

Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity Independent Evaluation

Far Rockaway Economic Advancement Initiative Evaluation Final Report

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NYC Opportunity Response to Evaluation of the Far Rockaway Economic Advancement Initiative



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New York City government is continually working to improve the way it brings workforce development services to residents who most need them. The following report presents the findings of an implementation and impact evaluation of an effort to expand the services at one of the City's career centers and tailor them to the local community – the Far Rockaway Economic Advancement Initiative (FREAI). FREAI was a program of the Department of Small Business Services (SBS) that provided intensive, place-based career development services layered on top of the standard workforce services provided at the City's American Jobs Centers (called "Workforce1 Career Centers" in New York City).

The isolation and concentration of residents with employment and training needs in the Far Rockaways, Queens, led SBS to develop a Workforce1 Career Center there in 2013. FREAI, which brought new services to this Center via a partnership with a community-based organization, launched inside the existing Workforce1 Career Center in 2015 with support from the Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity (NYC Opportunity) and Citi Community Development. FREAI incorporated a workforce development approach driven by the needs of local customers who were historically underserved. As part of its strategy to build strong connections with local low-income residents, FREAI conducted targeted outreach at local NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments and offered services that included financial counseling pre- and post-job placement, job readiness coaching, business development services focused on engaging local employers, and on-site training opportunities. Unlike other Workforce1 Career Centers, FREAI was developed as a "one-stop shop" operated simultaneously by two organizations, one focused on job placement and the other focused on intensive career development.

The evaluation finds that FREAI was successful in providing comprehensive career services and that FREAI customers were more likely to be connected to jobs than the matched comparison group. However, FREAI services did not necessarily translate into better earnings and employment outcomes, which were the same for FREAI customers and for the matched comparison group after one year. Given that Far Rockaway residents were likely at a disadvantage relative to the comparison group due to the geographic remoteness and the high poverty of their neighborhood, these similar outcomes could indicate that FREAI was successful. This evaluation, conducted by Westat and Metis Associates, studied both the program's implementation and impact. The authors gathered qualitative data through interviews and focus groups, and measured impact by comparing the outcomes of FREAI customers to those of similar, matched customers served by other Workforce1 Career Centers. The evaluation found that:

- FREAI effectively reached individuals from historically underserved communities, including NYCHA residents and other Rockaway residents;
- The partnership of the two providers was a highly successful element of the model, providing a seamless customer experience;
- Community members perceived the program as having a positive impact, primarily through the job readiness and placement services provided to local residents;
- Customers received a greater number of services and were more likely to receive specific types of high-touch services, such as individual job readiness services, than the comparison group;
- Customers were statistically significantly more likely to be placed in a job and worked more hours in the initial placement than the comparison group;
- FREAI customers' wages in the initial placement were lower than the comparison group by \$0.78 per hour; and
- There were no large, statistically significant differences in employment and earnings in the four quarters after services were received between FREAI customers and the comparison group.

The finding that the longer-term labor market outcomes of FREAI customers were similar to those of the comparison group does not imply that FREAI was unsuccessful. First, FREAI reached customers who have been underserved by other Workforce1 Career Centers, were likely less “job ready” on average due to their relative geographic isolation, and may not have had convenient access to the additional services provided by FREAI. Second, FREAI customers were able to achieve labor market outcomes that were similar to those obtained by customers of other Workforce1 Career Centers who did not face the geographic and economic barriers associated with living in Far Rockaway.

FREAI operations ended at the conclusion of the funding in March 2018 – the standard Workforce1 Career Center services continued to be offered on-site. SBS provided several examples of how FREAI's implementation changed their practices in ways that have carried over to other Workforce 1 Career Centers:

- Promoting engagement with financial counseling services proved more challenging than expected and thus required developing new marketing and outreach strategies (there were no pre-existing providers in the area) and re-engaging customers after they were employed (they were less likely to be interested in financial counseling before attaining jobs);
- FREAI providing additional services influenced what data SBS captures in its database;
- Providing training services onsite proved more challenging than originally anticipated due to certification requirements and the limited availability of needed equipment and training providers; and
- SBS established novel communication and referral strategies that connected SBS's sector-specific Workforce1 Career Centers in other parts of the City to the geographically isolated Rockaways to prevent jobseekers from having to visit multiple Centers whenever possible.

Westat and Metis Associates offer valuable recommendations for workforce development programming generally, and specifically for people who live in more isolated geographies. These include replicating place-based models that have tailored outreach and recruitment strategies, and expanding individual job readiness and support services in other workforce programs. NYC Opportunity and SBS will continue to incorporate lessons learned from this work as they endeavor to strengthen workforce development systems in New York City.

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Executive Summary

New York City Workforce1 Career Centers deliver the adult workforce development services authorized under Title I of the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS) operates the Workforce1 Career Centers throughout the city to meet federal mandates for workforce development. SBS provides comprehensive services at five centers across the five boroughs, and several expansion centers that provide specialized services. Additionally, two Workforce1 Career Centers provide sector specific healthcare and industrial and transportation services.

In 2015, SBS, in partnership with the Mayor’s Office for Economic Opportunity (NYC Opportunity), the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), and Citi Community Development (Citi), launched the Far Rockaway Economic Advancement Initiative at the Rockaway Center (hereafter “Rockaway Workforce1 Career Center”). The Far Rockaway Economic Advancement Initiative (FREAI) was developed to pilot several unique additions to the Workforce1 model, including: a place-based focus on customer engagement and business development (with a focus on serving New York City Housing Authority residents); an expanded portfolio of job-readiness services designed to meet the needs of all community members; and the provision of financial counseling pre- and post-job placement. Furthermore, to accommodate these additions to the Workforce1 Career Center’s scope, SBS chose to contract with a second vendor focused on intensive career development.

Evaluation Design

In 2017, the Mayor’s Office for Economic Opportunity engaged the services of Westat and Metis Associates to undertake an evaluation of this initiative. This evaluation was composed of two studies, a qualitative implementation evaluation and an impact evaluation that was designed to compare the labor market outcomes of Rockaway Workforce1 customers to those of similar customers served by “hub” Workforce1 Career Centers. “Hub” Workforce1 Career Centers include the Brooklyn, Bronx, Queens, Upper Manhattan, and State Island Workforce1 Career Centers.

For the implementation study, the evaluation team interviewed a cross-section of informed stakeholders between August and December, 2017, including Rockaway Center staff, representatives of nearby community-based organizations, employers, partner and agency representatives, representatives of NYCHA tenant associations, and directors of selected “hub” Workforce1 Career Centers. In addition, the researchers conducted telephone interviews and focus groups with Rockaway Center customers.

The impact study drew on data from two sources: the Worksource1 data system and Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records. Worksource1 is the platform used to maintain all Workforce1 Career Center data. This system records detailed information on the demographic characteristics of all SBS customers including customers' program-related activities and outcomes.¹ UI wage records provided information on employment and earnings after services.

Implementation Study Findings

Development and Implementation of the FREAI

The geographic isolation of Far Rockaway along with the concentration of residents with employment and training needs led the New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS) to pilot a new initiative in 2015 – the Far Rockaway Economic Advancement Initiative – at an intentionally designed Workforce1 Career Center situated in the community of Arverne. This initiative was developed as a “one-stop shop” designed to address community residents' job readiness (with a particular focus on engaging local New York City Housing Authority residents). To accomplish this goal, two different organizations, a job placement service provider and a career development service provider, were contracted to run the Rockaway Center in partnership (a design unique to this location). Each organization was chosen for their understanding of the community's needs as well as their distinct but complementary service areas and strengths. Several city agencies provided oversight while Citi Community Development advocated for, and helped design, the insertion of financial empowerment services into the FREAI model.

Practices at the Rockaway Center

The Far Rockaway Economic Advancement Initiative, layered onto the Rockaway Center, encompassed the following program components:

- **Robust community outreach and customer recruitment.** Overseen by the career development service provider, a team of outreach workers with roots in the Rockaway communities used a breadth of outreach methods to develop trust with the community and help community residents overcome personal and community-wide barriers to service uptake. Strategies included personal outreach (going door-to-door), acting as one-on-one liaisons between potential customers and the Rockaway Workforce1 Center, building relationships with local organizations and

¹ Throughout this report, the “FREAI” refers to the initiative at the Rockaway Center. “Rockaway Center customers” refers to the individuals served by the initiative and is used when making comparisons to other Workforce1 Career Center customers.

community institutions, distributing fliers, and communicating the Rockaway Center’s “open door policy.”

- **Job readiness services.** Overseen by the career development service provider but informed by partnership-level and customer-level collaborations with the job placement service provider, job readiness was provided through one-on-one counseling, a curriculum-based, multi-day class, and onsite and offsite trainings. Service provision was built around individualized assessments conducted to identify barriers to employment. The career development service provider used its network of referral partners and the organization’s other (offsite) services to address customers’ needs. Referrals were made to educational, housing, legal, immigration, and other services such as programs that provide work-appropriate clothing. In addition, the Rockaway Center was built with a training space specifically designed for flexible use. However, unlike the well-received job readiness services, the space was under-utilized; the trainings, determined centrally by SBS, were described as not responsive to the community’s needs.
- **One-on-one financial counseling.** The FREAI was designed to provide one-on-one financial counseling to each customer both before and after job placement so that, while seeking employment, a customer’s limited financial resources would be well-managed, and once employed, customers had the tools to make informed and intentional financial decisions. However, Center staff struggled to appropriately fit financial counseling within the larger program model. Financial empowerment was not, for example, framed as part of job readiness and customers were often unaware of this service, with the result that the service was underutilized. Center staff also had difficulty engaging customers after they were employed and therefore receipt of financial counseling post-placement was limited.
- **Employer engagement.** In recruiting employers, the FREAI was intended to engage local industries and employers, but with the primary goal of facilitating residents’ access to quality jobs. While the place-based aspect of the initiative was seen as an asset for residents and for the local economy, and the Rockaway Center’s relationship with employers was reported to be strong and valued, opportunities for local placements were limited. Nevertheless, the strength of the pre-screening process and preparation for job seekers, as well as the “professionalism” and “high quality communication” of Center staff, led to long-term relationships between the Rockaway Center and employers.
- **Job placement.** For staff of the job placement service provider, connecting customers to jobs was balanced between identifying customers’ interests and meeting the very specific needs of employers. Distinct to the FREAI, career development service provider staff also held a key role in placement efforts by helping to prepare customers for specific opportunities as well as following up with customers who were identified by the job placement service provider as needing

extra support. Challenges included identifying viable local opportunities and finding placements for customers who had a college or advanced degree as well as those without a high school or equivalent diploma.

Differentiators of the FREAI Model

The fully integrated partnership between two vendors was a key differentiator of the FREAI and differed from the structure of other Workforce1 Career Centers. Findings suggest that the partnership was a highly successful element of the model due to the following factors:

- A commitment from both providers to present a seamless customer experience;
- A collegial and fully collaborative relationship between each provider’s frontline staff, modeled by a strong partnership between each director;
- Distinct provider and staff responsibilities;
- Strong histories within the provider organizations of working within the Rockaway peninsula; and
- Mutual information sharing toward the goal of an effective customer-employer match.

Other distinctive features of the FREAI model that were *unique* to the Rockaway Center were: (1) a customer-driven approach with an expectation of serving all community residents; (2) a curriculum-based job readiness class; and (3) onsite financial empowerment services. The FREAI model also implemented three key practices *to a greater extent* than other Workforce1 Career Centers: (1) an onsite dedicated training space designed to host external trainers; (2) high-touch job readiness services; and (3) intentionally place-based approaches to job placement and customer outreach.

Community Relationships and Impact

The FREAI has had a positive impact on the community, primarily through the job readiness and placement services provided to local residents. The greatest benefit was perceived to be an ability to address the Rockaway peninsula’s widespread unemployment. Furthermore, customers believed that locating a Workforce1 Career Center in their community demonstrated an interest in community reinvestment in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. Job readiness and job placement services were perceived by representatives of local community-based organizations to be the Workforce1 Career Center’s primary asset. However, findings also indicate that the Rockaway Center had not yet become a catalyst for broader community or economic development.

Impact Study Findings

The impact study compared the outcomes of Rockaway Center customers to a matched comparison group selected from individuals who received services from “hub” Workforce1 Career Centers. **It is important to emphasize that the comparison group is not a “no services” group but rather an “alternate” services group.** The comparison group design does not test whether the Rockaway Center is better than no employment services, but rather whether this initiative is better able to meet the needs of Far Rockaway residents than a “typical” Workforce1 Career Center could. One limitation of the impact study is that while 55 percent of Rockaway Center customers lived in Far Rockaway, most of the comparison group lived in other areas of Queens and may not have faced the same geographic and economic circumstances as most customers. The comparison group may have had fewer difficulties finding jobs, which could have attenuated differences between Rockaway Center customers and the comparison group.

Impacts on Service Receipt

Rockaway Center customers received a greater number of services and were more likely to receive specific types of high-touch services, such as individual job readiness services, than the matched comparison group. The FREAI sought to provide Rockaway residents with job opportunities through comprehensive career services, and the contract with the career development service provider was the first one at a Workforce1 Career Center to include service-based metrics in addition to placement-based metrics.

- Consistent with this goal, Rockaway Center customers were significantly more likely than the matched comparison group to receive certain types of services, including orientation (by 26 percentage points), initial assessment (by 35 percentage points), job readiness workshops (by 4 percentage points), individual job readiness (by 38 percentage points), career counseling (by 46 percentage points), training (by 10 percentage points), and supportive services (by 10 percentage points).
- Rockaway Center customers were significantly more likely than the comparison group to receive more than 12 services (by 12 percentage points) and less likely to receive 6 or fewer services (by 26 percentage points).

Impacts on Labor Market Outcomes

The FREAI had a statistically significant impact on job placement. Rockaway Center customers were significantly more likely to be placed in a job and worked more hours in the initial placement than the matched comparison group. Rockaway Center customers were 4

percentage points more likely to be placed and worked 3 more hours per week on average than the comparison group. However, Rockaway Center customers's wages in the initial placement were significantly lower than the comparison group (by \$0.78 per hour).

There were no differences in employment and earnings in the four quarters after services between Rockaway Center customers and the matched comparison group. The impact study compared the employment and earnings in each of the four quarters after services of Rockaway Center customers and the matched comparison group.

- In each of the four quarters after services, about 60 percent of the matched comparison group was employed. The percentage of Rockaway Center customers that was employed in each quarter after services was very similar and differed only by 2 to 3 percentage points. These differences were either not statistically significant or too small to be considered substantively meaningful.
- Earnings of the matched comparison group and Rockaway Center customers were also quite similar in each of the quarters after enrollment, with differences in any quarter of about \$50 or less and not statistically significant.

Conclusions

The FREAI sought to increase job opportunities through a placed-based model that provided comprehensive career services to customers who have been historically underserved. Consistent with this goal, the FREAI increased uptake of services, including high touch services such as individual job readiness, relative to a matched comparison group who received “business as usual” services from “hub” Workforce1 Career Centers. While these services translated into higher chances of job placement in the short run, Rockaway Center customers did not experience higher employment and earnings in the long run (defined as the year after services) than the matched comparison group.

The finding that the labor market outcomes of Rockaway Center customers were similar to those of the comparison group does not imply that the place-based approach was unsuccessful. First, the Rockaway Center reached customers who have been underserved by other Workforce1 Career Centers. Such customers may not have had access otherwise to the services provided by the Rockaway Center. Second, Rockaway Center customers were able to achieve labor market outcomes that were similar to those obtained by customers who received services from other Workforce1 Career Centers but who did not face the geographic and economic barriers associated with Rockaway. The higher touch job readiness services likely played a role in helping Rockaway Center customers to achieve these outcomes.

1. Introduction

Far Rockaway Economic Advancement Initiative Additions to the Workforce1 Model

- Placed-based focus
- Expanded portfolio of job readiness services
- Financial Counseling
- Partnership between two vendors

In 2015, the New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS), in partnership with the Mayor’s Office for Economic Opportunity (NYC Opportunity), the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), and Citi Community Development (Citi) launched the Far Rockaway Economic Advancement Initiative at the Rockaway Center. SBS’s Workforce1 Career Centers are a system of walk-in employment centers located across the five boroughs of New York City that prepare and connect qualified NYC residents to job opportunities. Each Workforce1 Career Center

develops relationships with businesses and provides pre-screened candidates to businesses looking to hire. At the same time, each Workforce1 Career Center provides job readiness services to ensure that referred candidates have the best chance of obtaining the jobs being offered.

The Far Rockaway Economic Advancement Initiative (FREAI) was developed to pilot several unique additions to the Workforce1 model in an effort to better serve the needs of residents in Far Rockaway, Queens. The additions included: a place-based focus on customer engagement (with a focus on serving NYCHA residents), employer engagement, and business development; an expanded portfolio of job-readiness services designed to meet the needs of all community members; and the provision of financial counseling pre- and post-job placement. Furthermore, to accommodate many of these additions to the Workforce1 Career Center’s scope, SBS chose to contract with a second provider focused on intensive career development. The resulting partnership was a defining characteristic of the initiative (see Chapter 2 for implementation details).

In 2017, NYC Opportunity engaged the services of Westat and Metis Associates to undertake an evaluation of this initiative. This evaluation was composed of two studies, a qualitative implementation evaluation and a quantitative impact evaluation that compared the outcomes of Rockaway Workforce1 customers with those of similar customers served by other “hub” Workforce1 Career Centers. “Hub” Workforce1 Career Centers include the Brooklyn, Bronx, Queens, Upper Manhattan, and State Island Workforce1 Career Centers.

1.1 Research Questions

The implementation evaluation was designed to address the following research questions with a particular focus on understanding the contribution of the partnership between two providers to the initiative's other key practices:

- How well has each component of the program been implemented?
- What is the partnership like between the two providers? What are the strengths and weaknesses of this relationship?
- How do service flows differ from other Workforce1 Career Centers?
- What is the local perception of the Rockaway Center and what is its relationship with the community? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the various collaborations?
- How have financial empowerment services been implemented? What has participant uptake and feedback of these services been? What are the early outcomes?
- How have onsite training services been implemented? What has participant uptake and feedback of these services been? What are the early outcomes?
- What makes this initiative place-based? What's different about the implementation of the Rockaway Center compared to other Workforce1 Career Centers? What have been the successes and challenges of targeted outreach in the community?
- What are early best practices? What are recommendations to improve recruitment and communications, program services, partner relationships, client service uptake, outcomes and other factors?
- Has the program helped to create or strengthen collaboration among Far Rockaway service providers? Has the program been a catalyst for any new collaborations (e.g., data sharing, other projects)?
- What has been the impact on the community? To what extent do participants obtain jobs with Far Rockaway businesses?

The impact study compared the outcomes of Rockaway Center customers to those served by similar customers at other Workforce1 Career Centers. ***It is important to note that the comparison group was not a “no services” group but rather an “alternative services” group.***

The impact study addressed the following research questions:

- Do customer outcomes vary by Far Rockaway resident status and NYCHA resident status?
- Are Rockaway Center customer outcomes associated with customer demographic and socioeconomic characteristics?
- Are customer outcomes associated with the type and number of services received?
- What has been the added value of the financial empowerment services provided onsite?
- How has service utilization differed from similar customers at other Workforce1 Career Centers?
- What has been the program’s impact on job placement and subsequent employment, retention, and earnings, in comparison to similar customers served at other Centers?
- Does the program have any differential impacts on outcomes by customer characteristics, such as NYCHA resident status?
- What is the added value of having an integrated service site, with multiple services provided onsite at one location?

1.2 Data Sources

For the implementation study, the evaluation team interviewed a cross-section of informed stakeholders between August and December, 2017, including staff (N = 13), representatives of local community-based organizations (N = 4), employers (N = 3), partner and agency representatives (N = 11), representatives of NYCHA tenant associations (N = 2), and directors of selected “hub” Workforce1 Career Centers (N = 3). In addition, the evaluation team conducted 24 telephone interviews and 2 focus groups with Rockaway Center customers for a total of 38 customers interviewed. Interviews were recorded, by consent, and transcribed verbatim. Interview transcripts were content-analyzed using a combination of inductive and deductive methods.

For the impact study, data were drawn from SBS’s Worksource1 data system. Worksource1 is the platform used to maintain Workforce1 Career Center data. This system records detailed information on the demographic characteristics of customers and program-related activities to help answer each research question. Worksource1 also tracks job placement data. In addition

to data on Rockaway Center customers, the evaluation team received data from “hub” Workforce1 Career Center customers for the purposes of selecting a comparison group for the impact study. The “hub” Centers include the Queens, Brooklyn, Upper Manhattan, Bronx, and Staten Island Workforce1 Career Centers. Employment and earnings outcomes came from Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records.

1.3 Evaluation Challenges

The results of this study must be interpreted in light of its limitations.

- **Implementation findings on uptake and outcomes are based on perceptions.** The findings from the implementation study stem from the feedback and perceptions of those interviewed. Thus, statements about program uptake as well as customer and community outcomes should be interpreted within this context.
- **Selection of customers for interviews was not representative.** NYCHA residents are likely under-represented among the customers who were interviewed because of incomplete self-reported residency information.
- **Service data may not have been recorded consistently.** A fully integrated data system for the two providers was not in place during the first several months of the contract with the career development service provider, and some services may not have been recorded consistently. Thus, customers who received some types of services may not be counted as having received them.
- **Data on training completion was unavailable.** Worksource1 data included information on referral to training but not on training completion. Thus, it was not possible to assess whether the FREAI increased training completion.
- **The comparison group may have differed from Rockaway Center customers.** While the matched comparison group was similar on demographics and prior labor market experience, most were not Far Rockaway residents and may not have faced the same geographic and economic conditions, which could have predisposed the comparison group to better employment and earnings outcomes than Rockaway Center customers.

1.4 Report Structure

The findings from the evaluation are presented in three sections. Chapter 2 summarizes findings from the implementation study conducted from August and December 2017. Chapter 3 presents detailed descriptive analysis of participants’ demographic characteristics, services received, outcomes attained, and performance metrics. Chapter 4 describes the comparison of

outcomes between Rockaway Center customers and similar customers at other Workforce1 Career Centers. Chapter 5 presents our conclusions.

Appendix A provides details on the methodology adopted for the interviews and focus groups conducted as part of the implementation study. Appendix B provides an overview of the quantitative data sources used to conduct the impact study. Appendix C provides additional details regarding the methods used for the impact evaluation. Appendix D includes data tables with detailed impact estimates.

2. Implementation Study

This chapter summarizes the findings from the implementation study of the Far Rockaway Economic Advancement Initiative. It begins with a brief discussion of the development of the initiative, followed by a description of the Rockaway Center’s practices in outreach and recruitment, job readiness services, training, financial empowerment, and employer recruitment. The subsequent section analyzes the similarities and differences between the Rockaway Center and the Workforce1 system overall. The chapter concludes with an analysis of the features that define the partnership between the two vendors and recommendations.

The basis of the implementation study was a series of interviews with a cross-section of informed stakeholders. Stakeholders included staff from the two provider partners, representatives of local community-based organizations, local employers, local NYCHA tenant association representatives, and Rockaway Center customers. Partner and agency representatives (SBS, NYC Opportunity, Citi Community Development, and NYCHA) were also interviewed as were directors of three other Workforce1 Career Centers. Additional information on the methodology for this study is presented in Appendix A.

2.1 Development of the Far Rockaway Economic Advancement Initiative

The geographic isolation of Far Rockaway along with the concentration of residents with employment and training needs led SBS to develop, in 2015, a place-based Workforce1 Career Center. The FREAI incorporated a workforce development approach driven by the needs of customers who have been historically underserved. Thus, the Rockaway Center conducted targeted outreach in the community, especially among residents of NYCHA developments, and offered services that included financial empowerment, job readiness coaching, and onsite training opportunities.

As envisioned, the Rockaway Center was developed as a “one-stop shop” where two organizations would work together to support residents in their job preparation and success. Beyond simply co-locating organizations that could meet these various needs, SBS envisioned an integrated partnership between organizations that understood the needs of the community and offered different skill sets toward this goal. In addition, SBS included a large space at the Rockaway Center for onsite job training, effectively eliminating a transportation barrier customers faced when attending job trainings off the peninsula.

Based on the unique needs of the Far Rockaway population, Citi and SBS envisioned engaging an organization that would provide a breadth of services, including financial counseling, to supplement job-specific readiness training. Thus, the Workforce Development Corporation (the nonprofit arm of SBS) posted a solicitation to identify potential vendors. A large multi-service provider based in NYC submitted a proposal and, after further discussion about the agency’s role, an agreement was reached in which that organization would provide outreach and job coaching services to the local community and would partner with the job placement service provider currently operating the Rockaway (and other) Workforce1 Career Centers.

[The service provider] was brought in to address the soft skills people needed before they could get to “job-readiness,” whether it was resume writing or interview skills or whatever they needed. It was also in that first step where we thought financial counseling would be most effective. We’re very pleased that we were able to get a dedicated person at [the organization] that’s able to manage both the sessions and the one-on-one coaching and counseling.

- [Citi Community Development]

The two providers were paired by SBS to offer integrated services to the Far Rockaway community. The two providers initially operated out of separate locations with data systems designed around different indicators of success. Once they co-located, the main challenge

We had mutual admiration for each other and respect, and the culture of our respective organizations really complement one another. We seem to have a similar internal culture and mission, values... so there’s trust. We trust each other’s judgment and there’s a lot of transparency and mutual support.

- [Career development service provider senior leadership]

became integrating two different approaches to measuring and visualizing success and acclimating the career development service provider to the Workforce1 Career Center model. Although the two organizations had separate goals, they worked to ensure that their services aligned and supported each other. In the beginning, the career development service provider focused on outreach to the community and the job placement service provider focused on identifying employment opportunities. They worked together to determine the structure of the client flow and agree on a definition of job readiness. Over time, the organizations learned to

collaborate to ensure that the jobs that were identified matched the strengths and interests of the clients that were recruited.

Once the partnership was in place, daily operations of the Rockaway Center were divided between the two providers. The job placement service provider was responsible for providing those workforce development services that are consistent across the Workforce1 Career Center system—primarily job placement services, employer recruitment, and community outreach. The Rockaway Center Director was employed by the job placement service provider, and that

team included an account manager (who worked with employers) and job recruiters (who worked with customers). The career development service provider was responsible for conducting outreach to customers and community partners, providing job readiness services, and providing financial counseling (through the hire of a dedicated financial counselor). The career development service provider team was led by a program manager and included an outreach coordinator (and outreach staff) as well as career advisors.

2.2 Outreach and Customer Recruitment

A customer’s experience engaging with the Rockaway Center began with outreach and recruitment, followed by job readiness services, may have included trainings (on- and/or offsite) and financial counseling, and ended with job placement services. The recruitment of employers took place in tandem with these customer-focused activities.

Responsible for outreach in the community and customer recruitment, the career development service provider hired a team of outreach workers with roots in the Rockaway communities. Outreach efforts highlighted the Workforce1 Career Center as a “one-stop shop,” where practically any employment needs or concerns could be addressed. The team relied on a variety of outreach methods: cultivating initial layers of trust among community members, personal outreach (going door-to-door), distributing fliers, and communicating the Workforce1 Career Center’s “open door policy” towards drop-in visits were identified as successful strategies.

- **Fliers:** Historically popular for sharing information in NYCHA developments, fliers were used to spread information about the services available at the Rockaway Center, including financial counseling. NYCHA staff posted fliers in buildings and distributed fliers by hand. Fliers also were distributed by Center staff in face-to-face interactions with residents throughout the larger community. Distribution of fliers was described as particularly effective for sharing information because it put information directly into residents’ hands, where they can use it themselves or pass it along to someone else.
- **Neighborhood canvassing:** The outreach team engaged in thorough neighborhood canvassing from downtown Far Rockaway to about 110th Street, with an emphasis on the busier downtown area. Targeted locations included high traffic public spaces, businesses, and community organizations. Canvassing gave the outreach team the opportunity to have more in-depth conversations with prospective customers and answer questions, as well as to distribute fliers with information to take home. When distributing fliers and canvassing, outreach staff also distributed updated lists of job opportunities currently available through the Rockaway Center and the Workforce1 system. Outreach staff indicated that these lists were helpful in

attracting customers and framing the Workforce1 Career Center’s services as leading to concrete job placements.

- **Networking with and presentations to community leaders:** the career development service provider and NYCHA’s Office of Resident Economic Empowerment & Sustainability (REES) worked together on outreach strategies. Staff from both providers also met with NYCHA resident association representatives to discuss the initiative’s overall services and outreach efforts, and how they pertained specifically to the area’s NYCHA residents. SBS and the career development service provider worked with local elected officials, including District 31’s City Council member, to recruit customers, and staff also networked with local community leaders, at churches, schools, daycare centers, and food pantries. They also delivered presentations to community organizations and employers to describe the Workforce1 Career Center’s job readiness and other services. Open houses at the Workforce1 Career Center also provided prospective customers with information about job readiness services.

Messaging the Rockaway Center as “having an “open door policy,” and providing in-depth career services and the opportunity of “career pathways” through employer partnerships or trainings, was identified as an effective strategy. This combination of industry-specific opportunities and trainings—construction, transportation, security and others—and general job-search related services (e.g., resume development and coaching for job interviews) was believed by Rockaway Center staff to be encouraging to individuals, especially those who had specific employment interests yet wide-ranging job-readiness needs.

Among these efforts, building trust with community members was identified as an essential strategy for increasing residents’ utilization of services. Community members were described as often having concerns about job development services, including “a collective experience of mistrust around anything that’s going to change the household income [...].” As such, it was especially important for the outreach team to build trusting relationships in addition to merely communicating the services offered. Among the factors that were identified as contributing to the outreach team’s ability to build trust, was the “personality” of staff and their efforts to make residents feel “comfortable.” This included engaging with potential customers over multiple visits, acting as a resource for customers looking for more information about services, and building relationships with local organizations and institutions.

Staff also built relationships with community organizations (such as local social service providers, neighborhood associations, libraries, other job-readiness developers), which lent credibility to the Rockaway Center “brand,” and was reported to increase traffic. Residents who learned about the Rockaway Center from a trusted organization were believed to be more likely to use its services. In addition, community organizations learned that the Rockaway Center

provided different services than other Workforce1 Career Centers citywide and were able to communicate this added value to the individuals they referred.

Personal outreach of any kind was believed to be the most effective approach to building this trust. Going door-to-door, according to NYCHA tenant association representatives, was the most effective type of personal outreach. From their perspective, “going the extra mile” by traveling to NYCHA developments was a direct way to spread the word throughout the community. Face-to-face communication also helped to “demystify” the services provided at the Rockaway Center. More importantly, this type of outreach was said to strengthen community members’ perception that they could trust the staff at the Rockaway Center.

The FREAI encountered considerable obstacles to customer engagement that were related to the economic and social landscape of the peninsula and fears of violence among residents. Interviewees describe entrenched multi-generational poverty and unemployment as well as neighborhood-by-neighborhood insularity that discouraged travel to and from the Rockaway Center’s location. Therefore, some customers with these concerns used the Rockaway Center only as a “last resort.” As described by one staff member, participants have often “exhausted all other options by the time they reach the Workforce1 Career Center.” While this speaks to the difficulty that the outreach workers faced, it also highlights the intense need for the Rockaway Center’s services. These challenges also emerged as a significant barrier that prevented community members from pursuing and or accepting certain local jobs (depending on their exact locations).

One of the biggest things here that no one can prevent is violence. We have a big problem with violence out here in Far Rockaway. People can’t go to the corner store because they feel they’re going to be shot. [...] People don’t feel safe going to certain locations in Far Rockaway, not just the Rockaway Center. [...??] For instance, a lot of people want to do construction. And if you have issues with violence in the streets, how are you going to do construction when you have to go to a warehouse on 41st street and your job is on 51st street? So at the end of the day, you’ve got those problems... and that’s what’s stopping a lot of people from [obtaining] paying jobs.

- [Career development service provider staff]

Staff identified other reasons why many community residents, including NYCHA residents, did not come to the Rockaway Center. These included lack of childcare, transportation (or money for transportation), or appropriate clothing. However, while many of these barriers could be addressed through referrals – provided by the career development service provider’s staff – a potential customer would first have to visit the Rockaway Center to make these connections.

Outreach within NYCHA developments was reported to be complicated by different directives or approaches to distributing fliers, as well as by the marketing appeal of the fliers, themselves.

While NYCHA REES has a strict policy of only advertising to its residents those events that have dates or that are confirmed to take place regardless of attendance, the staff at the Rockaway Center sometimes preferred not to include a date until the target registration for an event had been met and they sometimes cancelled or rescheduled an event or training due to low attendance. In addition, fliers distributed by the Workforce1 Career Center in NYCHA developments were viewed by members of resident associations as not always distinctive or appealing enough to attract attention or stand out from the many other fliers that NYCHA distributes.

Conspicuously absent from the outreach was the financial empowerment component of Rockaway Center’s model. In fact, financial counseling was not considered a particularly enticing service and its availability was not used to recruit participants to the Rockaway Center. In fact, a notable number of interviewed participants indicated that they were unaware of this service, even though they had received other services at the Rockaway Center. Participants also expressed confusion over the applicability of the counseling to their situation. Some were also misinformed, for example, describing it as narrowly focused on credit repair (which is available but not the sole service); almost no one knew that the service was available after job placement.

Outreach efforts were also hampered by the challenge of differentiating the Rockaway Center from other Centers citywide. Differences were not readily apparent to potential customers unless they spoke with or received information from an outreach worker. Because of the efforts to project a seamless partnership between the two providers, the presence of the career development service provider was not outwardly advertised, nor was the presence of the FREAI more broadly. As a result, a customer choosing between several Centers or having already visited a different Center was less likely to recognize the added value. Thus, the unified branding of the Workforce1 Career Center system was a challenge for outreach.

Follow-up to outreach was often resource intensive, according to the outreach team. Typically, the outreach team had to make several phone calls before reaching customers to remind them about events or persuade them to return to the Rockaway Center for continued support.

2.3 Job Readiness Services

Job readiness services included individualized assessment and referrals to supportive services, one-on-one job readiness counseling, Fast Track (group job readiness) classes, and onsite or connection to offsite trainings. Both providers shared the same “very multi-faceted” definition of job readiness, which emphasized getting customers a “foot in the door,” and that was aligned with employers’ expectations.

A job-ready customer was someone who meets the following criteria:

- Their resume has been proofread and assessed for accuracy;
- They were familiar with all the information presented on their resume and felt comfortable answering questions about their experiences;
- They dressed professionally;
- They demonstrated a professional, positive attitude, and applied the overall input they had received from the Workforce1 Career Center; and
- They were knowledgeable about and prepared to meet with specific employers.

Career development service provider staff were proactive in conducting **individualized assessments** to identify barriers to employment and supportive services customers might benefit from. With information from the assessment, career advisors determined a customer's job readiness and presented them with one of three options: (1) attend the Fast Track program; (2) continue working with a career advisor for **one-on-one career advisement**; or (3) speak directly with a recruiter overseen by the job placement service provider. Most customers participated in job readiness services (options 1 or 2) before meeting with the job placement service provider's staff. Participants were also referred to a variety of supportive services offered by the career development service provider, local organization partners, and others. Referrals were made to educational, housing, legal and immigration, and other services.

The **Fast Track** job readiness course—a multi-day course facilitated by two career advisors—covered a range of job search topics. It prepared customers for a successful job search, including assistance with résumés and cover letters, information about completing job applications, mock interviewing, and practices for retaining a job. Class size ranged from a handful of customers to more than 20, depending on the intake traffic at the Rockaway Center. Both providers attributed customers' preparation for job placement in large part to Fast Track.

Whether or not a customer was directed to Fast Track was determined through a screening process and initial meetings with a career advisor, although the preference was for as many customers to attend Fast Track as possible. This preference, however, led to frustrations among some customers, who hoped to immediately respond to specific job opportunities. At the same time, staff indicated that incoming customers were not always realistic about their qualifications for the available job opportunities and, as a result, an initial responsibility of the career development service provider's staff was to manage customer expectations.

2.4 Training

From the beginning of the initiative, providing **onsite trainings** (e.g., for health aide and security guard certifications) was considered a key contribution to the local community. However, the onsite trainings were managed centrally by SBS and interview findings suggested that the trainings were disconnected from the place-based responsiveness of the Rockaway Center's other services and were not well-aligned with the interests of customers or the available of job opportunities. Customers were also referred to trainings offsite, however, feedback indicated that customers faced the same constraints traveling to offsite services as they faced coming to the Rockaway Center.

2.5 Financial Empowerment

The intention of integrating **one-on-one financial counseling** into the job readiness model was to ensure that customers seeking employment would be better equipped to manage their household finances and, once employed, would have the tools to help them make informed and intentional use of their (potentially) increased wages and income. Concrete measurable outcomes included the repair of credit, use of budgeting, better debt management, asset accumulation, and appropriate use of banking options. In addition, financial counseling was intended to address a perceived lack of similar resources in the local area. To achieve these goals, financial counseling was designed to be provided on a one-to-one basis at multiple points in time, including before and after job placement. Yet, in the final program design it was introduced to customers on the last day of Fast Track with participation dependent on each customer's own interest.

In addition, while outreach staff circulated separate fliers about financial counseling when in the field, interview findings suggest that, for many customers, Fast Track was the primary way in which they learned about the one-on-one financial counseling service. This indicates that, despite the importance placed upon financial counseling by key stakeholders, it was not promoted as part of the package of the Workforce1 Career Center's job readiness services. Instead, the service was presented as valuable, but optional, and was considered secondary to job placement. As a result, customer uptake was lower than intended and perceptions of this service varied across those interviewed, with a large portion of customers unfamiliar with the service entirely. These findings are symptomatic of this component's underlying challenge: unlike the other services provided by both the career development service and job placement service providers, the financial counseling was not directly related to a customer's successful employment. Those customers that did participate in financial counseling described it as most useful for addressing time-sensitive challenges (such as taxes or a loan deadline), rather than helping them to manage the changes in their finances resulting from having a job.

Finally, although it was a goal that customers would return to the Workforce1 Career Center for financial counseling after they were placed in a job, this was reported by staff as happening less often than preferred because customers largely viewed job placement as the natural outcome and “end point” of their engagement with the Workforce1 Career Center.

2.6 Employer Recruitment

In recruiting employers, the FREAI was intended to engage local industries and employers, but with the primary goal of facilitating residents’ access to quality jobs. The Rockaway Center’s development of partnerships with employers was largely driven by customer interest and qualifications, as assessed by the career development service provider’s job readiness staff. While the place-based aspect of the initiative was seen as an asset for residents and for the local economy, the opportunities were limited, as most employers were described as located off the peninsula. However, those interviewed reported that it was very important for employers to hire from the local community even when more competitive job applicants could be found elsewhere. As explained by one employer, “it should be the basis of every business. It is important for businesses to give back to the community and establish relationships.” In the opinion of these employers, the Rockaway Center was essential in allowing them to maintain a focus on local hiring by providing the necessary job readiness services.

Partners at Citi and SBS explained that the Rockaway Center, in addition to following the citywide business development strategies set by the Workforce1 system, was also developed to connect to the employment sectors and industries already present in and around Far Rockaway, namely transportation, healthcare, technology, and construction. While the place-based aspect of the initiative was identified by these stakeholders as an asset for residents (in terms of convenience) and for the local economy, one partner also acknowledged that focusing on just the peninsula for employment opportunities had limitations, as community members may have wanted or needed to broaden their geographic job search to find better opportunities.

The development of the Rockaway Center’s partnerships with employers was largely driven by customer interest. The staff did their best to identify job opportunities that customers wanted in a variety of fields, including food service, maintenance, and retail positions. Nevertheless, employers also initiated partnerships with the Rockaway Center. As one staff member from the job placement service provider said, “The employer relationship with us has been pretty good. We’ve had a lot of companies reaching out to us to help staff their job openings as well. So it has been, overall, pretty successful.”

While the job placement service provider staff focused on connecting customers to jobs they wanted and for which they were qualified, they also considered the qualities of the employer. An “ideal” employer, according to this provider, is one that has entry-level positions available, but that could also provide a “living wage” and opportunities for job training and advancement. Feedback from both Rockaway Center staff and customers, however, indicated that these “ideal” employers are difficult to locate, since most entry-level positions available may not provide the necessary job training and desired advancement opportunities. Despite these challenges, the Rockaway Center was known by interviewed employers as willing to partner until the appropriate candidates were identified. As shared by one employer, “There was difficulty finding a good fit in the beginning but they did not give up. It was definitely a positive experience.”

In general, the Rockaway Center’s relationship with employers was reported to be strong and employers appreciated the value of the services provided by the Rockaway Center. In their pitch to employers, the job placement service provider emphasized that their services save “time, energy, and money” because they take on the work of recruiting and screening candidates for employment. These staff believed that small businesses or “mom and pop shops” especially valued the Rockaway Center’s no-cost services since these employers have limited resources to dedicate to recruiting and interviewing candidates. Interviewed employers affirmed the value add of the service. They reported that the Rockaway Center was adept at identifying the best candidates and preparing them for job interviews. As summarized by one employer, “they pre-screen them in advance. Pre-screening is the added value.” The pre-screening process was described as both ensuring that applicants were high quality and that they were completely informed about what the job would entail. Only those truly interested and aligned with the needs of the company were referred.

The Rockaway Workforce1 Center provides a service that is needed in this community. There are not a lot of tools in the area for people to become successful and work. People want to work but they do not have access to the tools and skills necessary to prepare for the job market. It has had a positive impact on the community.

- [Employer]

The strength of the pre-screening process and preparation for job seekers, as well as the “professionalism” and “high quality communication” of the Rockaway Center’s staff, led employers to maintain long-term relationships. One employer, for example, described how they chose to recruit almost solely through the Rockaway Center based on the success of initial job recruitment events.

2.7 Job Placement

At the Rockaway Center, the account manager communicated information about employers and their job requests to recruiters, whose primary responsibility was to help customers secure employment. For the recruiters, connecting customers to jobs meant balancing between identifying customers’ interests and meeting the very specific needs of employers. After receiving career advisement services, customers met with a recruiter who learned about the customers’ job interests and qualifications and determined how these best aligned with available positions. They prepared the customer with “insight on how to win the job” and “exactly what the employer is looking for.” Staff of the career development service provider also had a key role in job placement by providing additional job readiness services as necessary.

Recruiters faced several challenges when working to identify job opportunities. One prevalent challenge was the difficulty in locating opportunities for individuals with a college or advanced degree as well as individuals without a high school or equivalent diploma. In fact, one community partner explained that the Rockaway Center may have lacked opportunities for the many youth in the community who need employment but who were no longer in school. A second challenge was the lack of opportunities that customers found attractive. In general, community stakeholders thought customers were attracted to airport jobs (at JFK), construction, food service jobs, and even seasonal work, which the job placement services provider did not always have. Staff acknowledged that it would have been beneficial to have more food service jobs since these did not require prior related experience. One community partner, in addition to explaining that many jobs offered inadequate compensation, said that many residents, especially those with families, wanted salaried positions with benefits. It was suggested by one respondent that NYCHA encourages residents who are not interested in the Rockaway Center’s job offerings to find work through the Jamaica, Queens Workforce1 Career Center or through other local community-based organizations that provide similar services.

2.8 Similarities and Differences between the FREAI Model and Other Workforce1 Career Centers

The FREAI model at the Rockaway Center shared many features with other Workforce1 Career Centers across New York City. While there were several distinctive features that were implemented solely at the Rockaway Center, for the most part, the differences were only by degree compared to other Workforce1 Career Centers. In addition, the geographic and economic characteristics of the Rockaway peninsula further confounded the comparison, as certain approaches taken by Rockaway Center staff were due as much to the challenges faced by community members as they were due to the FREAI innovations. Finally, the Workforce1

system itself varies across the city, with industry-specific hub sites operating differently than satellite and community-based sites such as the ones on Staten Island.

Table 2-1 summarizes the features of the FREAI that were (a) unique to the Rockaway Center, (b) features of the Rockaway Center that may exist at other Workforce1 Career Centers, but to a lesser extent, and (c) practices that were shared by other Workforce1 Career Centers.

Table 2-1. Summary of Similarities and Differences between the Rockaway Center and Other Workforce1 Career Centers

Distinctive features that were unique to the Rockaway Center
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • True partnership model with two co-located providers under contract with SBS • Customer-driven approach with an expectation of serving community residents • Curriculum-based job readiness class (Fast Track) • In-house financial empowerment services
Rockaway Center features that may exist at other Workforce1 Career Centers, but not to the same extent ¹
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large dedicated training space designed to host external trainers • High-touch job readiness services • Intentionally place-based approaches to job placement and customer outreach
Key practices of the Rockaway Center shared by other Workforce1 Career Centers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical co-location of services • Active collaborations with community partners • Social supports for customers through referrals to external programs • Intentional outreach to New York City Housing Authority residents • Varied points of customer intake

¹ These practices were most likely to be found at other satellite non-hub Workforce1 Career Centers.

2.8.1 Distinctive Features of the Rockaway Center

Four features of the Rockaway Center stand out as unique compared to the practices at other Workforce1 Career Centers.

Management by two independent providers working in partnership. The Rockaway Center was the only location that hosted two providers contracted by SBS to provide services in partnership. Described in more detail in the previous section, the distinctiveness of this partnership also extended to the contracting which governed the providers’ work. According to SBS, while the contract with the job placement service provider remained tied to performance targets (e.g., customers placed in job), the contract with the career development service provider was tied to service-based metrics. As a result, the partnership resulted in the first and only inclusion of service-based targets at a Workforce1 Career Center.

Customer-driven approach with an expectation of serving community residents. In contrast to other Workforce1 Career Centers citywide, the Rockaway Center was customer-driven as well as employer-driven. Both providers were expected to work with all customers who engaged with the Rockaway Center, without turning anyone away. This is in sharp contrast to other Workforce1 Career Centers, which seek out customers based on profiles set by the employers they work with. A Workforce1 Career Center director explained how,

The service flow is definitely high volume [and] employer driven, so we really work with employers to identify their employment need and then we work backwards to kind of identify individuals who fit those [employer's] needs.

According to SBS, this model was a defining feature of the FREAI. Both providers were expected to:

... be really creative, and really customize things to ensure that we're getting candidates to where they need to be, as opposed to saying, "You're not a fit. Okay, let's move on to someone else who might be."

Furthermore, this approach naturally extended to the Rockaway Center's business development activities as well. As previously discussed, the qualifications and interests of the customers "...feed directly into the type of business development that [the job placement service provider] will do." Finally, the Workforce1 system is largely designed to serve self-motivated individuals who approach a Workforce1 Career Center with an interest in pursuing specific job opportunities. However, the Rockaway Center was unique in its focus on reaching potential customers who may not, on their own, have expressed interest in pursuing job opportunities.

Use of a job readiness class curriculum (Fast Track). Although all Workforce1 Career Centers offer customers some job readiness training, only the Rockaway Center provided a multi-day job readiness class and required the vast majority of customers to attend class prior to working with a job recruiter.

Provision of in-house financial empowerment services. With the support of Citi Community Development, the Rockaway Center was the only Workforce1 Career Center that provided in-house financial empowerment services to customers in search of employment as well as those who have already obtained employment.

2.8.2 Key Practices of the Rockaway Center Also Found at Other Workforce1 Career Centers

The following practices of the Rockaway Center were highlighted by staff and stakeholders as important to the FREAI’s approach and yet were also indicated as taking place at other Workforce1 Career Centers across New York City. While this does not reduce their importance to the Rockaway Center or their benefit to community residents, it has implications for a comparative analysis which looks to associate differences in customer outcomes with differences in services provided. These practices are presented in two sections: practices that are implemented in other Workforce1 Career Centers, but to a lesser extent; and those that were important to the Rockaway Center but, in reality, are shared across the Workforce1 Career Center system.

2.8.3 Key Rockaway Center Practices That May Exist at Other Workforce1 Career Centers, But Not to the Same Extent

A dedicated training space that is larger than other Workforce1 Career Centers. This was a specific design feature to allow the Workforce1 Career Center to host external vendors. Most other Workforce1 Career Centers usually refer to offsite training. According to SBS, the training space was a distinctive feature of the Rockaway Center. However, this Center was not alone in offering a multi-use space for this purpose. In fact, a similar facility was described as present at the Staten Island Workforce1 Career Center, “18,000 square feet...with meeting rooms, conference rooms, and two computer labs, plus a resource room.” That space was described as “a really great resource for employers, and they feel really comfortable, where they have an opportunity to...come and meet with screened and qualified candidates.” It is possible therefore, that the only difference may be that the Rockaway Center’s space was intentionally designed for trainings in particular.

Furthermore, the impact of a dedicated training space at the Rockaway Center seems to have been diminished by the barriers that customers were reported to face when traveling to the Workforce1 Career Center. Because customers were described as reluctant to come to the Rockaway Center because of perceptions of community violence, the differentiating benefit of having a training space may have been lost. Offsite trainings were provided, alternatively, by both the Rockaway Center and other Workforce1 Career Centers citywide.

Workforce1 Career Centers citywide also share the option of offering customers individual training grants, which were described as allowing customers to “enhance their marketability, skills, and put themselves in a better position to get employment of their choice.” These grants provide customers the option of selecting their own types of training (examples include

security, computer sciences, network administration) and researching the school that they would like to attend. The availability of these grants may slightly offset the added value of the training space at the Rockaway Center since they offer customers another means of accessing trainings.

High-touch and personalized job readiness services. A characteristic of the FREAI was the inclusion of robust job readiness services offered by a dedicated provider. However, other Workforce1 Career Centers also provide similar job-readiness services to their customers, albeit to a lesser degree. Across the Workforce1 Career Center system, incoming customers receive an “introduction to services” that includes a screening and assessment leading to the development of an individual employment plan. In addition, Workforce1 Career Centers offer workshops on résumé development and interviewing skills. Beyond these offerings, however, other Centers also provide high-touch and tailored services that may be comparable to the one-on-one job readiness services provided through the FREAI. As explained by one Workforce1 Career Center director,

The career services team is the team that really works with the individuals to get them up to speed, get them job ready, help them with any supports they may need to really put them in a place where they are able to work.

Job readiness services are also higher touch at the smaller, satellite Workforce1 Career Centers. At these Centers, staff were described as working to tailor job readiness to the specific needs of their customers. For example, the Workforce1 Career Center in East New York was described as providing specialized workshop services for individuals who have criminal justice interactions as well as with out-of-school/out-of-work youth between the ages of 18 and 24.

Place-based approaches to job placement and customer outreach. An intended goal of the Rockaway Center was to implement a place-based approach to workforce development through the community—as opposed to industry-focused customer outreach—with strategic outreach to local NYCHA residents and job-readiness services tailored to the needs of local community members. According to SBS,

Whereas in the regular Workforce1 system, it’s like you can come through the doors no matter where you live, no matter what your situation is, and you’d get a service, this was really intended to be a little bit more targeted, and a little bit more specific, based upon what the population looked like. And we did the assessments, [to learn] what was really needed in the community itself, to really prepare candidates to get connected to the job opportunities.

However, interviews with directors of other Workforce1 Career Centers indicated that a place-based approach to serving customers is also being undertaken elsewhere in the Workforce1 system, although to a lesser extent. In fact, while the Rockaway Center was distinct from the industry-specific Centers, the satellite and community-based Centers share the same focus on serving a geographic area. For example, one Workforce1 Career Center director explained that they have a better chance of getting candidates if they focus on “the local area” while another explained how their Center engages with employers across all industries to give local customers the best opportunity to find employment.

Furthermore, other Workforce1 Career Centers also developed job opportunities with local employers. As an example, a director of another Workforce1 Career Center described how their location specializes in local employment practices of as a means of building stronger relationships with local companies:

Employers really feel that we provide a true and important service for them. And we are able to document that, and then communicate that with new employers as well, as they open in [the area]. We had a restaurant that opened – a few restaurants that opened within the last six months that would never have been able to open on [in the area] without our support [or without] utilizing our space or [our] help navigating the challenges of local business policies.

2.8.4 Key Practices of the Rockaway Center Shared by Other Workforce1 Career Centers

Physically co-located services. The provider partnership resulted in an experience where customers were able to receive job readiness and Workforce1 services seamlessly at the same location. While having “everything under the same roof” was highlighted as a key attribute of the initiative, other Workforce1 Career Centers were also described as having physically co-located services. In fact, some Workforce1 Career Centers were described as having an even greater breadth of services located in the same building. Therefore, the differentiating characteristic may be the manner in which customers are handed-off between organizations and the formal efforts at collaboration between the organizations, not the physical proximity of the services.

Intentional collaboration with community partners. While the Rockaway Center was expected to build relationships with community partners, feedback from SBS suggested that this is an approach taken by all Workforce1 Career Centers through their community partner coordinator positions. Furthermore, not only are these coordinators expected to build partnerships with individual organizations, they are also tasked with facilitating “networking opportunities for

other organizations within the community,” which mirrors the place-based expectations of the Rockaway Center.

Opportunities to connect customers to social services and other supportive programs.

Although the Rockaway Center benefits from the career development service provider’s breadth of programs, the ability of a Workforce1 Career Center to partner with other social service agencies to collaboratively meet the needs of customers is also shared by other Workforce1 Career Centers across the City. As explained by one Workforce1 Career Center director, “it’s a network of communication with community partners to really ensure that all the needs of [each customer] are being met.”

Varied points of customer intake. At other Workforce1 Career Centers, customers can come to the Rockaway Center in response to specific job postings or they can come in without having a clear sense of the services available. This is similar to the multiple ways in which customers first engaged with the Rockaway Center. And, customers who come to one of the Workforce1 Career Centers without a specific job opportunity will subsequently engage in job readiness services that are similar to those offered through the FREAI.

Targeted outreach to New York City Housing Authority residents. Findings indicate that the Rockaway Center was not altogether unique in its focus on reaching and serving NYCHA residents. The Staten Island Workforce1 Career Center, for example, deliberately engages in a breadth of outreach strategies to engage local NYCHA residents, including liaising with NYCHA borough staff, posting fliers, hosting events in NYCHA community centers, and connecting through community partner meetings. Within this context, the unique element of the FREAI model may not be the focus on NYCHA communities, but instead the dedicated outreach team. Furthermore, while this team was mainly deployed to recruiting NYCHA residents at the Rockaway Center, its practices are not limited to engaging this particular community. Other Workforce1 Career Centers could put in place similar outreach teams to engage NYCHA or other community residents within their own catchment areas.

2.9 Conclusions from the Implementation Study

As presented above, the fully integrated partnership between two providers was a key differentiator of the FREAI and is unlike other Workforce1 Career Centers. Findings suggest that the partnership was been a highly successful element of the model. The implementation evaluation identified the following elements as having been critical to its success:

- A commitment from both providers to present a seamless customer experience;

- A collegial and fully collaborative relationship between each provider’s frontline staff, modeled by a strong partnership between the directors;
- Distinct provider and staff responsibilities;
- Strong histories within both provider organizations of working within the Rockaway peninsula; and
- Mutual information sharing toward the goal of an effective customer-employer match.

Notwithstanding these positive findings, however, the question remains whether a single provider would be more effective than the initiative’s partnership model. While the two providers complemented one another, there is no evidence that two organizations working together is inherently better than a single organization with the expertise that each offer. Place-based and community-focused services as well as increased in-house job-readiness services could potentially be maintained by a single provider. In fact, interview findings suggested that the initial development of the partnership was driven, in large part, by an interest in expanding the breadth of services available at the Rockaway Center while maintaining the existing job placement service provider contract. As explained by one agency stakeholder:

We wanted someone who understood the neighborhood and the area. When we’re contracting with [Workforce1 Career Center] vendors, that’s not necessarily the focal point, it’s really who can get the job done. But [in Rockaway] we wanted to really be able to kind of really intensely understand, or better understand the neighborhood, how to connect with them, how to be a part of that, and then this [new] vendor in particular would offer more intensive services, which isn’t typically seen ...at the Rockaway Center as of yet.

As demonstrated throughout the evaluation findings, while the partnership at the core of the Far Rockaway Economic Advancement Initiative was considered to be a success, the added value stemmed largely from the expanded breadth of services provided at the Rockaway Center. A single organization able to provide the same services as the two providers combined would likely have provided an equivalent customer experience.

There is broad consensus among agency stakeholders, community partners, employers, and customers that the Rockaway peninsula needs the services of the Rockaway Center. Residents face high poverty and unemployment, and have access to few employment opportunities and social services. As indicated by this evaluation’s findings, the implementation of the Far Rockaway Economic Advancement Initiative at the Rockaway Center has resulted in several notable enhancements to the Workforce1 Career Center model, such as improved job-readiness services and increased community engagement.

It is unclear whether or not the initiative embraced a place-based approach. The place-based nature of the initiative was demonstrated most clearly through several key differentiating approaches: a mission of providing customer-driven services with an expectation of serving all community residents by meeting their needs, and identifying employment opportunities that matched the customers’ interests and qualifications. However, the limited job opportunities in the area along with residents’ reluctance or fear of leaving their immediate, familiar neighborhood either to access services or for employment, (unless traveling outside of the peninsula entirely), was a constraint.

2.10 Recommendations from the Implementation Study

As SBS plans for the future of the Rockaway Center and what features, if any, might be adopted in other Centers, the following should be considered:

- Training opportunities are a possible mechanism for increasing the place-based nature of a Workforce1 Career Center by directly addressing the needs and interests of local community members and job seekers. We recommend that SBS implement strategies to identify and provide trainings of compelling interest to local residents either through direct information gathering or through closer communication with the Rockaway Center staff. Findings suggest that the space could be utilized to a greater extent and in a more immediately responsive manner.
- Feedback from multiple respondent groups obtained in the implementation study suggested that the introduction of financial counseling at the Rockaway Center could have been better implemented. We recommend adjusting the way that financial counseling is branded and delivered. If it continues to be incorporated into a customer’s Workforce1 Career Center experience, it should be presented to customers more strongly as a key job readiness service, equivalent to resume development or interviewing skills. In other words, to be job ready, a customer needs the tools to take advantage, financially, of their employment. Otherwise, customers that are highly motivated and focused on job placement may not be as amenable to participating in financial counseling services. A deliberate focus of the Rockaway Center’s outreach efforts was NYCHA residents. SBS and NYC Opportunity both indicated the importance of engaging these residents and the outreach staff implemented many effective strategies in response, including cultivating face-to-face relationships with residents, providing onsite recruitment events, working with NYCHA tenant associations, and hiring local NYCHA residents as outreach workers. We recommend that reaching out to NYCHA leadership to rebuild a strategic relationship at the agency level that, in turn, can support the on-the-ground collaborations between Workforce1 Career Center and NYCHA staff. Place-based efforts that include and/or target NYCHA residents would be strengthened by the inclusion of representatives from NYCHA’s Office of Resident Economic

Empowerment & Sustainability (REES) in ongoing program-specific strategic efforts. Through a stronger partnership, outreach and communication efforts could be improved, as could opportunities for collaboration on trainings and onsite workshops and service provision. Finally, referral pathways between NYCHA staff and the Workforce1 system would also benefit.

- We recommend that SBS preserve the enhanced job readiness services and the close collaboration between customer-oriented and employer-oriented staff regardless of whether responsibility rests with two providers working in partnership or with a single provider.

Finally, drawing on the qualitative comparison between key practices of the Rockaway Center and other Workforce1 Career Centers, we encourage SBS to consider ways in which the Rockaway Centers are also tailoring their services to meet the needs of their local area's residents.

3. Analysis of Customer Characteristics, Service Use, and Outcomes

Key Findings

Customers

1. Almost half of Rockaway Center customers did not live in Far Rockaway, with most coming from other areas of Queens and Brooklyn, suggesting a broader definition of place.
2. Consistent with the placed-based focus, the Rockaway Center served a higher percentage of NYCHA residents than other Workforce1 Career Centers.
3. Rockaway Center customers were more likely to be African American, have less than a high school diploma, and be on public assistance compared to the Workforce1 Career Center population, suggesting that the FREAI reached an underserved population.

Service Use

4. The career development service provider exceeded all of its metrics for the first two years of the contract for service provision and job placement.

Job Placement and Wages

5. Eighteen percent of Rockaway Workforce1 Career Center customers were placed into jobs, and two-thirds worked 35 or more hours per week. The vast majority of customers earned at least minimum wage and the average hourly wage was \$11.22.
6. Far Rockaway residents were less likely to be placed in jobs than those who lived elsewhere, perhaps reflecting a lack of opportunities in Far Rockaway.
7. Several measures of program participation were strongly related to job placement and wages. Customers who received 7 or more services were more likely to be placed and had higher wages than those who received fewer than seven services.
8. Several types of services, individual job readiness, onsite training, financial counseling, and other supportive services were related to placement and/or wages. Neither Fast Track nor referral to offsite training were related to placement or wages.

The impact study began with a descriptive analysis of the population served by the Rockaway Center, service delivery, and outcomes. This chapter presents the results of that analysis. It also includes subgroup analyses of differences in outcomes by customer characteristics and services received and an analysis of formal performance metrics. The analyses in this chapter are primarily descriptive.

The data analyzed in this chapter are from SBS's Worksource1 database. Worksource1 collects data on Workforce1 Career Center customer demographics and service receipt. The analyses included customers who enrolled between May 2015 and June 2017. For more information on the data sources used in the impact study, see Appendix B.

3.1 Customers

Recruitment by the career development service provider included individuals ages 18 and older who live in Far Rockaway, with a particular emphasis on individuals in six housing developments. There was also an emphasis on recruiting customers below the federal poverty line. As of June 30, 2017, a total of 6,390 customers had been served by the Rockaway Center. The analysis compared the demographic characteristics of Rockaway Center customers to the population of "hub" Workforce1 Career Center customers. "Hub" Workforce1 Career Centers include the Queens, Brooklyn, Upper Manhattan, Bronx, and Staten Island Workforce1 Career Centers. Understanding the backgrounds of these customers not only makes it possible to assess how they may have differed from customers at other Workforce1 Career Centers, but also provides a context for the impact analysis in Chapter 4.

Table 3-1 shows that, despite the place-based focus on Far Rockaway, only 54 percent of Rockaway Center customers lived in Far Rockaway. Additional analyses (not shown) revealed that among Rockaway Center customers who did not live in Far Rockaway, the vast majority lived in Queens (29 percent) or Brooklyn (55 percent). However, the Rockaway Center served a higher percentage of NYCHA residents than other Workforce1 Career Centers. In addition, compared to other Workforce1 Career Center customers, Rockaway Center clients were more likely to be African American, have less than a high school diploma or GED, and have received public assistance at enrollment.² These findings suggest that the Rockaway Center was effective in reaching individuals who were underserved by other Workforce1 Career Centers.

² Public assistance includes self-reported receipt of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Social Security Insurance (SSI), Cash Assistance (CA), and Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) at enrollment.

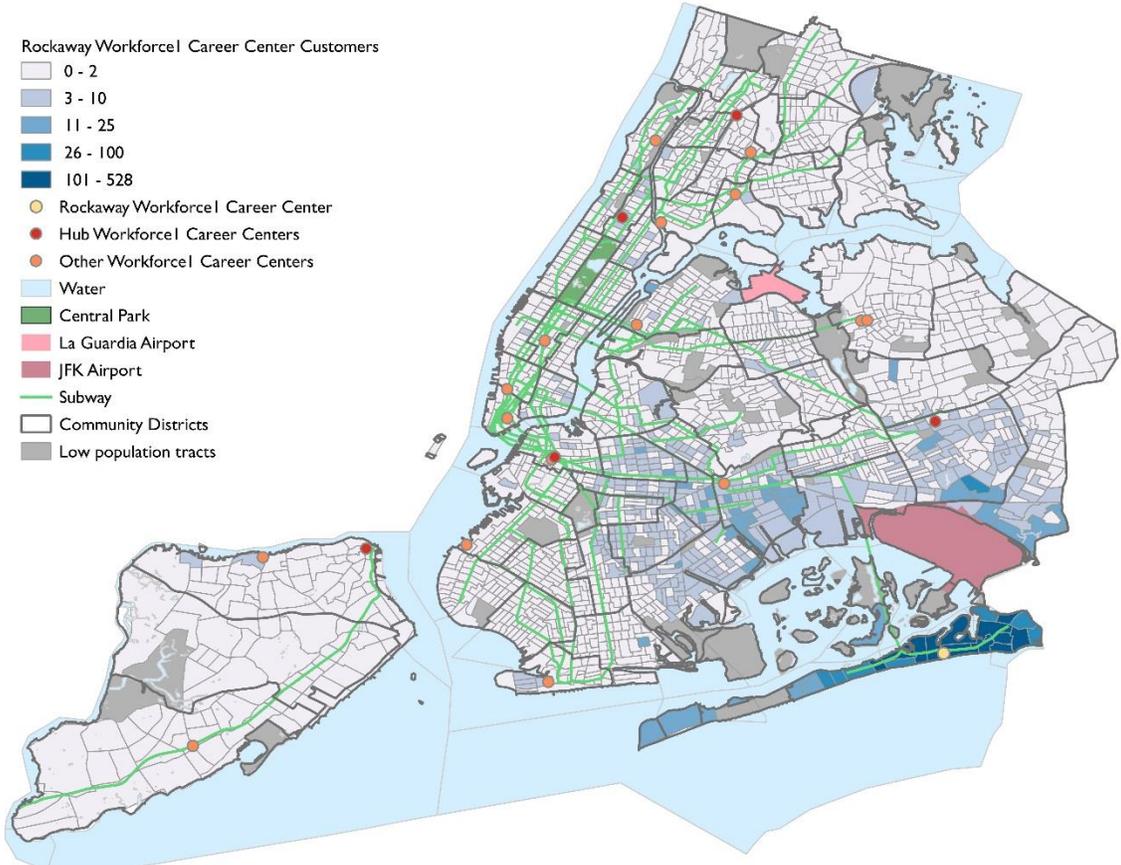
Table 3-1. Demographic Characteristics

	Rockaway Center	“Hub” Workforce1 Career Centers
Gender		
Male	47.9	51.1
Female	52.1	49.0
Age at enrollment		
18 to 24	37.1	33.0
25 to 34	28.6	28.1
35 to 44	14.9	14.3
More than 45	19.4	24.7
Average (in years)	32.1	34.0
Race		
White	5.7	10.3
African American	60.6	45.0
Hispanic	16.1	23.3
Multiple or other races	4.9	6.7
Single parent	14.1	9.7
Education		
Less than high school diploma or GED	17.7	11.5
High school diploma or GED	39.8	36.8
Some college or vocational school	32.8	35.4
College degree or higher	9.7	16.2
Enrolled in school	16.2	17.4
Veteran	1.7	4.1
Lives in Far Rockaway	53.9	1.0
NYCHA resident	16.0	12.4
On public assistance	41.2	27.1
Number of Customers	6,930	119,734

SOURCE: Worksource1 data.

Because many Rockaway Center customers did not live in Far Rockaway, additional analyses examined the geographic distribution of customers. Figure 3-1 displays the geographic distribution of Rockaway Center customers by Census tract. Not surprisingly, the Census tracts immediately surrounding the Rockaway Center have the highest concentration of customers. Customers that traveled to the peninsula for services were most frequently from nearby areas in Queens and Brooklyn. These findings suggest that the place-based focus of the FREAI may have been broader than intended, extending beyond the Far Rockaway peninsula.

Figure 3-1. Geographic Distribution of Rockaway Center Customers



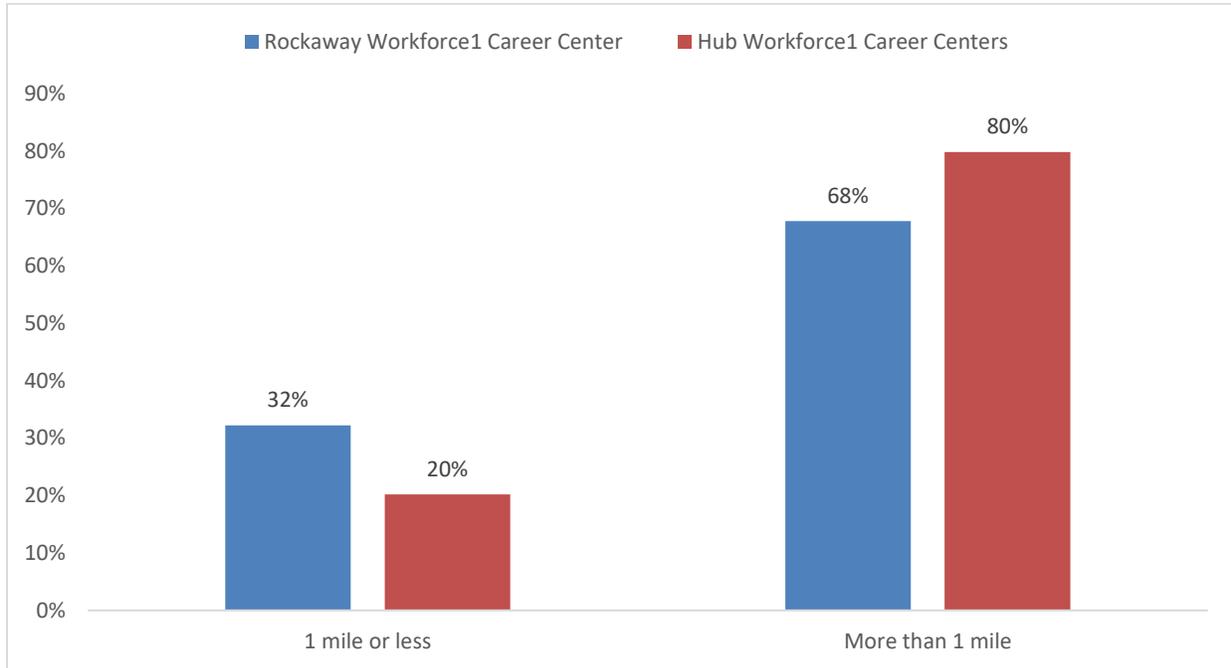
SOURCE: Worksource1 data.

Note: Includes 6,143 Rockaway Center customers and 111,812 “hub” Workforce1 Center customers with valid address.

Because a goal of the FREAI was to provide services to individuals in the local community, the analysis examined whether the Rockaway Center was more likely to serve local residents compared to other Workforce1 Career Centers. Figure 3-2 shows the distance that Rockaway Center customers lived from the Rockaway Center, compared to the distance that “hub” Workforce1 Career Center customers lived from a “hub” Workforce1 Career Center. The figure

shows that 32 percent of Rockaway Center customers lived within 1 mile of the Rockaway Center, whereas only 20 percent of “hub” Workforce1 customers lived within 1 mile of the “hub” Workforce1 Career Center. The findings suggest that the Rockaway Career Center was more likely to serve local residents compared to other Workforce1 Career Centers.

Figure 3-2. Proximity of Rockaway Center Customers to Rockaway Center and Hub Workforce1 Career Customers to a Hub Workforce1 Career Center



SOURCE: Worksource1 data.

Note: Includes 6,143 Rockaway Center customers and 111,812 “hub” Workforce1 Center customers with valid addresses.

3.2 Service Use

Table 3-2 displays the number of services utilized by Rockaway Center customers. Beyond orientation (71%), the services most frequently utilized by Rockaway Center customers included screening for job opportunities (63%), assessment (58%), referral to employers (48%), individual job readiness (31%), Fast Track (13%), and referral to training (11%). Most of the other services were utilized by 10 percent or fewer of customers. More than half of Rockaway Center customers received seven or more services and more than two-thirds received services in three

or more categories.³ The analyses in Chapter 4 examine whether service utilization differs between Rockaway Center customers and similar customers at other Workforce1 Career Centers.

Table 3-2. Service Use

	Percent of Customers	Number of Customers
Type of Service		
Orientation	71.2	4,936
Assessment	58.0	4,018
Resource room/computer lab	12.0	831
Job readiness workshops	10.1	703
Individual Job Readiness	31.1	2,157
Fast Track	12.8	886
Career counseling	51.4	3,560
Referral to Training	11.4	787
<i>Onsite training</i>	6.9	480
<i>Offsite training</i>	5.2	362
Screening for job opportunities	63.1	4,372
Referral to employers	48.1	3,335
Referral to GED/ESL	1.9	130
Financial counseling	7.7	534
Other Supportive services	2.2	509
Number of Services		
0 to 6	48.1	3,332
7 to 12	32.9	2,277
More than 12	19.1	1,321
Number of Service Categories		
0 to 2	37.4	2,593
3 to 4	23.8	1,652
5 or more	38.8	2,685
Number of Participants		6,930

Source: Worksource1 data

Note: Includes services utilized through June 2017.

³ The service categories are described in Table B-2 in Appendix B. Services received were grouped into 12 categories such as orientation, assessment, workshops, etc. The total number of service categories is a count of the total number of categories in which a customer received a service. To make the number of service categories comparable between Rockaway Center customers and other Workforce1 Career Center customers, Fast Track was included with workshops and financial counseling was included with supportive services.

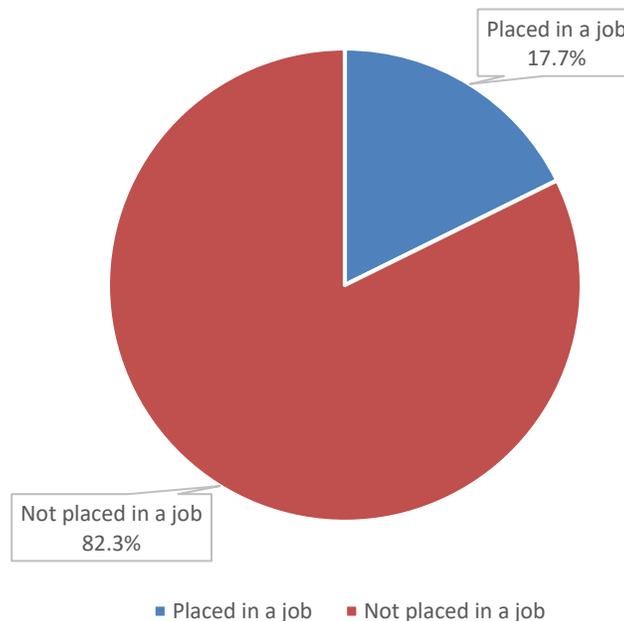
3.3 Placement and Wages

This section discusses participants' success in finding jobs and the types of jobs they obtained. It includes both descriptive analysis and multivariate regression analysis to understand how customer demographic characteristics and service use are associated with job placement and wages.

3.3.1 Job Placements

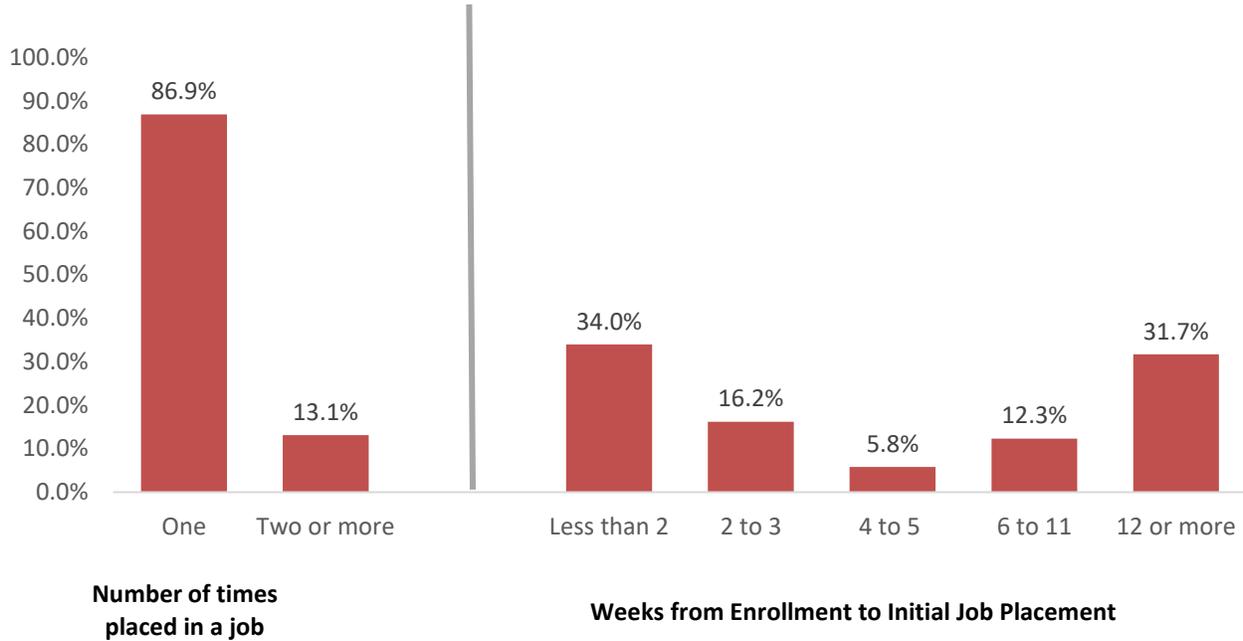
Figure 3-3 shows that 18 percent of Rockaway Center customers were placed into a job. Figure 3-4 shows that among Rockaway Center customers who were placed in a job, 13 percent were placed more than once. This is consistent with findings from the implementation study that some participants maintained relationships with the job placement services provider after placement. One-third of Rockaway Center customers were placed within 2 weeks of enrollment. Another one-third of customers were not placed until 12 weeks or more after enrollment. These patterns likely reflect the different job readiness of customers. Customers who were job ready would have been placed into employment sooner, whereas those with more extensive needs would have required more assistance before job placement. The average number of weeks to placement was 15 (not shown).

Figure 3-3. Job Placements



Source: Worksource1 data

Figure 3-4. Number and Timing of Job Placements



Source: Worksource1 data

Note: Includes 1,225 customers who were placed in a job.

3.3.2 Characteristics of Job Placements

Table 3-3 shows that nearly two-thirds Rockaway Center customers who were placed into jobs typically worked 35 or more hours per week. Starting wages ranged substantially but the vast majority were at or above the New York State minimum wage of \$8.75 in 2015 (the earliest year included in the evaluation).⁴ About 12 percent earned over \$15 per hour. The average hourly wage was \$11.22. The most frequent occupations of Rockaway Center customers were sales, office and administrative support, and food service.

⁴ There were no Rockaway Center customers with placement wages below \$8.75 and only 4 Workforce1 Career Center customers with placement wages below \$8.75.

Table 3-3. Characteristics of Job Placements

	Rockaway Center
Hours worked at initial placement	
Less than 35	35.9
35 or more	64.1
Average	34.2
Hourly wage at initial placement	
\$8.75 or less	7.0
\$9	21.5
\$9.01 to \$10.99	19.4
\$11	25.7
\$11.01 to \$12.99	6.9
\$13	2.5
\$13.01 to \$14.99	5.5
\$15.00 or over	11.6
Average (in dollars)	11.22
Occupation of Initial Placement	
Sales and Related	34.6
Office and Administrative Support	15.1
Food Preparation and Serving Related	11.6
Protective Service	8.9
Production	8.2
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	7.9
Transportation and Material Moving	4.7
Construction and Extraction	2.5
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	2.3
Healthcare Support	1.9
Management	<1
Life, Physical, and Social Science	<1
Community and Social Services	<1
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	<1
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	<1
Personal Care and Service	<1
Business and Financial Operations	0
Computer and Mathematical	0
Architecture and Engineering	0
Legal	0
Education, Training, and Library	0
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	0
Number of Customers	1,225

Source: Worksource1 data

3.3.3 Analysis by Far Rockaway Resident Status and NYCHA Resident Status

The Rockaway Center targeted its outreach to Far Rockaway residents and NYCHA residents. To examine whether the targeted outreach led to different outcomes, job placement and wages were analyzed separately by Far Rockaway resident status and NYCHA resident status. Customers who lived in Far Rockaway were significantly less likely to be placed into a job than customers who lived elsewhere. This could reflect the fact that customers living in Far Rockaway had less access to jobs. However, Far Rockaway residents actually earned more in the initial placement than those who lived elsewhere. There were no differences in job placement or wages by NYCHA resident status. This is not surprising, since the program was not designed differently for NYCHA residents.

Table 3-4. Initial Job Placement Outcomes by Far Rockaway and NYCHA Resident Status

	Placed in a Job	Wages at Initial Placement
Far Rockaway resident		
Yes	13.4	\$11.52
No	22.7	\$11.01
Difference	-9.3*	\$0.51*
NYCHA resident		
Yes	18.3	\$11.00
No	17.6	\$11.26
Difference	0.7	-\$0.26

Source: Worksource1 data

* p < .01

3.3.4 Multiple Regression Analysis and Findings

To further explore the relationship among customer demographic characteristics, service use, and job placement, multiple regression analysis was used. Multiple regression analysis seeks to isolate the unique influence of explanatory variables on an outcome variable. This is important because customers who have specific demographic characteristics or receive specific services may be different from those who do not in ways that could be related to job placement and wages.

Two multiple regression analyses were conducted. The first regression analysis considered the association between customer demographic characteristics and the number of services received on job placement and wages. The second regression analysis considered the association between customer demographic characteristics and the type of services received on job placement and wages. It is important to emphasize that the results in this section are

correlational and do not necessarily indicate the causal effect of a specific service on job placement or wages. Differences in job placement may be due to unobserved differences in motivations or needs of customers, or the decision of the staff to target certain services to particular types of customers. Moreover, many factors influence job placement and wages, and receipt of individual services is likely to make only a small contribution.⁵

- **Customers living in Far Rockaway were less likely to be placed in a job than those living outside of the community.** Customers living in Far Rockaway were 8 percentage points less likely to be placed than those living elsewhere. This could reflect the fact that customers living in Far Rockaway had less access to jobs. However, there was no difference in wages between customers living in Far Rockaway and those living elsewhere.
- **Women earned lower wages than men.** Women and men were equally like to be placed, but women earned lower wages in the placement job than men. Specifically, women earn about \$0.59 less per hour than men, a somewhat larger gap than national data showing that women’s earnings are about 80 percent of men’s earnings (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). This gender difference was not explained by the fact that women worked fewer hours than men, as additional analysis indicated that, among customers who worked full-time (35 or more hours per week), women still had lower earnings than men. The difference was also not explained by differences in the occupations in which women and men were placed. Women earned less than men in most of the occupations.
- **Older customers were less likely to be placed but had higher wages than younger customers.** Customers age 25 or older were less likely to be placed than those younger than age 25. However, older customers had higher wages than younger customers. The higher wages of older customers may be explained by the fact that they have higher levels of work experience than younger workers, a hypothesis which could not be explored with the available data.
- **Minority customers had lower wages than white customers.** Black and Hispanic customers had wages that were \$1.45 and \$1.75 less, respectively, than white customers. These differences are in line with national statistics showing that the earnings of racial and ethnic minorities are lower than those of whites (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). However, black and Hispanic customers were equally likely to be placed compared to white customers.

⁵ The table shows the results from ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis. For job placement, the coefficient gives the difference in the proportion of customers who achieved the outcome between the groups. For example, a coefficient of -.085 for Far Rockaway resident indicates that Far Rockaway residents are 8.5 percentage points less likely to be placed in a job than those who live elsewhere. For wages, the coefficient gives the difference in wages between the two groups.

- **Disabled customers had worse employment outcomes than non-disabled customers.** Disabled customers had lower wages than non-disabled customers and were less likely to be placed.
- **Customers with a high school degree or GED had better employment outcomes.** Compared to those without a degree, these participants earned higher wages and were more likely to be placed. This is consistent with national statistics which consistently show that individuals with less education have lower earnings (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018).
- **Single parents were less likely to be placed.** Single parents were less likely to be placed but had similar wages to customers who were not single parents. The observed lower likelihood of placement may be due to issues such as transportation and child care, a hypothesis which we could not explore.
- **The number of services received was strongly related to placement.** Customers who received 7 or more services were 6 percentage points more likely to be placed than those who received fewer than 7 services, and those who received more than 12 services were 24 percentage points more likely to be placed. ***The number of services received was the single strongest factor associated with job placement, suggesting that program participation was helpful in overcoming barriers to employment based on demographic and socioeconomic characteristics.***

Table 3-5. Regressions of Job Placement and Wages on Customer Characteristics and Number of Services

	Placement in Employment	Wages at Initial Placement
Female (Base=Male)	-0.000	-0.593*
Age (Base=18 to 24)		
Age 25 to 34	-0.034*	0.805*
Age 35 to 44	-0.034*	1.602*
Age 45 or older	-0.031*	1.595*
Race (Base=White)		
Black	-0.019	-1.458*
Hispanic	-0.018	-1.751*
Other	-0.065*	-1.620*
Missing race	-0.000	-0.965
Disabled (Base=Not disabled)	-0.051*	-1.661*
Veteran (Base=Not a Veteran)	0.042	0.446
Has HS diploma, GED, or higher (Base=No high school diploma or GED)	0.036*	0.877*
Enrolled in school (Base=Not enrolled in school)	0.023	-0.227
Single parent (Base=Not a single parent)	-0.029*	-0.150
On public assistance (Base=Not on public assistance)	-0.014	-0.165
Lives in Far Rockaway (Base=Lives elsewhere)	-0.082*	0.138
NYCHA resident (Base=Not a NYCHA resident)	0.015	-0.116
Number of services (Base=1 to 6 services)		
7 to 12 services	0.063*	0.507
More than 12 services	0.244*	0.306
Intercept	0.168	11.276
R-squared	0.079	0.107
Sample size	6,930	1,225

Source: Worksource1 data

* p < .05

The second regression analysis examined whether the types of services received were related to better or worse job placement and wages. Table 3-6 shows that several program participation measures were related to job placement and wages. Those who received resource room/computer lab services, individual job readiness, referral to employers, and supportive services were all significantly more likely to be placed into jobs than those who did not receive these services.

The relationship between type of services received and wages was less clear. Those who received onsite training, screening for job opportunities, and financial counseling had higher wages than those who did not receive these services. However, those who received referrals to employers actually had lower wages. It may be that those who received immediate job placement were those who were in less skilled occupations or that the occupations into which these individuals were placed paid lower wages.

It is interesting to note that participation in Fast Track was not associated with placement or wages. This finding is perhaps explained by the fact that customers who received Fast Track were more likely to have less than a high school diploma and on be public assistance at enrollment, factors that are related to job placement. Moreover, Fast Track participants had lower prior wages, suggesting that Fast Track was provided to customers who were less prepared for immediate placement.

It is noteworthy that onsite training was associated with higher wages but offsite training was associated with neither placement nor wages. There are two possible explanations for this finding. First, the onsite trainings may have been in more in-demand occupations than offsite trainings. Onsite trainings included Commercial Drivers' License (CDL), Home Health Aid (HHA), and Sandy Pre-Apprenticeship program, whereas offsite trainings were in security, pest control, computer and technology training, and cable installation. However, we did not have access to data on which specific training a customer received to explore whether placement and wages varied by the occupations in which customers were trained. Second, the implementation study findings revealed concerns with varying eligibility and participation requirements of offsite training providers, which may explain why the offsite trainings were unrelated to placement or wages. We did not have access to data on whether customers actually completed training—only whether they were referred. If some customers did not complete training, this would suppress any positive association of training with placement and wages.

Table 3-6. Regressions of Job Placement and Wages on Customer Characteristics and Type of Services

	Placement in Employment	Wages at Initial Placement
Received orientation (Base=Did not receive)	-0.000	0.017
Received assessment (Base=Did not receive)	0.020	0.468
Received resource room/computer lab (Base=Did not receive)	0.030*	-0.506
Received job readiness workshops (Base=Did not receive)	0.005	-0.379
Received individual job readiness (Base=Did not receive)	0.034*	-0.239
Received Fast Track (Base=Did not receive)	-0.028	-0.399
Received career counseling (Base=Did not receive)	-0.011	0.283
Received referral to onsite training (Base=Did not receive)	0.027	0.905*
Received referral to offsite training (Base=Did not receive)	-0.012	-0.824
Received screening for job opportunities (Base=Did not receive)	-0.000	0.926*
Received referral to employers (Base=Did not receive)	0.189*	-1.422*
Received GED/ESL (Base=Did not receive)	0.062	-0.494
Received supportive services (Base=Did not receive)	0.071*	0.450
Received financial counseling (Base=Did not receive)	-0.006	1.119*
Intercept	0.168	11.276
R-squared	0.079	0.107
Sample size	6,930	1,225

Source: Worksource1 data

Note: Models include controls for sex, age, race, disabled status, veteran status, level of education, current school enrollment, receipt of public assistance, single parent status, rockaway residence, and NYCHA residence. Results for these coefficients were similar to those in the model that included number of services and are not shown.

* p < .05

3.4 Performance Metrics

The previous sections included data on service use and outcomes for the Rockaway Center. The contract with the career development services provider included a series of performance metrics that were tied not just to job placement but also to service provision, a first for a Workforce1 Career Center. These metrics included:

- Number of customers served;
- Number of services provided to customers;
- Number of customers provided financial counseling;
- Number of customers provided training referrals;
- Number of customers provided career preparation services;
- Number of customers provided supportive services;
- Number of customers enrolled in “Fast Track” course;
- Number of customers placed in a job; and
- Number of customers earning more than \$13.13 per hour.

Table 3-7 shows the progress toward these measures during the first 2 years of the contract (May 2015 to April 2017).⁶ The career development service provider far exceeded its goals for the number of customers served in both contract years. Nearly 1,300 customers were served in year 1—26 percent higher than the performance metric. The number of customers served in year 2 also exceeded the goal, with 2,984 customers served, which was nearly triple the goal.

The performance metric for the number of services provided was also exceeded in both years. Nearly 2,300 and 7,000 services were provided in year 1 and year 2, respectively. The number of services provided in year 2 was 4 times the goal. While the goals for the number of customers provided each type of service—financial counseling, training referrals, preparation services, supportive services, and Fast Track—were exceeded in year 2, performance on each metric fell short of the goals in year 1. The least progress was made toward the goal for financial counseling, which is consistent with the finding from the implementation study that this service was underutilized. The provider met only 11 percent of its goal of the number of

⁶ Another metric was that 50 percent of customers served must be low or moderate income, defined as 230 percent of the Federal poverty line based on family size in the year in which the services were provided. It was not possible to assess performance on this metric with the available data.

customers who received financial counseling in year 1. One reason may have been that there was not a consistent system for recording service data in Worksource1 until May 2017; therefore, some services that were provided may have not been recorded or may have been recorded as occurring at a later date.

Table 3-7. Job Development Service Provider Performance Metrics Data in the First Two Contract Years

	Contract Year 1			Contract Year 2		
	Goal	Actual	Total as Percent	Goal	Actual	Total as Percent
Number of customers served	1,000	1,260	126%	1,000	2,984	298%
Number of services provided	1,700	2,235	131%	1,700	6,957	409%
Number provided financial counseling	325	38	12%	325	439	135%
Number provided career preparation	1,000	801	80%	1,000	2,768	277%
Number provided training	175	115	66%	175	566	323%
Number provided support services	200	168	84%	200	301	151%
Number enrolled in Fast track	375	336	90%	375	470	125%
Number placed in a job	300	163	54%	350	533	152%
Number with wage more than \$13.13	65	11	17%	65	99	152%

Source: Worksource1 data.

Note: Number of customers served is the total number of customers who received at least one service. Number of services is the total number of services provided to customers who received at least one service. Number of customers provided financial counseling, training referrals, career preparation services, supportive services, and Fast Track are the unique numbers of customers who were provided each service. The categorization of services is described in Appendix B, table B-3. Number of customers placed in a job is the unduplicated number of customers who were provided at least one service and placed into a job.

Job placement performance metrics were also not met in year 1 but were exceeded in year 2. The career development service provider placed 163 customers in year 1, 54 percent of the target. In year 2, the provider placed 533 customers, 183 more than the target. While the number of placements with hourly wages more than \$13.13 in year 2 exceeded the goal, the number in year 1 was only 17 percent of the goal.

4. Impacts

Key Findings

1. ***The FREAI increased uptake of services.*** Compared to the matched comparison group, Rockaway Center customers were significantly more likely to receive several specific services, including assessment, individual job readiness, career counseling, training, and supportive services. Rockaway Center customers were also significantly more likely to receive a greater number of services, an indicator of the intensity of services.
2. ***The FREAI increased job placement and hours worked but not wages.*** Rockaway Center customers were significantly more likely to be placed in a job and worked more hours in the initial placement than the matched comparison group, although the differences were modest. However, Rockaway Center customers had lower hourly wages at the initial placement than the matched comparison group.
3. ***There were no differences in employment and earnings in the year after enrollment.*** The employment and earnings of Rockaway Center customers in the year after the program were very similar to those of the matched comparison group. While the employment and earnings of Rockaway Center customers increased in the year after the program, so did the earnings of the matched comparison group. These findings suggest that while the place-based approach helped to increase employment and earnings, it did not do so more than the “business as usual” approach at “hub” Workforce1 Career Centers.
4. ***The findings did not differ by subgroups.*** The results for all Rockaway Center customers were similar to those obtained when the analysis was conducted by subgroups defined on the basis of NYCHA resident status, age, education level, and enrollment date (before versus after colocation of the providers).

In this chapter, we present findings from the impact study of the FREAI. The impact study aims to determine whether the “place-based” Rockaway Center was more successful or not than the “business as usual” approach to workforce development. The analysis is based on a comparison group design, which compares the outcomes of Rockaway Center customers to the outcomes of

similar customers at other Workforce1 Career Centers during the same period (“comparison group”).

The analysis used Worksource1 data matched to UI wage data. The two data sources were linked using Social Security Numbers (SSN), if one was available. The analysis focused on the subset of individuals for whom a full year of post-program data was available. The number of quarters participants’ earnings were observed in the post-program period depended on when they enrolled in the program. The analysis used UI data through Q1 2008, so customers who enrolled no later than Q2 2017 (March 2017) had four quarters of post-program data and were included in the analysis.

4.1 Propensity Score Matching

We used propensity score matching (PSM) to examine differences in labor market outcomes between Rockaway Workforce Career Center customers and similar Workforce1 Career Center customers (Rosenbaum and Rubin, 1983). While a random assignment design is considered the “gold standard” in program evaluation, it is often infeasible due to ethical or practical concerns. PSM constructs a comparison group that is equivalent to the treatment group on *observable* characteristics to mimic a random assignment design. PSM has been widely used to evaluate workforce programs (Eyster et al., 2010; Hollenbeck, 2009). As long as both the treatment and comparison groups are the same with respect to observable and unobservable characteristics, the comparison group’s experiences represent what might have happened to the treatment group had they not participated in the program.

Treatment Group. The impact evaluation includes Rockaway Center customers who were served from June 2015 through March 2017. Customers who were served after March 2017 did not have four quarters of post-program employment and earnings data available and could not be included. A total of 6,086 customers were served during this period. The analysis was further restricted to customers who had a valid SSN and could be matched to UI wage records. The final analytic sample size for the Rockaway Center group was 5,753 (95% of customers served).

Comparison Group. An appropriate comparison group must consist of individuals with observable characteristics similar to those of the treatment group. That is, based on their demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, comparison group members should be just as likely to have enrolled in the Rockaway Center. The comparison group was selected from individuals who received services from the City’s “hub” Workforce1 Career Centers. Specifically, the comparison group was comprised of individuals who received services from the Queens Workforce1 Career Center. The Queens Workforce1 Career Center was chosen because most Rockaway Center customers lived in Queens. The selection of the Queens Workforce1 Career

Center as the comparison group ensured that the comparison group was exposed to similar local labor market conditions as Rockaway Center customers. **It is important to emphasize that the comparison group is not a “no services” group but rather an “alternate” services group.** The comparison group design does not test whether the place-based approach is better than no services at all, but whether it is better than the “business as usual” approach at “hub” Workforce1 Career Centers. Also, it is impossible to fully replicate in a comparison group the geographic isolation of Rockaway because, while some of the comparison group lived in Rockaway, most did not. The comparison group may have had different job opportunities and constraints than Rockaway Center customers.

We used single nearest neighbor matching, which selects for each treated case the comparison case with the closest propensity score and thus the most similar characteristics. We selected the following characteristics for inclusion in the propensity score: date of enrollment, age, gender, race/ethnicity, disability, veteran status, education level, school enrollment, single parent, on public assistance, NYCHA resident, borough, local unemployment rate, prior earnings and employment, prior UI receipt, and industry of employment. Matching was done without replacement, which means that once a comparison group case had been selected, it could not serve as a match for another case. **The method was effective in removing differences in observable characteristics (including demographic characteristics and prior employment and earnings) between Rockaway Center customers and the comparison group.** See Appendix D for a detailed description of the application of this method and results.

4.2 Results

The sections below present the impact results. Impacts were calculated by estimating the mean difference in outcomes between the Rockaway Center group and the matched comparison group. Due to the very large sample size, differences for which $p < .01$ are considered statistically significant. Even with this more conservative criterion, most of the differences are statistically significant, including some small differences. Therefore, it is also important to consider the size of the difference when determining its importance. Appendix E provides further details on the data that underlies the figures in this chapter.

4.2.1 Services Received

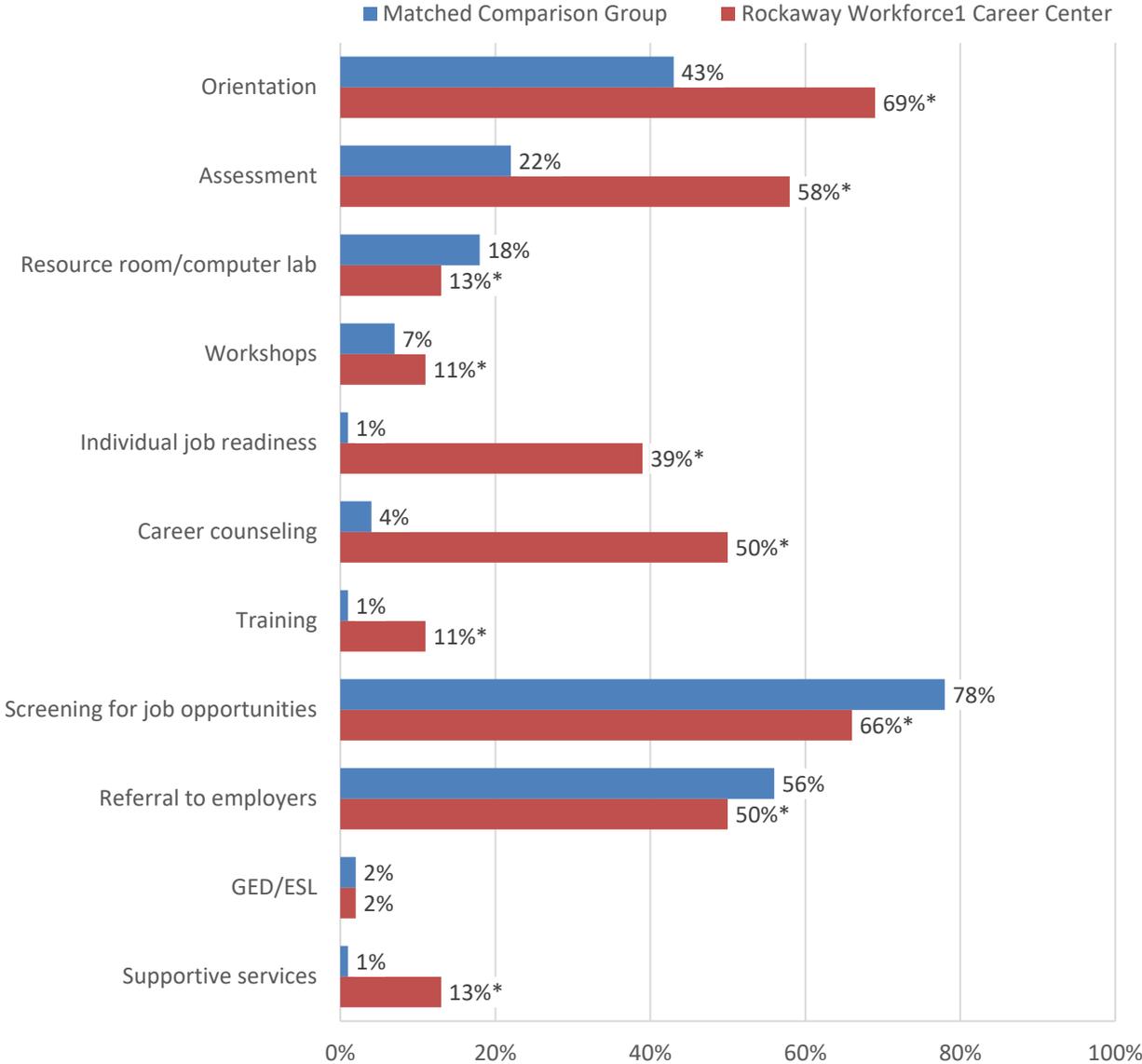
The FREAI sought to make several enhancements to the Workforce1 Career Center model, and the contract with the job development services provider is the first and only to tie performance to service-based metrics at a Workforce1 Career Center. It is critical to assess whether Rockaway Center customers actually received different services than similar customers at other

Workforce1 Career Centers. If not, then one would not expect a difference between the two groups on job placement or labor market outcomes.

Figure 4-1 illustrates the differences in service receipt for Rockaway Center customers relative to the matched comparison group. The figure shows the percentage of the matched comparison group and Rockaway Center customers that received each type of service.⁷ For example, the figure shows that 42 percent of the matched comparison group received an orientation service versus 69 percent of Rockaway Center customers, a difference of 26 percentage points. As can be seen from the figure, Rockaway Center customers were significantly more likely to receive several other types of services, including assessment, individual job readiness, career counseling, referral to training, and referral to supportive services than the matched comparison group. The largest differences were for career counseling, individual job readiness, and assessment. Rockaway Center customers were less likely to receive referrals to employers and screening for job opportunities, although these differences were small. There was not a significant difference in GED/ESL receipt between the two groups.

⁷ Because Fast Track and financial counseling are not offered by other Workforce1 Career Centers, these services had to be combined with other services for the comparison. Fast track was included as a workshop and financial counseling was included as a supportive service.

Figure 4-1. Impacts on Type of Services Received



Source: Worksource1 data

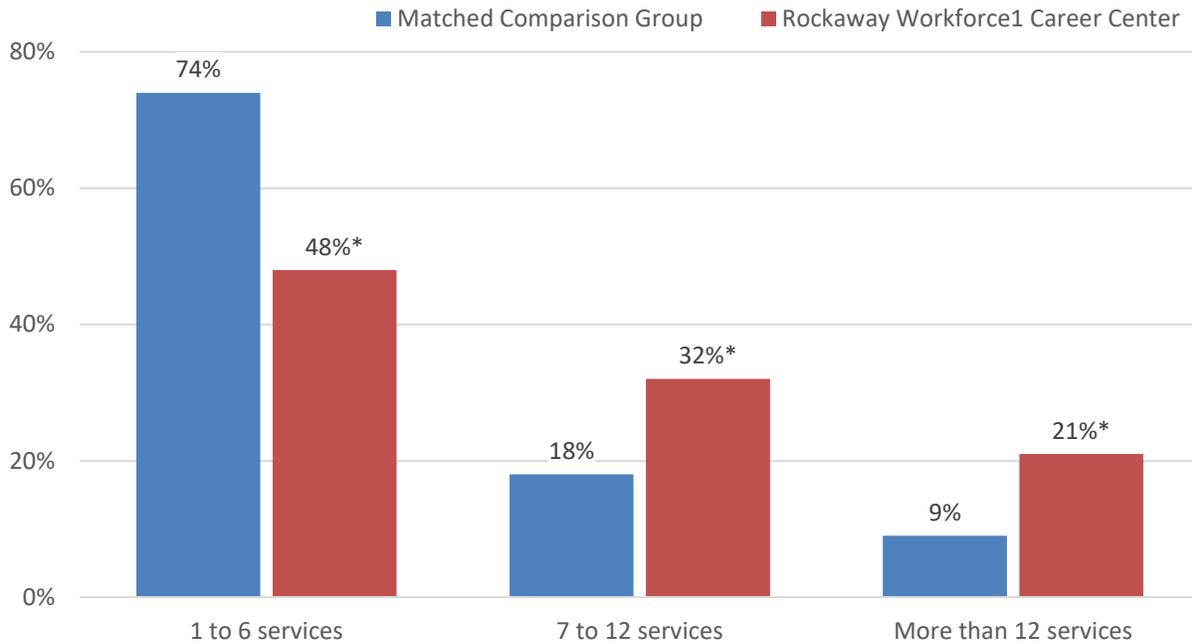
Note: The figure shows the percentage of the matched comparison group who received each type of service and number of services and the percentage point difference associated with the Rockaway Center.

* p < .01

Figure 4-2 shows differences in the number of services received. Rockaway Center customers were significantly more likely to receive a greater number of services than the matched comparison group. Rockaway Center customers were 14 percentage points more likely to receive 7 to 12 services and 12 percentage points more likely to receive 13 or more services than the matched comparison group. Conversely, Rockaway Center customers were 26 percentage points less likely to receive 1 to 6 services than the comparison group. These

findings suggest that, all else equal, the Rockaway Center provided a more intensive service experience than other Workforce1 Career Centers, including more high-touch assessment and job readiness services.

Figure 4-2. Impacts on the Number of Services Received



Source: Worksource1 data

Note: The figure shows the percentage of the matched comparison group who received each type of service and number of services and the percentage point difference associated with the Rockaway Center.

* p < .01

4.2.2 Labor Market Outcomes

The impact analysis included five labor market outcomes:

- **Job placement** – whether the customer was placed in a job;
- **Hourly wage at the initial placement** – conditional on being placed, the hourly wage at the initial placement;
- **Hours worked** – conditional on being placed, the hours worked per week at the initial placement;
- **Quarterly employment** – whether a customer was employed, defined as having earnings of at least \$100, in each of the four quarters after enrollment;

- **Job retention** – whether a customer was employed in the first and second quarter after enrollment, the first, second, and third quarter after enrollment, and all four quarters after enrollment; and
- **Conditional earnings** – conditional on being employed, total earnings from all jobs in each of the four quarters after enrollment.

Table 4-1 shows the impacts on labor market outcomes. Rockaway Center customers were significantly more likely than the matched comparison group to be placed into a job (by 4 percentage points) and worked significantly more hours in the initial placement than the matched comparison group (by 3 hours per week). The difference in job placement is about a 25 percent increase over the matched comparison group. However, Rockaway Center customers had significantly lower hourly wages at the initial placement than the matched comparison group (by \$0.78).⁸

Rockaway Center customers had very similar employment levels in the four quarters after enrollment to the matched comparison group. On average, in each quarter after enrollment, about 60 percent of the matched comparison group was employed. Rockaway Center customers were about 2 to 3 percentage points less likely to have been employed in each quarter but the differences were either not statistically significant or too small to be substantively meaningful. In most cases, the differences were less than five percent of the comparison group employment rate.

A similar pattern emerged for earnings. Among the matched comparison group, earnings increased from about \$3,800 in the first quarter to about \$5,000 in the fourth quarter after enrollment. Rockaway Center customers' earnings were very similar to those of the matched comparison group in each quarter. None of the differences in earnings between the matched comparison group and Rockaway Center Customers was statistically significant. Moreover, the differences in earnings between the two groups were only about 1 percent or less in magnitude.

⁸ It is important to note that the percentage of Rockaway Center customers who were placed into a job might differ slightly from that reported in the previous chapter because the analysis is restricted to customers who enrolled through March 2017 and who could be matched to UI data.

Table 4-1. Impacts on Job Placement, Employment, and Earnings

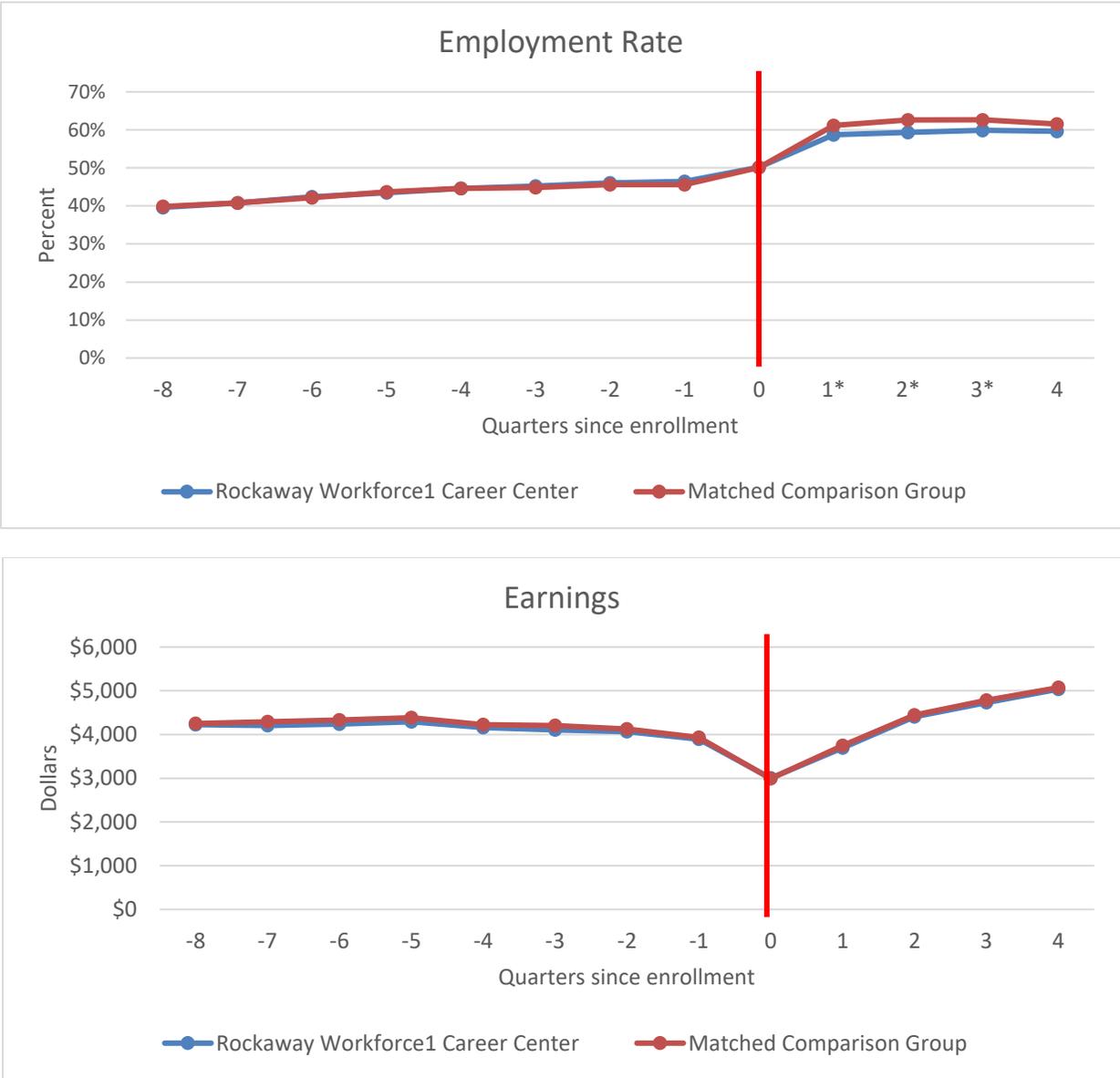
	Matched Comp Group	Rockaway Center	Diff	% of Comp Group Mean	Significant
Job placement					
Placed in a job (%)	15.1	18.9	3.8	25.2	Significant
Wage at placement (\$)	11.89	11.10	-.78	-6.6	Significant
Hours worked at placement (\$)	31.3	34.4	3.0	9.6	Significant
Employment Rate					
1 st quarter after enrollment (%)	61.2	58.7	-2.5	-4.0	Significant
2 nd quarter after enrollment (%)	62.6	59.4	-3.3	-5.2	Significant
3 rd quarter after enrollment (%)	62.7	59.9	-2.8	-4.4	Significant
4 th quarter after enrollment (%)	61.5	59.7	-1.9	-3.0	Not significant
Employment Retention					
Employed 1 st and 2 nd quarter (%)	52.2	49.2	-3.0	-5.8	Significant
Employed 1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd quarter (%)	46.2	42.9	-3.3	-7.1	Significant
Employed all four quarters (%)	41.3	38.7	-2.6	-6.2	Significant
Quarterly earnings (for those employed)					
1 st quarter after enrollment (\$)	3,750	3,696	-54	-1.4	Not significant
2 nd quarter after enrollment (\$)	4,447	4,402	-45	-1.0	Not significant
3 rd quarter after enrollment (\$)	4,786	4,733	-53	-1.1	Not significant
4 th quarter after enrollment (\$)	5,072	5,036	-36	-0.7	Not significant

Source: Worksource1 data and UI wage data.

Note: “Significant” indicates statistically significant at the .01 level.

To better understand the reason for the lack of differences in employment and earnings, we examined the rates of employment and earnings over time for both Rockaway Center customers and the matched comparison group. Figure 4-3 shows these results. The employment rates of Rockaway Center customers and the comparison group are similar before the quarter of enrollment. In the quarter in which they enroll in the program, both groups have employment rates of about 50 percent. In the quarter of enrollment, the rates of both groups increase to about 57 percent. Both groups show a similar increase. These results suggest that while the Rockaway Center increased employment, these increases also occurred for the matched comparison group, suggesting that the program did not increase employment more than the “business as usual” approach at other Workforce1 Career Centers.

Figure 4-3. Employment and Earnings



Note: Quarter 0 represents the quarter of enrollment. Earnings are conditional on employment and exclude individuals with zero earnings.

Source: UI wage data

* p < .01

Among those who were employed, mean earnings were similar in the quarters before program enrollment. Both groups experience a similar drop in earnings in the quarter before enrollment. This is referred to as the Ashenfelter dip (Ashenfelter & Card, 1985) and is due to the fact that individuals seek workforce services after a period of difficulty in the labor market. The figure clearly shows that the earnings of Rockaway Center customers increased after enrollment.

Earnings increased from about \$3,000 to \$3,700. However, a similar increase occurred for the matched comparison group. Similar to the results for employment, while Rockaway Center customers experienced increases in earnings, these increases were very similar to those experienced by the comparison group.

A **difference-in-differences analysis** compared the difference in employment and earnings in the year before and the year after enrollment across Rockaway Center customers and the matched comparison group. The difference between the change in the outcomes for Rockaway Center customers and the matched comparison group provides an estimate of the impact on the outcome. An advantage of difference-in-differences analysis is that it can control for unobservable differences between the two groups. Employment was defined as the percentage of quarters the customer was employed (from 0 to 100) in the year before and after enrollment at a Workforce1 Career Center; earnings was defined as the average conditional earnings for quarters employed.

Table 4-2 shows that both groups increased employment between the pre- and post-program period, and the changes were of similar magnitudes. The comparison group had an increase in employment of 17 percentage points, and the Rockaway Center customers had an increase of 14 percentage points. Therefore, the increase for Rockaway Center customers was about 3 percentage points lower than for the comparison group. The results for earnings also indicated a small difference between the two groups. The matched comparison group experienced an increase in earnings of about \$450 (from \$3,598 to \$4,046). The increase for Rockaway Center customers was somewhat higher at \$507 (from \$3,478 to \$3,985). The increase in earnings for Rockaway Center customers was \$57 more than the increase for the comparison group, less than 2 percent of earnings in the year before. Therefore, the data provide little evidence of different patterns of labor market outcomes between the two groups.

Table 4-2. Difference-in-Differences Analysis of Employment and Earnings

Outcome	Rockaway Center			Matched Comparison Group			DD
	Year Before	Year After	Difference	Year Before	Year After	Difference	
Employment (%)	45.6	59.4	13.8	45.1	62.0	16.8	-3.1
Earnings (\$)	3,478	3,985	507	3,598	4,046	450	57

Source: UI wage data

4.2.3 Subgroup Analysis

We conducted subgroup analysis to determine whether the impact of the FREAI varied by customer demographic characteristics. Table 4-3 presents the results of the subgroup analysis. The top of the table shows the impact estimates for the entire sample, replicating the results presented earlier. The remainder of the table displays the subgroup analyses results by NYCHA resident status, enrollment date, age, and educational level. We chose these subgroups because: (1) the FREAI was developed with input from NYCHA and targeted NYCHA residents, (2) services were not fully co-located until October 2015, (3) youth have greater unemployment rates than adults (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016), and (4) the implementation study findings indicated that the jobs offered by the Rockaway Center may have been more appropriate for customers with a high school diploma but not for those with lower or higher levels of education. In most of the subgroups, there were no significant differences between the Rockaway Center group and the matched comparison group. The one exception was for age, where initial placement wages were lower for ages 18 to 24 in the Rockaway Center compared to ages 18 to 24 in the matched comparison group. However, in general, the findings suggest that the outcomes of Rockaway Center customers were similar to the matched comparison group, regardless of subgroup.

Table 4-3. Results from Subgroup Analyses

	Placed in a Job	Placement Wages	Placement Hours	Employment Rate	Mean Earnings
Impact Estimates for All Rockaway Workforce1 Career Center Customers					
Impact for all customers	3.8*	-.78*	3.0*	-2.6*	-61
Impact Estimates by NYCHA Resident Status (NYCHA vs. non-NYCHA)					
Impact for Non-NYCHA	4.0*	-0.85*	3.1*	-2.2*	-117
Impact for NYCHA	2.6*	-0.50*	2.5*	-4.4*	115
Differential impact statistically significant	No	No	No	No	No
Impact Estimates by Enrollment Date (Before October 2015 vs. October 2015 or Later)					
Impact for Before October 2015	4.3	-.63	4.3	-0.3	-323
Impact for October 2015 or later	3.7	-.82	2.7	-2.8	-1
Differential impact statistically significant	No	No	No	No	No

Table 4-3. Results from Subgroup Analyses (continued)

	Placed in a Job	Placement Wages	Placement Hours	Employment Rate	Mean Earnings
Impact Estimates by Age (18 to 24 vs. 25 or older)					
Impact for 25 or older	3.2	-0.37	2.8*	-2.8*	15*
Impact for 18 to 24	4.9	-1.29*	3.3*	-2.2*	-180*
Differential impact statistically significant	No	Yes	No	No	No
Impact Estimates by Education (Less than high school diploma vs. high school diploma vs. more than high school diploma)					
Less than high school diploma/GED	3.2*	-0.56*	5.1*	-3.5*	49
High school diploma/GED	3.7*	-0.80*	2.8*	-2.8*	-58
More than high school diploma/GED	4.2*	-0.83*	2.7*	-2.0*	-118
Difference significant (Less than high school vs. high school)	No	No	No	No	No
Difference significant (Less than high school vs. more than high school)	No	No	No	No	No
Difference significant (High school vs. more than high school)	No	No	No	No	No

Source: Worksource1 data and UI wage data

Note: Statistical significant is established when the difference is significant at .01 or less.

5. Discussion

The Far Rockaway Economic Advancement Initiative (FREAI) sought to increase job opportunities through a place-based model that provided comprehensive career services to customers who have been historically underserved. The impact study compared the service receipt and labor market outcomes of Rockaway Center customers to similar customers at “hub” Workforce1 Career Centers. Rockaway Center customers were significantly more likely than the matched comparison group to receive several types of services, including initial assessment, individual job readiness services, career counseling, training, and supportive services. These findings indicate that the FREAI was successful in providing these needed services to the Far Rockaway community.

However, the impact study showed that these services did not necessarily translate into better labor market outcomes for Rockaway Center customers than the matched comparison group. While Rockaway Center customers were more likely to be placed in a job and worked more hours in the initial placement, they had lower wages at the initial placement and similar employment and earnings in the four quarters after services. The implementation study findings play an important role in understanding why Rockaway Center customers had similar employment and earnings to matched comparison group customers. We discuss two potential explanations below.

One explanation is that the Rockaway Center shared many features with other Workforce1 Career Centers, which may have attenuated some of the differences between Rockaway Center customers and the matched comparison group. The implementation study showed that while the Rockaway Center piloted several additions to the Workforce1 model, other Workforce1 Career Centers also had some of these features, including co-located services and collaboration with community partners.

Another possibility is that the geographic and economic situation of Rockaway played a role in the labor market outcomes for Rockaway Center customers. The implementation study findings revealed that some customers were not attracted to the jobs offered through the Rockaway Center because the diversity of jobs that were offered was limited or the compensation was too low. For example, most of the jobs were suited for customers with a high school diploma or equivalent, with fewer opportunities for those with lower or higher levels of education. At the same time, the implementation study suggested that customers were deterred from taking jobs in certain areas because of concerns about travel and community violence. While the impact study controlled for local labor market conditions, these variables may not have been sufficient to capture the isolation of the Rockaways. In other words, while the matched comparison group

was similar to Rockaway Center customers in demographics and prior labor market experience, its members may not have faced the same unique constraints as Rockaway residents. These factors would tend to make the labor market outcomes of Rockaway customers look worse relative to the comparison group. In addition, comparison group members who were not placed in jobs may have been more likely to find jobs on their own than Rockaway Center customers, which would explain why the placement rate of Rockaway Center customers was higher than the comparison group but employment in the four quarters after services was similar.

The finding that the labor market outcomes of Rockaway Center customers were similar to those of the comparison group does not imply that the place-based approach was unsuccessful. It is likely the initiative recruited customers that are typically not served by Workforce1 Career Centers and, despite this, they achieved similar labor market outcomes. All else being equal, one might expect that Rockaway Center customers would not fare as well in the labor market as other Workforce1 Career Center customers. The higher touch job readiness services likely played a role in helping Rockaway Center customers to achieve these outcomes. This leads to two suggestions for how to continue to meet the needs of the Rockaway population, or how Workforce1 Career Centers could serve similar populations.

The results of this evaluation have implications for the expansion of a place-based model to other Workforce1 Career Centers. First, SBS should consider expanding the place-based model to other areas where potential customers may have barriers to accessing needed workforce development services. Through targeted outreach and recruitment, as well as the provision of services locally, the Rockaway Center successfully reached customers who have been historically underserved by other Workforce1 Career Centers. Second, the findings suggest that more intensive, individual job readiness and supportive services should be expanded at other Workforce1 Career Centers. Rockaway Center customers were more likely to receive intensive services such as individual job readiness, career counseling, and supportive services. These types of services were associated with higher rates of job placement among Rockaway customers, suggesting that they were effective in reducing barriers to employment associated with the geographic and economic isolation of Far Rockaway.

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Appendix A. Implementation Study Methodology

As the basis of the implementation evaluation, we interviewed a cross-section of informed stakeholders between August and December 2017. Individual and group interviews were conducted by telephone and in-person, depending on the stakeholder group. Interview protocols were guided by the research questions set forth by NYC Opportunity and informed by an initial review of program materials and documentation. The following interviewees were recruited from a list of stakeholders developed in collaboration with SBS and NYC Opportunity, and with the two Rockaway Center vendors:

- Job placement service provider staff: Rockaway WF1CC Director, Job Recruiters (N = 2), Account Manager (N = 1), Receptionist (N = 1);
- Career development service provider staff: Program Manager, Outreach Team (N = 4), Job Advisors (N = 2), Financial Counselor (N = 1);
- Local community-based organizations (N = 4);
- Employers with whom the Rockaway WF1CC has placed customers (N = 3);
- Partner and agency representatives: SBS (N = 6), NYC Opportunity (N = 1), Citi (N = 3), NYCHA (N = 1);
- NYCHA Tenant Association representatives (N = 2); and
- Directors of other WF1CCs (N = 3).

In addition, the evaluation team conducted 24 telephone interviews and 2 focus groups with Rockaway Center customers for a total of 38 customers interviewed. Because customers had not previously agreed to have their information shared with an evaluator, SBS and the job placement service provider first reached out to customers to announce the evaluation and offer customers an opportunity to respond directly to the evaluation team if they were interested in being interviewed. Outreach to customers was carried out in several waves and included emails to customers who engaged with the Workforce1 Career Center within the last 90 days (first wave) and who engaged with the Workforce1 Career Center prior to 90 days (second wave). In addition, staff from both providers circulated a flier to customers who received services during the data collection timeframe. Interviewed customers, including those who participated in the focus groups, received \$20 gift cards as an incentive and token of appreciation.

Interviews were recorded, by consent, and transcribed verbatim. Interview transcripts were content-analyzed using a combination of inductive and deductive methods. The transcripts

were first coded according to the evaluation’s guiding research questions using the NVivo software package and subsequently coded by a team over multiple iterations in a method that identified and substantiated thematic findings within and across qualitative sources.

Appendix B. Impact Study Data Sources

In this appendix, we describe the data used in the impact study.

B.1 Worksource1

The Worksource1 data system is the platform used to maintain Workforce1 Career Center data. Worksource1 collects detailed information on program-related activities of each customer. In March 2018, SBS provided files containing data on Rockaway Center customers and “hub” Workforce1 Career Centers. At the Rockaway Center, Worksource1 data were entered by both providers. The records from both providers were combined to create a single customer list for the Rockaway Center. If a customer had records with both providers, the records were combined and the enrollment date was set to the date of the earliest enrollment observed for either provider. The evaluation team provided a customized data request memorandum and instructions for submitting the data through Westat’s secure file transfer protocol (SFTP). We held calls with SBS to discuss the request and discuss any gaps or challenges. The evaluation team conducted several checks of the data to ensure that they were accurate and complete.

B.2 Participant Characteristics

Worksource1 tracks participant demographic and background characteristics including age, gender, ethnicity, race, educational level, school enrollment status, public assistance receipt, disability, Veteran status, and single parent status.

B.3 Services Received

Worksource1 collects data on all services received by participants. Services are selected from a list and staff must record services in real time but no more than 5 days after the service is received. Services were reviewed and grouped into broad categories to be similar across the Rockaway Center and other Workforce1 Career Centers.

B.4 Outcomes

Worksource1 collects data on the following job placement outcomes:

- Placement in a job;
- Job start date;

- Hours worked per week;
- Wage; and
- Occupation.

B.5 Unemployment Insurance Data

Administrative data on employment and earnings were provided by New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL). The data were provided for each quarter from the 2013 Q2 to 2018 Q1. The provision of data from 2013 Q2 meant that labor market history for each customer was available for at least two years before enrollment. The file included earnings from each employer, Federal Employer Identification Number (FIEN), employer address, and North American Industry Classification (NAICS) code for each employer. NYSDOL also provided data on UI claims and benefits.

B.6 Local Area Employment Rate

The evaluation team obtained information on local area unemployment rates from data published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. <https://www.bls.gov/lau/>.

B.7 Missing and Out of Range Data

Steps were taken to address out of range and missing data. Ages greater than age 90 were set to missing because it is unlikely that individuals so old would seek workforce services. Similarly, ages younger than 17 were set to missing because the programs do not serve individuals so young. Missing age was replaced with the mean age. Data were missing for several participant characteristics. The percentage of cases with missing data on most of the variables was extremely low. The one exception was race. For race, a separate missing category was created and included in the analysis. Other participant characteristics with missing data included gender and education. For these variables, missing data was set to the modal category. Census tract, which was used to determine whether a participant lived in Far Rockaway, also had missing data. For these cases, if the participant enrolled in the Rockaway Center, missing was assumed to be Rockaway and not Rockaway if served by another Workforce1 Career Center.

The distribution of quarterly wages was examined and top coded at \$25,000, which was about the 99th percentile for most quarters.

B.8 Data Limitations

Although the Worksource1 data are reliable and accurate, there are several limitations that should be noted when interpreting the findings:

- **Inconsistent recording of services.** Career development services may not have been consistently recorded in Worksource1. In May 2016, Worksource1 service categories were updated to better align with the services offered. SBS staff attempted to retroactively categorize services. We conducted analysis of services over time and did not notice any changes before and after May 2016. However, it is possible that some services may not be coded in the correct category in the analysis.
- **Generic referral services code.** If a participant was referred to other services, in some cases this was recorded in a generic referral category, making it impossible to identify the specific service to which a participant was referred. Therefore, certain categories of services may be undercounted because they are recorded as referrals rather than the actual service.
- **No training completion status.** Worksource1 does not contain data on training completion status for offsite trainings. The evaluation team requested this information from the career development service provider but it was unavailable. Thus, it was impossible to assess whether the FREAI increased training completion.

While UI data provide a cost effective method for obtaining outcomes on participants, there are several known limitations:

- **Coverage.** First, UI data potentially undercount certain types of jobs, including agricultural employment, military and federal civilian employment, railroad employment, and self-employment. UI data also does not capture employment for individuals who migrate out of state. It is impossible to distinguish these situations from non-employment in UI data. Therefore, the lack of earnings in UI data does not necessarily indicate that the individual is not employed.
- **No Hours Worked.** UI data report total wages for each quarter. UI data do not contain hours worked and thus do not permit analysis of hourly wages.
- **High rate of missing data on zip code.** Data on employer zip code were missing for more than half of job records. Therefore, it was impossible to examine whether participants worked in Far Rockaway.

Table B-1 shows the variables used in the impact analysis.

Table B-1. Variable Definitions

Variable	Description
Date of enrollment	Mutually exclusive dummy variables for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015 Q2 (omitted category) • 2015 Q3 • 2015 Q4 • 2016 Q1 • 2016 Q2 • 2016 Q3 • 2016 Q4 • 2017 Q1
Gender	Mutually exclusive dummy variables for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male • Female (omitted category)
Age	Mutually exclusive dummy variables for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 18 to 24 • Age 25 to 34 • Age 35 to 44 • Age 45 and older
Race/ethnicity	Mutually exclusive dummy variables for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White, non-Hispanic (omitted category) • African American • Hispanic • Other/multiracial • Missing
Disability	Mutually exclusive dummy variables for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled • Not disabled (omitted category)
Veteran	Dummy variables for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veteran • Not a veteran (omitted category)
Education level	Dummy variables for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than high school (omitted category) • High school diploma or GED • Some college or vocational training • College
School enrollment	Dummy variables for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolled • Not enrolled (omitted category)

Table B-1. Variable Definitions (continued)

Variable	Description
Single parent	Dummy variables for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single parent • Not a single parent (omitted category)
On public assistance	Dummy variables for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On public assistance • Not on public assistance (omitted category)
NYCHA resident	Dummy variables for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYCHA resident • Non-NYCHA resident (omitted category)
Borough	Mutually exclusive dummy variables for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queens • Brooklyn • Other location (omitted category)
Unemployment rate	Continuous variable for unemployment rate in Census tract of residence
Employment transitions	Mutually exclusive dummy variables for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employed/employed (omitted category) • Employment/not employed • Not employed/employed • Not employed/not employed
Prior employment	Dummy variables for employment in quarters 1 to 8 prior to enrollment
Prior earnings	Earnings for each of the 8 quarters prior to enrollment
UI experience	Dummy variables for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any UI experience in 1st year prior to enrollment • Any UI experience in 2nd year prior to enrollment
Industry	Indicator variables for whether individual received the majority of earnings from at least one quarter from a job in major NAICS groups

Table B-2. Description of Service Categories

Service utilization category	Description of codes recorded in Worksource1 records
Orientation	Orientations to the Workforce1 Career Center’s services
Assessment	Initial assessment or assessments for specific programs
Resource room/computer lab	Use of resource rooms or computer labs.
Workshops	Workshops in areas such as interviews, resumes, computer skills, specific occupations, job search.
Fast track	Fast Track completion and enrollment
Individual Job Readiness	Individual services in topics such as cover letters, interviews, resume support, and other aspects of job readiness.
Career counseling	Participation or referral to Individual Career Advisement
Training	Any training activity or referral to a training activity.
Screening for job opportunities	Any screening activities related to job placement. For example, these could take place in person, at events, with community partners, over the phone, or upon initial program entry.
Referral to employers	Referrals to employers.
GED/ESL	Adult education classes and language or ESL services.
Supportive services	Activities to help customers participate in job search and training including housing, professional attire, public benefits, social services, and transportation.
Financial counseling	Financial counseling or other financial workshops.

Table B-3. Definition of Services included in Career Development Service Provider Performance Metrics Analysis

Service	Code recorded in Worksource1 records
Financial counseling	1:1 Financial Counseling 1:1 Financial Counseling Follow-Up Financial Empowerment Workshop
Career preparation	Cover Letter Support Follow Up Interview Preparation Resume Support Individual Career Advisement
Referral to training	Workforce1 Internal Referral - Training Occupational Training
Support services	Housing Services Professional Attire Services Public Benefits and Support Services Miscellaneous Supportive Service Professional Attire Services Social Services Screening and Referrals Transportation Services
Fast track	Fast Track Completion Fast Track enrollment Job Readiness Overview Workshop (offsite)

Appendix C. Impact Analysis Design

This appendix describes the methods used for the impact analysis. We used propensity score matching (PSM) to examine the difference in outcomes between Rockaway Center customers and “hub” Workforce1 Career Center customers. Propensity score matching creates treatment and comparison groups that are similar on observed background characteristics but differ only in their participation in the program. We implemented propensity score matching using the PSMATCH procedure in SAS (SAS Institute, Inc., 2016).

C.1 Step 1: Estimate Propensity Scores

First, a propensity score was estimated for each individual in the treatment and comparison groups. The evaluation team constructed a data set that included both Rockaway Center customers and comparison pool. A variable was coded 1 if the record was from a Rockaway Center customer and 0 if it was from the comparison pool. The propensity score is the conditional probability of receiving treatment, which, in this case, is being a Rockaway Center customer. The propensity score was estimated with a logit model and included the following variables: quarter of enrollment, gender, race, age, disability, Veteran status, age, enrolled in school, single parent, public assistance, NYCHA resident, borough, any employment in the year prior to enrollment, earnings in the year prior to enrollment, employment in each of the eight quarters prior to enrollment, earnings in each of the eight quarters prior to enrollment, employment transitions, any UI experience in the year prior to enrollment, and any UI experience in the second year prior to enrollment. The propensity score model is similar to the model used in previous nonexperimental evaluations of workforce programs (Andersson et al., 2013; Heinrich et al., 2013; Michaelides, Mueser, and Mbwana, 2014).

We checked the overlap in propensity scores between the treatment and comparison groups, known as the region of common support. This step is important because biased inference can occur if comparison is made for a treatment individual for whom there is no comparison case with a similar propensity score. Common support was assessed by comparing the distribution of propensity scores across the treatment and comparison groups. We applied a minimum and maximum criteria in which individuals with propensity scores outside the range were deleted. Specifically, comparison cases with propensity scores less than the lowest treatment propensity score plus .25 standard deviation and treatment cases with propensity scores greater than the highest comparison case propensity score plus .25 standard deviation were deleted from the analysis.

C.2 Step 2: Match Samples

Next, participants were matched to non-participants using the predicted probabilities or “propensities” from the logit model using one-to-one nearest neighbor matching (Rubin 1973). In nearest neighbor matching, the data are randomly sorted and a “greedy” algorithm is used to find the closest match for a treatment case from the comparison group that meets the matching criteria. A match is chosen for each treatment case one at a time. To ensure close matches, we required matches to have propensity scores within .25 standard deviation of the propensity score of the treatment case to which it was matched. While a broader one-to-many match can be used and lead to greater efficiency, potential bias can result from subsequent matches not being as similar as the first match. Matching was done without replacement, meaning that once a comparison individual had been chosen as a match, it could not be chosen again as a match for another treated individual.

The goal of propensity score matching is to achieve “balance”—that is, to ensure a similar distribution of measured background characteristics between the treated and comparison groups. To assess balance, we used a measure of standardized bias, as recommended by Rosenbaum and Rubin (1985). The standardized bias is the standardized difference between the treatment and control group means. Covariates with standardized bias less than 5 percent are considered to be balanced. Propensity score matching was able to achieve balance on all of the covariates. Table C-1 shows the covariate balance before and after PSM.

Table C-1. Balance Before and After Matching

	Unmatched			Matched		
	Rockaway WF1CC	Queens WF1CC	Bias	Rockaway WF1CC	Queens WF1CC	Bias
Quarter of Enrollment						
Quarter 2, 2015	3.9	5.3	-6.7	3.9	4.4	-2.3
Quarter 3, 2015	13.7	17.1	-9.5	13.8	13.6	0.5
Quarter 4, 2015	11.1	11.3	-0.5	11.1	11.1	0.0
Quarter 1, 2016	15.2	12.7	7.3	15.1	14.7	1.2
Quarter 2, 2016	16.6	14.1	7.0	16.5	16.9	-1.1
Quarter 3, 2016	14.6	16.2	-4.6	14.6	15.2	-1.6
Quarter 4, 2016	12.2	12.5	-1.0	12.2	11.3	2.8
Quarter 1, 2017	12.8	10.8	6.0	12.7	12.7	-0.1
Age						
17 to 24	36.9	31.9	10.5	36.8	37.1	-0.7
25 to 34	29.0	28.2	1.6	29.0	29.5	-1.2
35 to 44	14.9	14.2	2.0	14.9	14.9	0.1
45 or older	19.2	25.6	-15.4	19.3	18.5	2.0

Table C-1. Balance Before and After Matching (continued)

	Unmatched			Matched		
	Rockaway WF1CC	Queens WF1CC	Bias	Rockaway WF1CC	Queens WF1CC	Bias
Male	52.7	50.8	3.7	52.6	52.5	0.2
Race						
White	5.8	5.6	0.8	5.7	5.7	0.0
African American	60.8	48.1	25.6	60.7	60.8	-0.2
Hispanic	16.0	20.2	-10.9	16.1	15.7	1.1
Multiple or other	4.9	11.9	-25.7	4.9	4.8	0.1
Missing	12.6	14.1	-4.5	12.7	13.0	-1.0
Disabled individual	4.1	4.0	0.7	4.2	4.1	0.3
Veteran	1.7	4.6	-16.9	1.7	1.6	0.8
Education						
Less than high school	17.2	9.7	21.9	16.8	16.6	0.5
High school	40.0	36.6	7.0	40.2	40.4	-0.4
Some college or vocational	33.2	37.3	-8.6	33.4	33.1	0.6
College degree	9.6	16.4	-20.2	9.7	9.9	-0.8
Enrolled in school	16.2	17.2	-2.7	16.3	16.2	0.1
Single parent	14.5	9.7	14.9	14.4	14.2	0.6
On public assistance	42.0	27.7	30.4	41.7	42.9	-2.5
NYCHA resident	16.3	8.3	24.6	15.9	16.0	-0.3
Borough						
Queens	66.6	60.8	12.0	66.5	64.4	4.4
Brooklyn	25.3	20.4	11.9	25.4	26.7	-3.2
Other	8.1	18.8	-31.9	8.1	8.9	-2.3
Employment Transitions						
Employed/employed	19.9	25.6	-13.6	20.0	20.3	-0.7
Employed/not employed	30.1	30.6	-1.1	30.2	29.8	0.8
Not employed/employed	23.9	20.7	7.7	23.7	23.7	0.1
Not employed/not employed	26.1	23.1	7.0	26.1	26.2	-0.3
Prior employment						
Employed 1 quarter prior	46.4	51.7	-10.6	46.5	45.6	1.8
Employed 2 quarters prior	46.0	51.0	-9.9	46.1	45.6	0.9
Employed 3 quarters prior	45.1	50.8	-11.3	45.2	44.9	0.7
Employed 4 quarters prior	44.5	49.4	-9.8	44.6	44.6	0.1
Employed 5 quarters prior	43.3	48.0	-9.3	43.4	43.7	-0.6
Employed 6 quarters prior	42.3	46.4	-8.4	42.4	42.1	0.5
Employed 7 quarters prior	40.7	45.5	-9.7	40.8	40.8	0.1
Employed 8 quarters prior	39.5	44.3	-9.8	39.6	39.9	-0.5

Table C-1. Balance Before and After Matching (continued)

	Unmatched			Matched		
	Rockaway WF1CC	Queens WF1CC	Bias	Rockaway WF1CC	Queens WF1CC	Bias
Prior Earnings						
Earnings 1 quarter prior	1,806	2,318	-14.9	1,812	1,795	0.5
Earnings 2 quarters prior	1,869	2,400	-14.9	1,876	1,882	-0.2
Earnings 3 quarters prior	1,848	2,457	-16.8	1,856	1,887	-0.9
Earnings 4 quarters prior	1,848	2,384	-14.8	1,856	1,884	-0.8
Earnings 5 quarters prior	1,859	2,339	-13.2	1,866	1,918	-1.4
Earnings 6 quarters prior	1,791	2,265	-13.0	1,798	1,827	-0.8
Earnings 7 quarters prior	1,712	2,240	-14.6	1,718	1,749	-0.9
Earnings 8 quarters prior	1,668	2,164	-13.8	1,675	1,695	-0.5
Prior UI experience						
Any UI experience 1 year prior	14.7	14.9	-0.6	14.7	14.5	0.8
Any UI experience 2 years prior	12.1	11.8	0.9	12.0	12.1	-0.1
Sample size	5,753	24,522		5,723	5,723	

C.3 Stage 3: Estimate Impacts

The fourth and final step in propensity score matching is to estimate the impacts. We estimated the average treatment effect on the treated (ATT) by simply comparing the average outcomes of the treatment and control groups. The ATT gives the effect of the program on those for whom it is actually intended. It is important to note that PSM addresses only selection on observed characteristics that are included in the matching process. If treatment and control cases differ in ways that are unobserved, the impact estimates may be biased.

Appendix D. Impact Tables

Table D-1. Impacts on Services

Service	Matched Comparison Group	Rockaway Workforce 1	Difference	% of Comparison Group Mean	Significance Level
Orientation	43.0	68.8	25.8	60.1	Significant
Assessment	22.1	57.2	35.1	158.5	Significant
Resource room/computer lab	18.0	12.8	-5.1	-28.6	Significant
Workshops	6.8	10.6	3.7	54.9	Significant
Individual job Readiness	0.5	38.2	37.7	7448.2	Significant
Career counseling	4.1	49.9	45.8	1120.5	Significant
Training	1.4	11.7	10.3	744.3	Significant
Screening for job opportunities	77.7	65.7	-12.0	-15.5	Significant
Referral to employers	55.7	50.0	-5.6	-10.1	Significant
GED/ESL	2.3	1.8	-0.5	-20.8	Not significant
Supportive services	1.2	12.9	11.7	940.8	Significant
Number of Services					
1 to 6 services	47.7	73.8	-26.1	-54.7	Significant
7 to 12 services	31.8	17.7	14.1	44.3	Significant
More than 12 services	20.5	8.5	12.0	58.4	Significant

Source: Worksource1 data

Note: Statistical significant is established when the difference is significant at .01 or less.