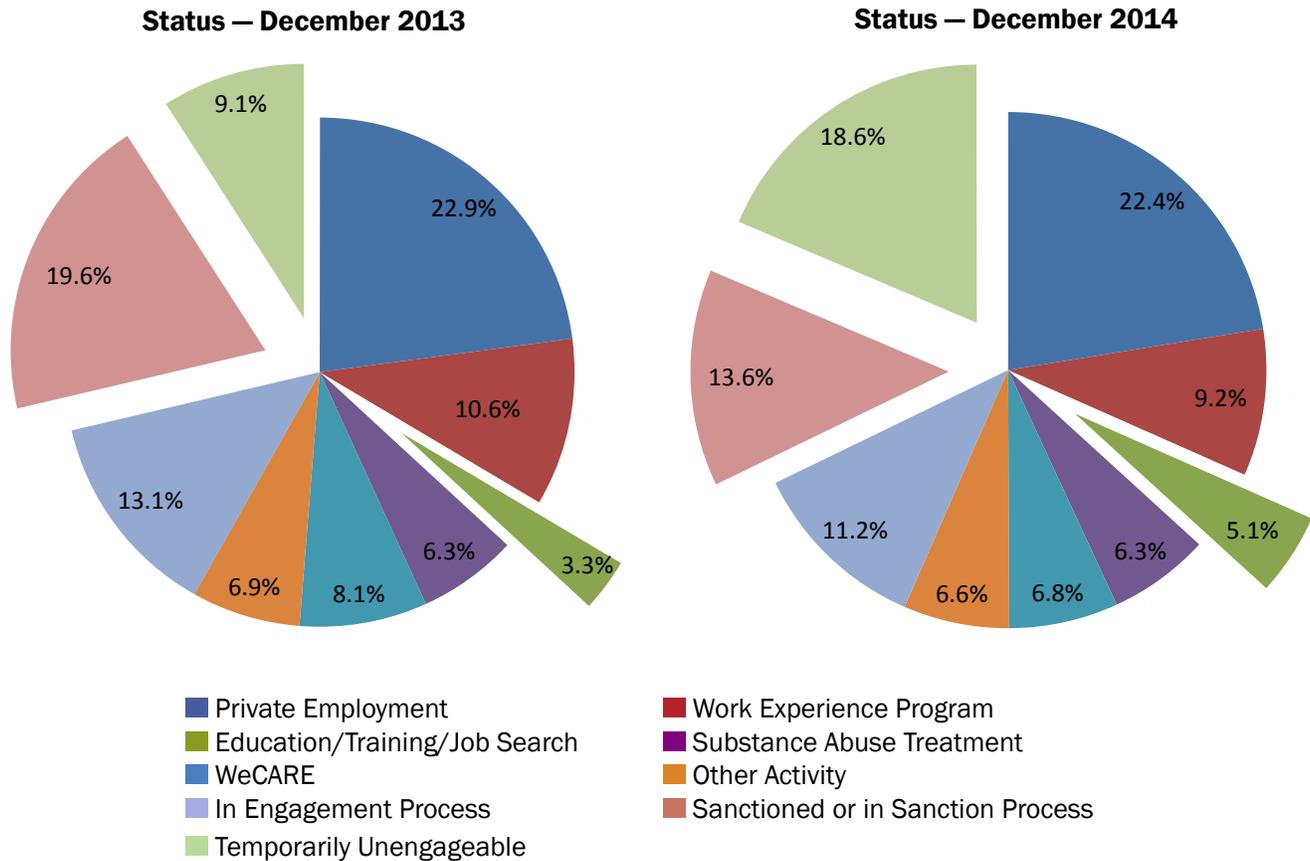


The Public Assistance Caseload: More Job Training, Fewer Punitive Actions Under the de Blasio Administration?

In October 2014, the city's Human Resources Administration announced a new employment plan for public assistance recipients. The plan, which was already being phased in before the formal announcement, makes the agency's employment programs less punitive and puts more emphasis on education and training. Some of the changes affecting the city's caseload of about 177,000 cash assistance cases can already be seen by comparing participation data from December 2013 with December 2014.

Share of Caseload in Various Work Participation and Preparation Classifications



- The number of cash assistance cases under or facing sanctions for violating the employment requirements fell from 19,632 (19.6 percent of all cases) to 14,473 (13.6 percent).
- Cases with the household head in an education, training, or job search program increased from 3,347 (3.3 percent) to 5,485 (5.1 percent).
- The number of cases classified as temporarily unengageable jumped from 9,119 (9.1 percent) to 19,823 (18.6 percent), primarily due to a big increase in the number of cases being evaluated for WeCARE, a program designed to help clients overcome medical and/or mental health barriers to employment.
- The number of participants in the Work Experience Program, which requires participants to work for their cash and food stamp benefits, also decreased somewhat from 10,661 (10.6 percent) to 9,786 (9.2 percent). The plan calls for gradually phasing out this program.

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SOURCE: Human Resources Administration, Weekly Caseload Engagement Status Reports for January 5, 2014 and January 4, 2015

NOTES: The numbers exclude cases categorized as indefinitely unengageable including child-only cases, and those in which the household head is receiving Supplemental Security Income, is age 60 or over, or is receiving services from the HIV/AIDS Services Administration. They also exclude a small number of cases categorized as unengaged. Cases are classified by their primary activity.

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