





# Common Employment Myths


An analysis of workforce data identified a lack of evidence to support several common perceptions about employment in Memphis. Below are several employment myths for the population experiencing poverty:

 MYTH	 FACT
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

 <p><b>Living-wage jobs can be easily obtained with a high school diploma</b></p>	<p>8 in 10 high school graduates do not demonstrate readiness for post-secondary education or a career. In Memphis, a high school diploma does not ensure sufficient math and reading proficiency to pursue the training needed to obtain living-wage jobs.</p>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

 <p><b>Financial assistance for tuition is enough to earn a post-secondary degree</b></p>	<p>Only 1 in 5 tAchieves scholarship recipients in Shelby County graduate community college within three years. While financial assistance for tuition is valuable, numerous incidental expenses can undermine the benefits of tuition support.</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

 <p><b>Professional credentials always improve employment outcomes and earning potential</b></p>	<p>Only 30 percent of industry credentials earned by Tennessee K-12 students are associated with jobs that pay at least \$15 per hour. Credentials are not helpful when they are not aligned with high-wage, high-demand jobs.</p>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

 <p><b>Anyone who wants to work can access the services needed to find a living-wage job</b></p>	<p>The rate of people experiencing poverty who are not working but seeking employment is 50 percent higher in Memphis than Tennessee. Identifying the needed workforce services in accessible locations is frequently insurmountable.</p>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

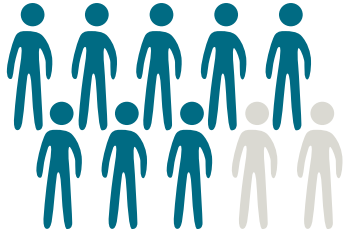
 <p><b>Enhancing public transit will solve the transportation gap for employment</b></p>	<p>Only 1 percent of neighborhoods in Memphis are considered location efficient, i.e., compact, close to jobs and services, with a variety of transportation choices. Greater investments in public transit alone is not sufficient.</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------



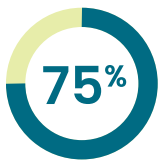
## Employment Myth Fact Sheets



### MYTH: Living-wage jobs can be easily obtained with a high school diploma



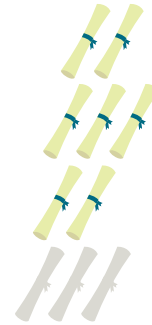
8 in 10 high school graduates do not demonstrate readiness for postsecondary education or a career. In Memphis, a high school diploma does not ensure sufficient math and reading proficiency to pursue the training needed to obtain living-wage jobs.



75 percent of Memphians who are experiencing poverty have at least a high school diploma



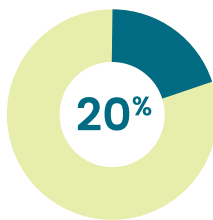
An estimated 60,000 people who are experiencing poverty and have a high school diploma are still in need of academic remediation in order to pursue technical education that leads to living-wage jobs



7 in 10 low-wage workers in Memphis (nearly 150,000 people) have a high school diploma as their highest education completed

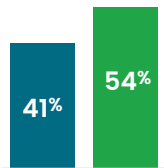


### MYTH: Financial assistance for tuition is enough to earn a postsecondary degree



Did not graduate  
Graduated

Only 1 in 5 tAchieves scholarship recipients in Shelby County graduate community college within three years. While financial assistance for tuition is valuable, numerous incidental expenses can undermine the benefits of tuition support.



Even with a tAchieve scholarship, community college students who are economically disadvantaged do not graduate within six years at the same rate as other students (41 percent versus 54 percent)



Retention after the first year for Tennessee community college students experiencing poverty jumps from 40 percent to 75 percent when they receive coaching and financial support for incidental expenses



Transportation, groceries, and technology are the three most common incidental expenses that impact community college retention in Tennessee



## Employment Myth Fact Sheets



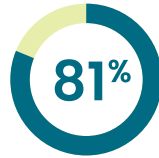
### MYTH: Professional credentials always improve employment outcomes and earning potential



Only 30 percent of industry credentials earned by Tennessee K-12 students are associated with jobs that pay at least \$15 per hour. Credentials are not helpful when they are not aligned with high-wage, high-demand jobs.



Of the Top 10 specific credentials earned by K-12 students in Tennessee, only three are among the Top 10 credentials requested by employers



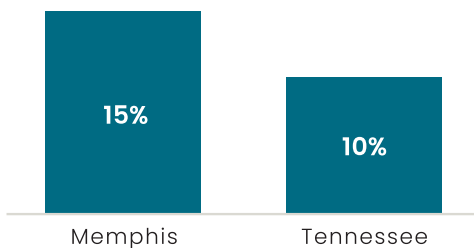
Over 80 percent of credentials earned by Memphis K-12 students as of March of the 2021-2022 academic year do not impact earning potential (OSHA 10: 75 percent; CPR/Basic Life Support: 6 percent)



The most valuable credentials are offered by industry bodies versus educational institutions or employers, include an experiential component, and are aligned with prevalent jobs in the area



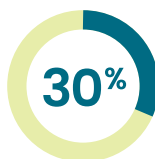
### MYTH: Anyone who wants to work can access the services needed to find a living-wage job



The rate of people experiencing poverty who are not working but seeking employment is 50 percent higher in Memphis than Tennessee. Identifying the needed workforce services in accessible locations is frequently insurmountable.



No zip codes have providers that collectively offer all types of workforce development services, requiring people to travel across the city and to multiple organizations to access different workforce services



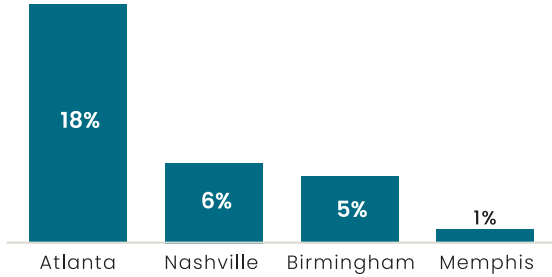
Only 30 percent of workforce development service providers are located in zip codes with an average annual income that is less than \$50,000



Government childcare benefits do not apply to all job training programs, making it challenging for parents experiencing poverty to participate



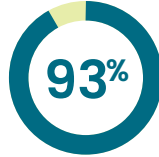
### MYTH: Enhancing public transit will solve the transportation gap for employment



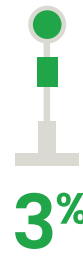
Only 1 percent of neighborhoods in Memphis are considered location efficient, i.e., compact, close to jobs and services, with a variety of transportation choices. Greater investments in public transit alone is not sufficient.



9 out of 10 jobs in Memphis are not accessible via public transit within a 2-hour round trip



93 percent of Memphis neighborhoods have a transit service level score of less than 5 out of 100, based on the number of transit options within walking distance and frequency of service



Just 4,000 people experiencing poverty in Memphis (3 percent) live near bus services that run at least every 15 minutes options within walking distance and frequency of service