Breakout 18 — Life Skills for Stability — Housing Readiness and Employment Readiness

One sentence for the board: This group builds the two kinds of readiness recovery stands on after the basics hold — a place to live that stays, and work that pays and keeps.

Purpose	Teach housing readiness and employment readiness as practical planning: what a stable place to live requires, what steady work requires, and the dated steps that move each one forward. This is new ground beyond Life Skills, which teaches money and time; nothing here repeats the money and time material. This group plans; it does not place anyone in housing or a job, and it promises no placement.
Who chooses this group	Curriculum groups meet separately for men and for women. Breakout groups are coed unless otherwise specified. Placement for participants who do not fit a men/women split follows the participant's stated preference, confirmed with staff for safety and privacy. Nothing about a participant's placement is disclosed to the group. Any participant working toward stable housing, steady work, or both. No participant is asked to share their housing situation, income, or employment history in group. The stated preference stands unless a stated safety reason requires a private conversation. Safety and privacy are the only criteria.
Length	60 minutes
Materials	Paper and pens for every client, whiteboard or flip chart and markers, and the topic resources named in this outline, and the program's current local resource sheet

Time	Segment	What happens
0–5 min	Welcome	Ground rules, confidentiality limits, right to pass. State plainly at the start: this group plans — it does not place anyone in housing or a job.
5–30 min	Teaching	The teaching points below, in order, on the board: two foundations, housing readiness, keeping the place, employment readiness, naming what you can do, and dated steps.
30–45 min	Discussion	Prompts below. General answers are always complete answers — no one is asked to share their housing situation, income, or work history.
45–55 min	Practice — my housing and work steps	Clients choose housing or work and write three dated steps, what step one needs, and an if–then plan. Writing stays with the client.
55–60 min	Close	Takeaways, the staff referral path for housing and work questions restated, and one dated step each client will actually do this week.

Teaching points

- **Stability is two foundations.** Recovery stands on daily systems — money, time, home, work — and this group works the two that reach beyond the week: a place to live that stays, and work that pays and keeps. Both are built in steps, not found in a single leap.
- **Housing readiness: know what a landlord needs.** A stable place to live asks for the same things in the same order: identification and documents in one folder, a way to show income or support, references who will answer, and a record kept clean from here on. This group teaches what to gather and in what order — it does not find housing for anyone.

- **Housing readiness: keep the place once it is yours.** Rent paid on time, the place kept clean and in repair, neighbors treated with respect, and problems reported early instead of hidden — the same small systems from Life Skills, aimed at keeping a home, not just finding one.
- **Employment readiness: show up ready.** Steady work asks for documents in one folder, a way to be reached, clean clothes and a way to get there, and the habit of arriving early and communicating before a lateness, not after. Prepare the night before; that habit alone rebuilds a reputation.
- **Employment readiness: name what you can do.** A short, honest list of what a person can do — tasks, skills, experience, willingness — written down, practiced aloud in general terms, and kept where it can be used for an application or a conversation. No participant is asked to perform their history for the room.
- **Steps, dated, one at a time.** Housing and work each get three dated steps — gather, ask, follow up — small enough to finish this week. A step without a date is a wish; this group writes dates.

Discussion prompts

- "What is one housing or work step you have already finished — and what made it possible?"
- "What gets in the way most often: missing documents, no way to be reached, transport, or something else?"
- "What is one thing you can do, honestly and plainly, that an employer or landlord would value?"
- "Who on staff or in your supports can help with one step this week — and what exactly will you ask them?"

Practice — my housing and work steps (10 minutes, your page stays with you)

1. Choose housing or work — the one that needs a step this week. Write which one and why.
2. Write three steps for it — gather, ask, follow up — each small enough to finish, with the day you will do each one.
3. Write what you need for step one: the document, the number, the ride, the person to ask.
4. Name the obstacle most likely to appear and your if–then plan for it: "If ___ happens, then I will ___."
5. Keep your page. It is yours. Nothing written in this practice is collected, copied, or kept by the facilitator or the program.

Facilitator boundaries — Life Skills for Stability

- **Planning, not placement.** Facilitators teach readiness and planning. They do not find housing, do not find jobs, do not contact landlords or employers for a client, and do not promise any placement or outcome. Referrals go through program staff.
- **No personal advice on any client's situation.** Facilitators do not advise on any individual's housing, benefits, legal, or employment matter. Questions about a client's own situation go to program staff and the client's own contacts.

- **No one shares their situation aloud.** No participant is asked to share housing status, income, benefits, or work history in group. General answers are complete answers.
- **Warrior close:** Close with the steps dated: “A place that stays and work that keeps are built one dated step at a time — gather, ask, follow up. That is how warriors hold ground: by building the ground they will stand on.”

Sources & Evidence

Clinical evidence: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. SAMHSA's working definition of recovery and its four major dimensions — health, home, purpose, and community — which frame housing and purposeful work as conditions that sustain recovery. This outline applies that framework as group education; it makes no outcome claim and promises no placement.

Recovery-support evidence: Casey Life Skills (Casey Family Programs) — a widely used framework for assessing and building practical life skills, named here as the framework background for the readiness domains covered. Recovery-support application in this packet: peer practice, written weekly steps, and accountability in group. No outcome is promised for this group.

Note: No outcome is promised for any group in this packet.