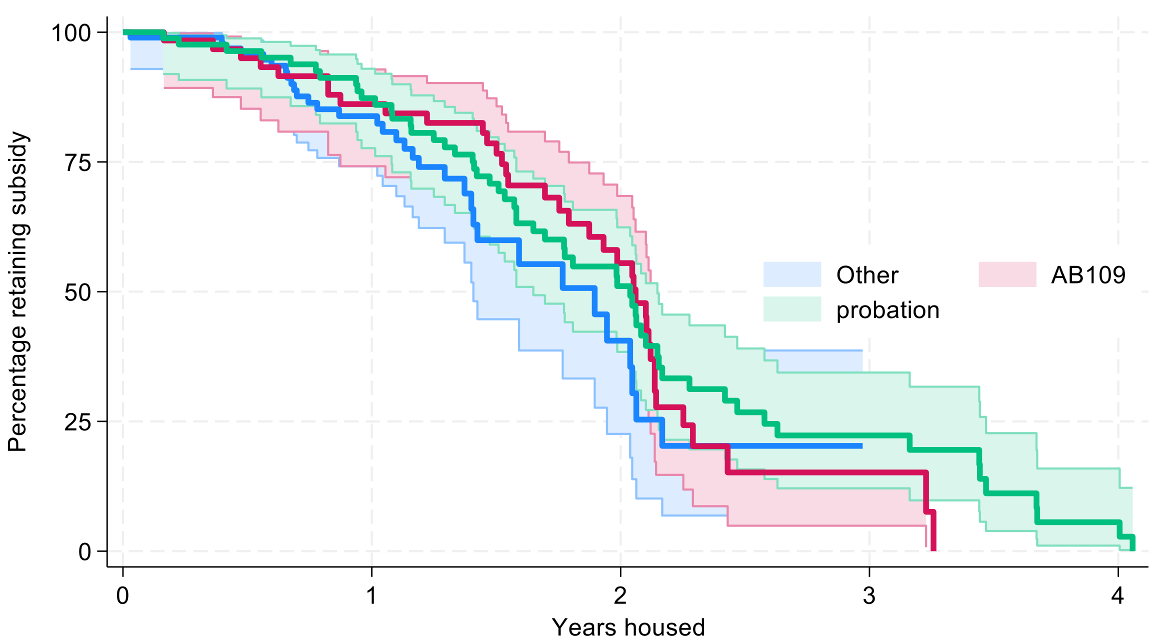
Figure B.2. Survival Curves for Years Housed, by Race/Ethnicity



NOTE: *n* = 258.

Retention was similar across the AB 109, probation, and parole groups (Figure B.3).

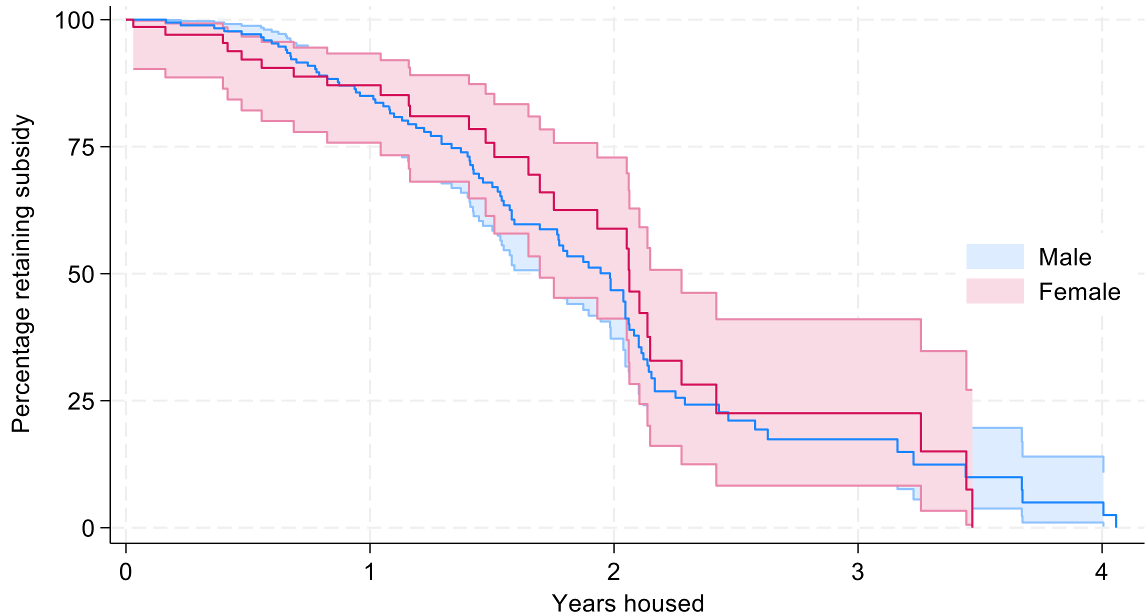
Figure B.3. Survival Curves for Years Housed, by Supervision Status



NOTE: *n* = 258.

Women (n = 116) and men (n = 344) experienced similar rates of housing retention (Figure B.4).

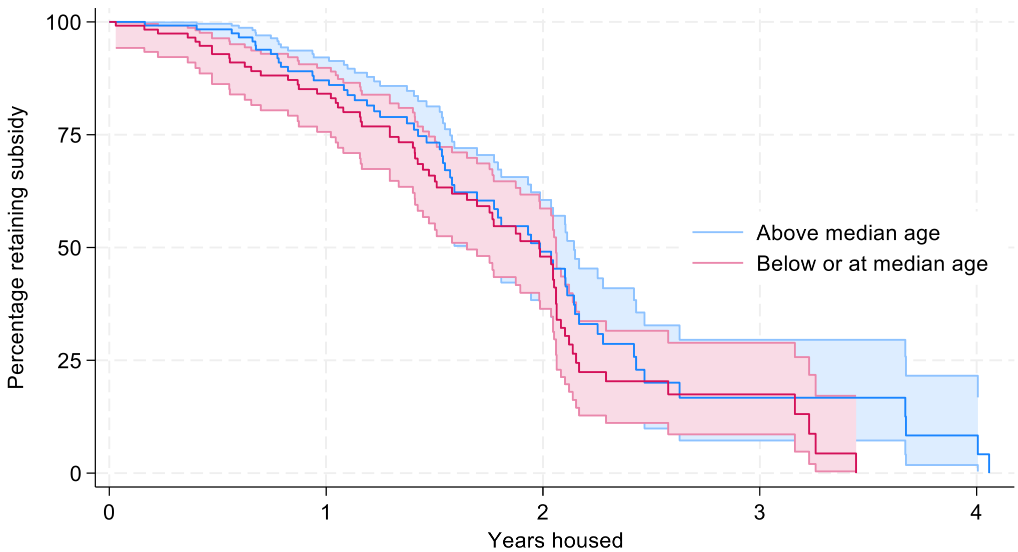
Figure B.4. Survival Curves for Years Housed, by Gender



NOTE: n = 258.

Participants over the median age of 38 years remained housed longer than those aged less than 38, who exited housing more quickly (Figure B.5). We considered survival plots of transition-age youth (those aged 18–25 years, n = 20) versus older adults (n = 440) but do not present them here because of the low numbers of transition-age youth in the sample.

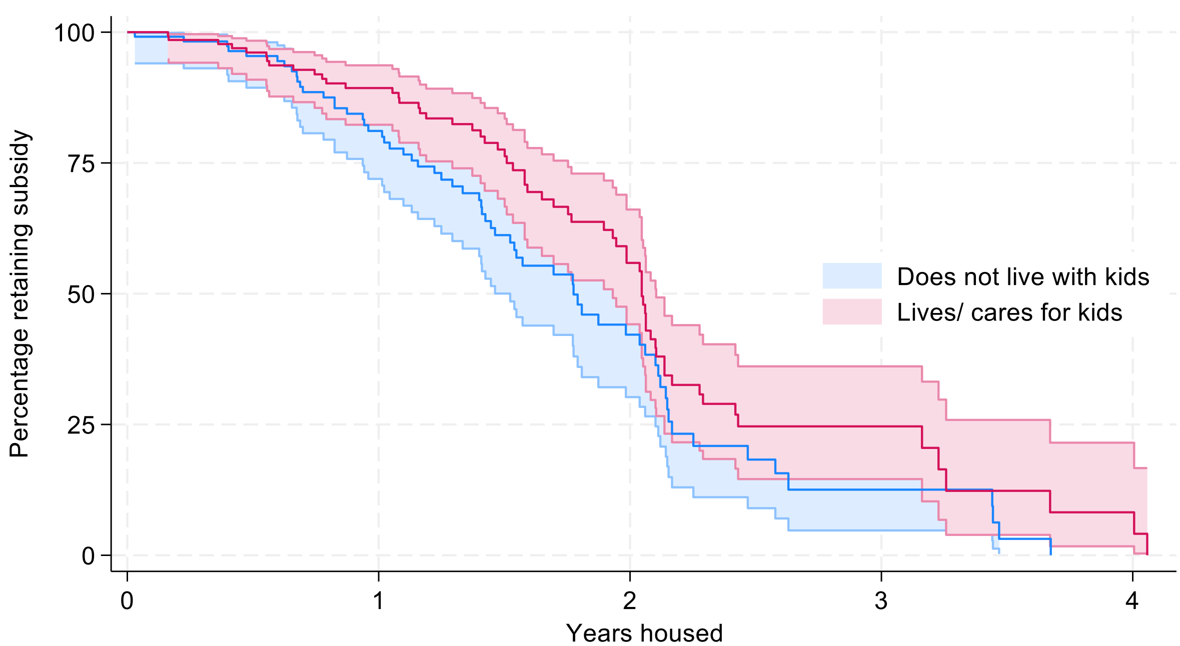
Figure B.5. Survival Curves for Years Housed, by Age Group



NOTE: *n* = 258.

Participants who were living with or caring for children had higher housing retention than those who were not (Figure B.6).

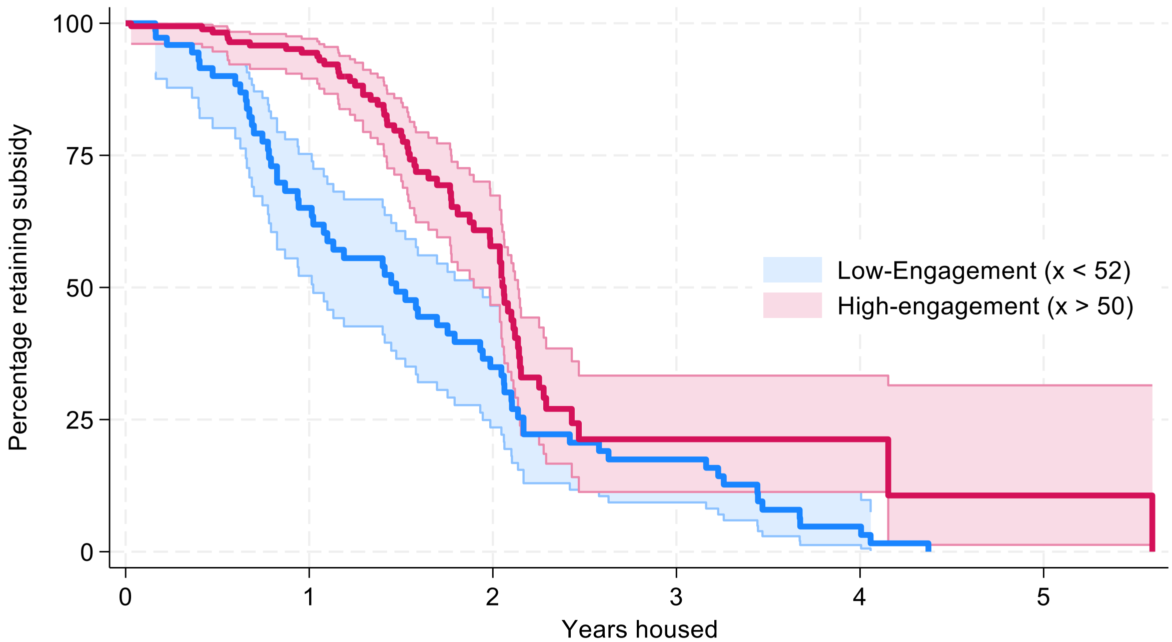
Figure B.6. Survival Curves for Years Housed, by Whether Participants Were Living with Children



NOTE: *n* = 258.

Participants with high engagement (52 or more contacts) remained housed significantly longer than those with lower engagement (Figure B.7).

Figure B.7. Survival Curves for Years Housed, by Level of Program Engagement



NOTE: n = 258.

Exits Due to Incarceration

Table B.6 presents Cox survival modeling of the likelihood of program exit as a result of incarceration based on participant characteristics. The Cox survival model further indicates that higher engagement with program staff (coefficient: –0.0206, $p < 0.1$) and being housed (coefficient: –1.644, $p < 0.01$) are both strongly associated with a reduced risk of reincarceration.

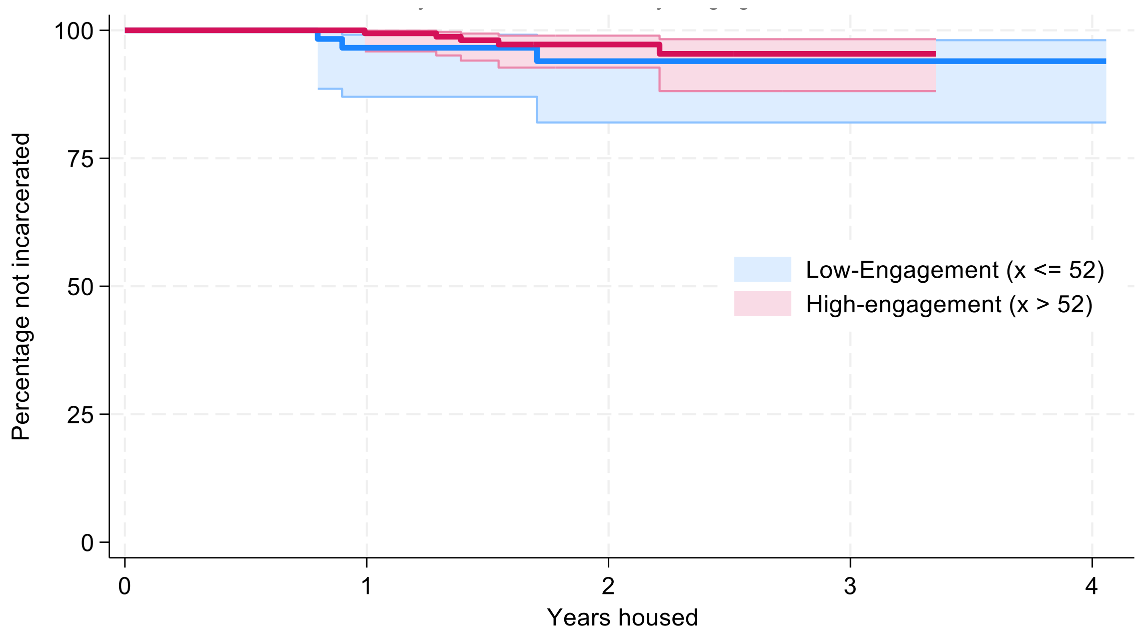
Figures B.8 and B.9 show survival curves for participants with differences in level of engagement and supervision status, demonstrating low levels of incarceration even for higher-risk participants with AB 109 supervision status.

Table B.6. Hazards Models for Likelihood of Incarceration During Program Enrollment

Variable	Cox	*p*-Value	Adjusted *p*-Value
AB 109	1.327	0.098	0.289
	(0.802)		
Probation	0.439	0.606	0.707
	(0.851)		
Age	–0.0408	0.109	0.289
	(0.0255)		
Female	–1.048	0.167	0.333
	(0.758)		
White	–1.913*	0.050	0.234
	(0.977)		
Hispanic/Latino	0.720	0.359	0.564
	(0.785)		
Multiracial/other	–0.298	0.720	0.775
	(0.830)		
Housing at entry: family	–0.583	0.457	0.640
	(0.785)		
Housing at entry: transitional	0.571	0.363	0.564
	(0.627)		
Housing at entry: friend	–0.175	0.814	0.814
	(0.744)		
Housing at entry: residential treatment facility	0.561	0.527	0.670
	(0.886)		
Have children	–0.706	0.124	0.289
	(0.459)		
Engagement	–0.0206*	0.009	0.062
	(0.00790)		
Housed by Breaking Barriers program	–1.644***	0.001	0.010
	(0.484)		
Days enrolled	–		
Reference	–		
Observations	460		

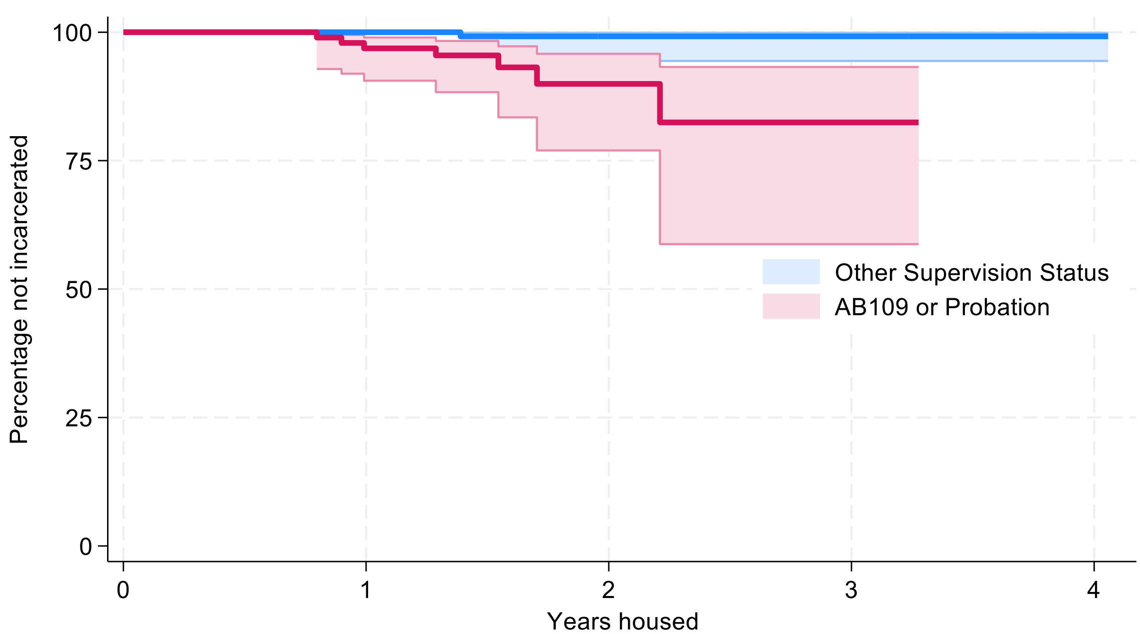
NOTE: Robust standard errors of each estimate are in parentheses. Asterisks indicate results that are statistically significant after a Benjamini-Hochberg correction for the false discovery rate at the 90-percent level (*), 95-percent level (**), and 99-percent level (***). Each coefficient in the table shows how much more or less likely a participant with that characteristic is to recidivate compared with the reference group. For example, a positive coefficient means a higher likelihood than the reference group; a negative coefficient means a lower likelihood. The reference group is Black male participants who are not Hispanic or Latino, were unhoused at program entry, do not have children, are not on parole and supervision, and have just enrolled in the Breaking Barriers program.

Figure B.8. Days Enrolled Prior to Incarceration Incident, by Participant Engagement



NOTE: *n* = 460.

Figure B.9. Days Enrolled Prior to Incarceration Incident, by Supervision Status



NOTE: *n* = 460.

Employment

Factors Associated with Obtaining Employment Among Participants Unemployed at Program Entry

Table B.7 presents results from the logistic regression models predicting employment at program exit among all participants and among those unemployed at entry. In the full sample (models 1 and 2), AB 109 and probation supervision status are significantly associated with a lower likelihood of employment (logit: –1.325 and –1.173, both $p < 0.01$). Probability of employment at exit for AB 109 participants is 46 percent, probability for participants on probation is 48 percent, and probability for other participants is 82 percent. For the total sample, women were more likely to be employed at exit than men.

Among participants who were unemployed at entry (models 3 and 4), older age (logit: –0.103, $p < 0.05$) is associated with a significantly lower probability of employment at exit. There were large but not significant effect sizes identified for being female, White, or multiracial or other race. The logit model predicts that the oldest participant in the sample, at 69, would have a 9-percent probability of being employed at exit; the youngest would have an 85-percent probability; and a 40-year-old would have a 55-percent probability if they were unemployed at entry. For participants who do obtain employment, older participants are more likely than younger participants to secure full-time rather than part-time positions (Table B.10, later in this appendix).

Similarly, if unemployed at entry, women have a 42-percent probability of employment at exit, compared with 66 percent for men. The expected probabilities of finding employment at exit are 85 percent for White participants, 48 percent for Hispanic/Latino participants, 49 percent for Black participants, and 79 percent for multiracial or other race participants. These trends are consistent with broader patterns in reentry employment outcomes, which show that Black and Hispanic individuals, as well as women, experience lower employment rates following reentry.[78] Reentry employment data reflect that these barriers are also intersectional and that women of color face compounded challenges in securing employment. Other factors, such as living situation prior to program entry, do not show consistent or significant associations with employment outcomes. These findings suggest that participants under supervision, older adults, and women may face greater barriers to employment and could benefit from targeted support.

[78] Couloute and Kopf, 2018.

Table B.7. Regression Models of Employment Outcomes at Program Exit (Employed on Last Day) Among All Participants and Those Unemployed at Entry

Variable	Logit	Adjusted *p*-Value	Logit Unemployed at Entry	Adjusted *p*-Value
AB 109	–1.325***	0.008	–1.234	0.436
	(0.378)		(1.002)	
Probation	–1.173**	0.014	–0.654	0.656
	(0.378)		(0.935)	
Age	0.0158	0.504	–0.103**	0.024
	(0.0141)		(0.0353)	
Female	0.852*	0.075	–1.215	0.228
	(0.359)		(0.667)	
White	0.566	0.435	2.342	0.145
	(0.434)		(1.086)	
Hispanic/Latino	–0.403	0.561	–0.968	0.516
	(0.429)		(0.997)	
Multiracial or other	0.679	0.435	1.974	0.228
	(0.493)		(1.133)	
Housing at entry: family	–0.169	0.764	–0.0347	0.965
	(0.393)		(0.798)	
Housing at entry: transitional	–0.371	0.554	–0.464	0.666
	(0.367)		(0.817)	
Housing at entry: friend	0.155	0.771	0.265	0.832
	(0.436)		(0.917)	
Housing at entry: residential treatment facility	–0.0899	0.861	0.744	0.656
	(0.505)		(1.142)	
Have children	–0.213	0.571	0.540	0.516
	(0.269)		(0.554)	
Engagement	0.00550	0.435	0.0129	0.436
	(0.00433)		(0.00991)	
Reference	0.566	0.571	3.956**	0.024
	(0.736)		(1.333)	
Observations	293		73	
Pseudo R-squared	0.0708		0.1755	

NOTE: Robust standard errors of each estimate are in parentheses. Asterisks indicate results that are statistically significant after a Benjamini-Hochberg correction for the false discovery rate at the 90-percent level (*), 95-percent level (**), and 99-percent level (***). Each coefficient in the table shows how much more or less likely a participant with that characteristic is to be employed at program exit compared with the reference group. For example, a positive coefficient means a higher likelihood than the reference group; a negative coefficient means a lower likelihood. The reference group is Black male participants who are not Hispanic or Latino, were unhoused at program entry, do not have children, are not on parole and supervision, and have just enrolled in the Breaking Barriers program.

Factors Associated with Obtaining Employment Among Participants Housed Through Breaking Barriers

Table B.8 presents results from logistic regression and OLS models estimating the likelihood of employment at program exit among participants who were housed during the program.

The BSCC model (model 1) has less power than the full population model (model 2). All BSCC participants who were housed in residential treatment facilities prior to program entry ($n = 6$) were employed on the last day, leading to the residential treatment facility variable being omitted from the logit model. No coefficients had significant relationships identified in the BSCC model. However, one variable with a large effect size was AB 109 supervision status: Participants with this status had a decreased probability of being employed at exit (43-percent probability versus 69-percent probability without AB 109 supervision status; logit: –1.226; $p = 0.546$).

In the full sample of housed participants (model 2), a longer duration of housing is significantly associated with a higher probability of employment (logit: 0.00195; $p < 0.05$). A participant housed for six months had an expected probability of 45 percent, rising to 61 percent if housed for 18 months. Other factors, such as supervision status, race/ethnicity, and living situation prior to program entry, do not show consistent or statistically significant associations with employment outcomes in these models. The effect size is much smaller, reflecting that a participant with AB 109 supervision status has a 58-percent probability of obtaining employment, compared with 59 percent when we look at the full-population sample.

Table B.8. Regression Models of Employment Outcomes at Program Exit (Employed on Last Day) Among Participants Housed Through Breaking Barriers

Variable	BSCC	Adjusted *p*-Value	Total	Adjusted *p*-Value
AB 109	–1.226	0.546	–0.0485	0.946
	(0.594)		(0.343)	
Probation	–0.515	0.866	–0.246	0.825
	(0.746)		(0.348)	
Age	–0.0301	0.848	–0.0204	0.688
	(0.0286)		(0.0149)	
Female	0.0306	0.961	0.0220	0.946
	(0.623)		(0.322)	
White	0.945	0.848	0.184	0.825
	(0.807)		(0.418)	
Hispanic/Latino	–0.184	0.961	0.187	0.825
	(0.797)		(0.413)	
Multiracial or other	1.368	0.848	0.272	0.825
	(0.918)		(0.484)	
Housing at entry: family	0.442	0.866	0.0439	0.946
	(0.752)		(0.409)	
Housing at entry: transitional	0.0507	0.961	–0.442	0.688
	(0.678)		(0.368)	
Housing at entry: friend	0.562	0.866	0.766	0.688
	(0.880)		(0.588)	
Housing at entry: residential treatment facility	—	—	0.410	0.825
			(0.523)	
Have children	–0.477	0.848	–0.565	0.437
	(0.470)		(0.298)	
Engagement	0.000387	0.961	–0.00217	0.825
	(0.00658)		(0.00376)	
Time housed	0.000454	0.961	0.00195**	0.014
	(0.00131)		(0.000589)	
Reference	1.403	0.848	0.652	0.825
	(1.544)		(0.823)	
Observations	100		258	
Pseudo R-squared	0.1151		0.1303	

NOTE: Robust standard errors of each estimate are in parentheses. Asterisks indicate results that are statistically significant after a Benjamini-Hochberg correction for the false discovery rate at the 90-percent level (*), 95-percent level (**), and 99-percent level (***). Each coefficient in the table shows how much more or less likely a participant with that characteristic is to be employed at program exit compared with the reference group. For example, a positive coefficient means a higher likelihood than the reference group; a negative coefficient means a lower likelihood. The reference group is Black male participants who are not Hispanic or Latino, were unhoused at program entry, do not have children, are not on parole and supervision, and have just enrolled in the Breaking Barriers program.

Factors Associated with Employment During Program Enrollment, Six-Month Interval Analysis

Table B.9 presents logistic regression estimates for obtaining employment during program enrollment, assessed in six-month intervals. The results show that remaining in the program for longer periods is associated with higher odds of employment: Compared with the first six months, being enrolled for 13–18 months (65-percent probability; logit: 0.620, $p = 0.387$), 19–24 months (67-percent probability; logit: 0.672, $p = 0.255$), and 25–32 months (70-percent probability; logit: 0.887, $p = 0.127$) is associated with a not significant but greater likelihood of employment. In contrast, the period covering months 7–12 is associated with a lower probability of employment (25-percent probability; 48 logit: −1.465, $p = 0.326$). Age, gender, race/ethnicity, and engagement do not show significant associations. There is a large positive effect size for the coefficient on the multiracial or other race category (logit: 0.492, $p = 0.463$), reflecting that participants in the multiracial or other race category have a 63-percent probability of finding employment, compared with 52 percent for Black participants and 62 percent for White participants.

These findings highlight the importance of sustained program participation for improving employment outcomes.

Table B.9. Regression Models of Employment During Program Enrollment (Any Employment in Six-Month Intervals) Among Breaking Barriers Participants

Variable	Logit	Odds Ratio	*p*-Value	Adjusted *p*-Value
AB 109	–0.401	0.670	0.260	0.468
	(0.306)	(0.206)		
Probation	–0.379	0.684	0.206	0.463
	(0.257)	(0.177)		
Age	0.00978	1.010	0.563	0.729
	(0.0107)	(0.0104)		
Female	0.107	1.113	0.577	0.729
	(0.233)	(0.258)		
White	0.425	1.529	0.251	0.468
	(0.324)	(0.487)		
Hispanic/Latino	–0.132	0.877	0.718	0.761
	(0.314)	(0.276)		
Multiracial or other	0.492	1.636	0.180	0.463
	(0.361)	(0.591)		
Housing at entry: family	0.146	1.157	0.640	0.729
	(0.303)	(0.346)		
Housing at entry: transitional	–0.511	0.600	0.053	0.319
	(0.272)	(0.165)		
Housing at entry: friend	0.331	1.392	0.368	0.552
	(0.358)	(0.492)		
Housing at entry: residential treatment facility	–0.0648	0.937	0.836	0.836
	(0.367)	(0.348)		
Have children	–0.268	0.765	0.187	0.463
	(0.203)	(0.156)		
Engagement	0.00272	1.003	0.340	0.552
	(0.00285)	(0.00279)		
Program months: 7–12	–1.465	0.231	0.073	0.326
	(0.805)	(0.189)		
Program months: 13–18	0.620	1.858	0.108	0.387
	(0.343)	(0.631)		
Program months: 19–24	0.672	1.957	0.028	0.255
	(0.287)	(0.564)		

Variable	Logit	Odds Ratio	*p*-Value	Adjusted *p*-Value
Program months: 25–32	0.887	2.428	0.007	0.127
	(0.283)	(0.680)		
Reference (program months: 1–6)	–0.387	0.679	0.648	0.729
	(0.514)	(0.346)		
Observations	460	460		
Pseudo R-squared	0.0771	0.0771		

NOTE: Robust standard errors of each estimate are in parentheses. Asterisks indicate results that are statistically significant after a Benjamini-Hochberg correction for the false discovery rate at the 90% level (*), 95% level (**), and 99% level (***). Each coefficient in the table shows how much more or less likely a participant with that characteristic is to have been employed, compared to the reference group. For example, a positive coefficient means a higher likelihood than the reference group; a negative coefficient means a lower likelihood. The reference group is Black male participants who are not Hispanic or Latino, were unhoused at program entry, do not have children, are not on parole and supervision, and have just enrolled in the Breaking Barriers program.

Factors Associated with Full-Time and Part-Time Employment at Program Exit

Table B.10 presents logistic regression and odds ratio models estimating the likelihood of obtaining full-time or part-time employment at program exit. The results show that age is a significant predictor of employment status: Older participants are more likely than younger ones to obtain full-time employment (probability of full-time employment given 60 years old = 55 percent, while probability of full-time employment given 30 years old = 36 percent; logit: 0.0273, $p < 0.1$) and less likely than younger ones to obtain part-time employment (probability of part-time employment given 60 years old = 7 percent, while probability of part-time employment given 30 years old = 21 percent; logit: –0.0429, $p < 0.1$). Living with a friend prior to program entry is associated with a higher likelihood of full-time employment (56 percent compared with 40 percent for participants who did not live with a friend; logit: 0.660, $p < 0.1$), while living in transitional housing is associated with a lower likelihood of part-time employment (9 percent versus 20 percent for other participants; logit: –0.943, $p < 0.1$). Increased engagement with program services is modestly associated with a higher probability of part-time employment but is not statistically significant (logit: 0.00706, $p < 0.193$). A participant with 100 engagement counts has a 19-percent probability of obtaining part-time employment and a 45-percent probability of obtaining full-time employment, compared with a 12-percent part-time probability and a 40-percent full-time probability for a participant with ten engagement counts. Other participant characteristics, such as supervision status, gender, and race/ethnicity, do not show consistent or statistically significant associations with employment status at exit. These findings highlight the importance of age, living situation, and program engagement in supporting employment outcomes for justice-involved individuals.

Table B.10. Regression Models of Employment Status at Program Exit (Full-Time and Part-Time) Among Breaking Barriers Participants

Variable	Logit Full-Time	Odds Ratio Full-Time	Logit Part-Time	Odds Ratio Part-Time
AB 109	–0.281	0.755	0.152	1.164
	(0.248)	(0.187)	(0.364)	(0.424)
Probation	–0.431	0.650	0.324	1.383
	(0.252)	(0.164)	(0.365)	(0.505)
Age	0.0273*	1.028*	–0.0429*	0.958*
	(0.0107)	(0.0110)	(0.0161)	(0.0154)
Female	–0.0625	0.939	0.363	1.438
	(0.239)	(0.225)	(0.298)	(0.429)
White	0.294	1.342	0.0560	1.058
	(0.310)	(0.415)	(0.436)	(0.461)
Hispanic/Latino	0.157	1.170	–0.331	0.718
	(0.298)	(0.348)	(0.436)	(0.313)
Multiracial or other	–0.0421	0.959	0.964	2.622
	(0.349)	(0.334)	(0.514)	(1.347)
Housing at entry: family	0.220	1.246	–0.382	0.683
	(0.298)	(0.372)	(0.368)	(0.251)
Housing at entry: transitional	0.00908	1.009	–0.943*	0.389*
	(0.274)	(0.276)	(0.378)	(0.147)
Housing at entry: friend	0.660*	1.935*	–0.432	0.649
	(0.347)	(0.671)	(0.464)	(0.301)
Housing at entry: residential treatment facility	0.405	1.499	–0.679	0.507
	(0.359)	(0.538)	(0.512)	(0.260)
Have children	–0.285	0.752	0.0325	1.033
	(0.202)	(0.152)	(0.279)	(0.288)
Engagement	0.00246	1.002	0.00706	1.007
	(0.00259)	(0.00260)	(0.00346)	(0.00349)
Reference	–1.447*	0.235*	–0.441	0.644
	(0.570)	(0.134)	(0.806)	(0.519)
Observations	460	460	460	460
Pseudo R-squared	0.0640	0.0640	0.0997	0.0997

NOTE: Robust standard errors of each estimate are in parentheses. Asterisks indicate results that are statistically significant after a Benjamini-Hochberg correction for the false discovery rate at the 90-percent level (*), 95-percent level (**), and 99-percent level (***). Each coefficient in the table shows how much more or less likely a participant with that characteristic is to be employed at program exit compared with the reference group. For example, a positive coefficient means a higher likelihood than the reference group; a negative coefficient means a lower likelihood. The reference group is Black male participants who are not Hispanic or Latino, were unhoused at program entry, do not have children, are not on parole and supervision, and have just enrolled in the Breaking Barriers program.

Abbreviations

AB	Assembly Bill
BSCC	Board of State and Community Corrections
CalWORKs	California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids
CFCI	Care First Community Investment
FHSP	Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool
JCOD	Justice, Care and Opportunities Department
OLS	ordinary least squares
PSH	permanent supportive housing
RRH	rapid rehousing
SRO	single-room occupancy
VI-SPDAT	Vulnerability Index–Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool

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