



# Barriers Before the Job

A Native Workforce Perspective

NORTH  
**Dakota** | Indian Affairs  
Be Legendary.

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# Understanding Native Workforce Realities

Barriers, Context, and How Employers Can Respond

- Understand Native work experiences
- Build understanding, not blame
- Improve systems together



# Workforce Readiness Starts Before the Job

## Basic stability

- Housing
- Utilities
- Access



# Housing & Utilities Matter

- Housing and utilities are often overlooked in workforce discussions.
- They directly impact a person's ability to maintain employment.
- Without heat, water, or electricity, people are in survival mode.
- Consistent work depends on stable living conditions.



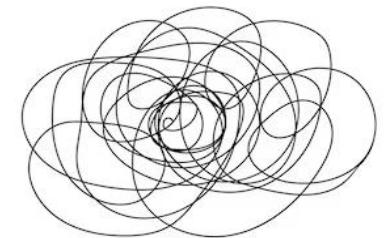
## Access Comes Before Opportunity

- Jobs often require online applications and email.
- No internet or device = hard to apply.
- Broadband access is the first step to getting hired.

# You Can't Plan a Career in Survival Mode

## Survival Mode vs Stability

- Survival needs like housing, utilities, and food make long-term planning hard.
- Training or committing to work is difficult without stability.
- Stability allows growth, learning, and consistency.



# Trust is a Workforce Issue

- Housing and utilities are often overlooked in workforce conversations.
- They directly affect a person's ability to work.
- Without heat, water, or electricity, people are in survival mode.
- Consistent work needs consistent living conditions.





# Training Alone isn't Enough

- Training works best when local, flexible, and tied to real jobs.
- Transportation, childcare, and scheduling affect participation.
- One-size-fits-all training often fails.

# Common Misunderstandings

- Gaps in employment are often seen as a lack of motivation.
- They're usually signs of access barriers.
- Understanding context helps employers respond better.





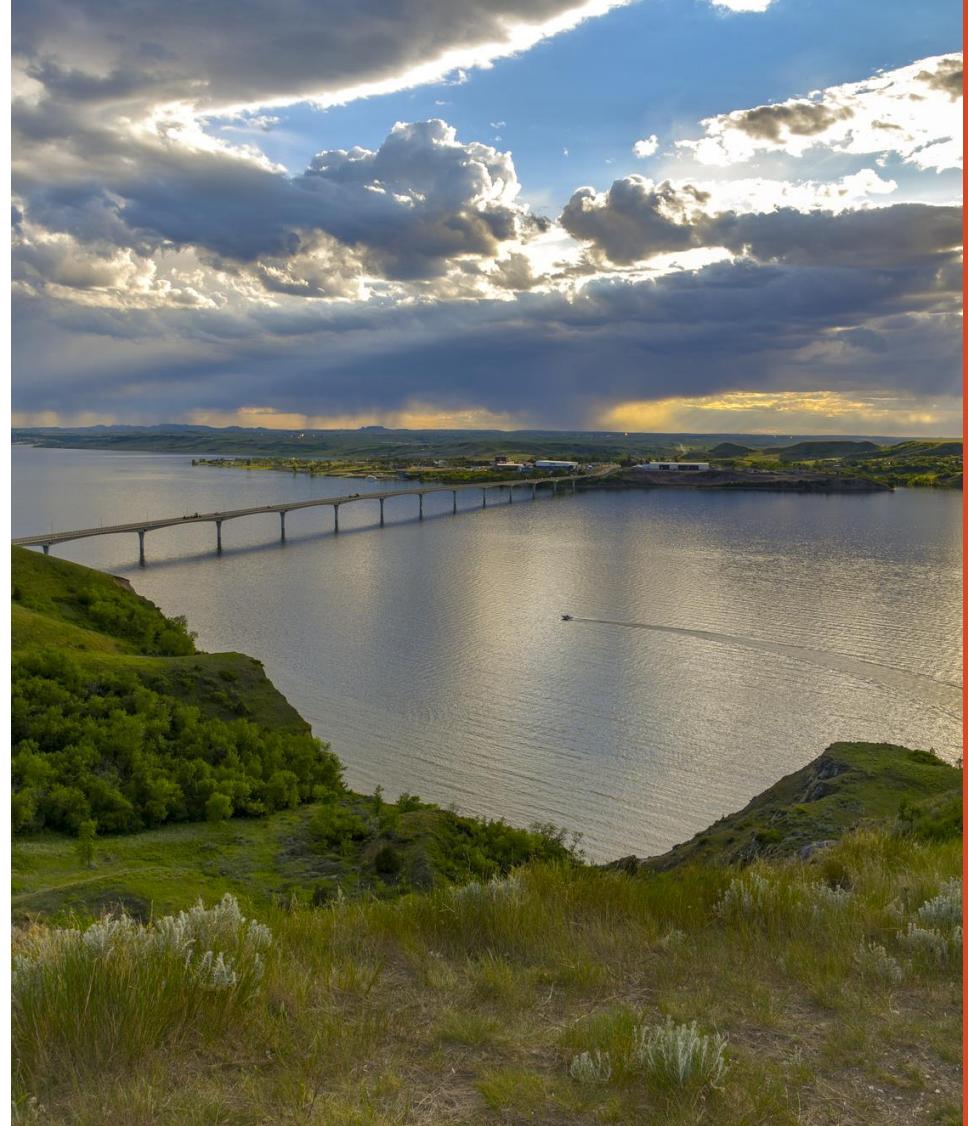
# Employer Practices That Make a Difference

## WHAT WORKS BETTER

- In-person or assisted applications help.
- Flexible start dates make programs accessible
- On-the-job training and apprenticeships work well.
- Partnering with tribal communities is important.
- Relationships matter as much as job postings.

# Building Workforce Success Together

- When housing, access, trust, and training align, workforce success follows.
- Build systems that meet people where they are.
- Create pathways, not barriers, to work.



A person is sitting on a bench in a dark, possibly rainy, urban setting. The background is blurred, showing what might be a city skyline or a bridge at night.

# WHAT WE CAME HERE FOR

From Hope to Home



***Maacagíraac (Hidatsa)***

***Müigwetch (Anishinaabe)***

***wetAxkoosšteéRAt (Arikara)***

***Wááshíraharanito'sh (Mandan)***

***Pidamaye/Pilamaye (Dakota/Lakota)***

**Thank You!**

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