

# Homeless Response System Staffing Model

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## What is the HRS staffing theory?

The HRS staffing theory is a collection of frameworks that communities can leverage to help inform building and developing system improvement capacity.

## What does fully staffed look like?

“Fully staffed” will look different for every community in terms of number of staff, the division of responsibilities, where in a community staff are hosted, etc.

The staffing theory proposes a community is “fully staffed” when it can **effectively execute key functions** that are critical for system improvement, regardless of community characteristics.



## The Building Blocks

The HRS staffing theory builds on a number of theories and frameworks. The frameworks used and referenced in the staffing theory are:

- [Build for Zero Theory of Change](#)
- [Collective Impact Framework](#): Collective impact is a network of community members, organizations, and institutions that advance equity by learning together, aligning, and integrating their actions to achieve population and systems-level change.
- [Backbone Functions](#): The functions needed within place-based partnerships to advance outcomes in communities.
- **Job Archetypes**: A collection of ways to organize system improvement activities into tangible job descriptions.
- **System Improvement Competencies**: BfZ-identified knowledge and skills that contribute to successfully executing system improvement work.

# Theories and Frameworks

## How these frameworks relate

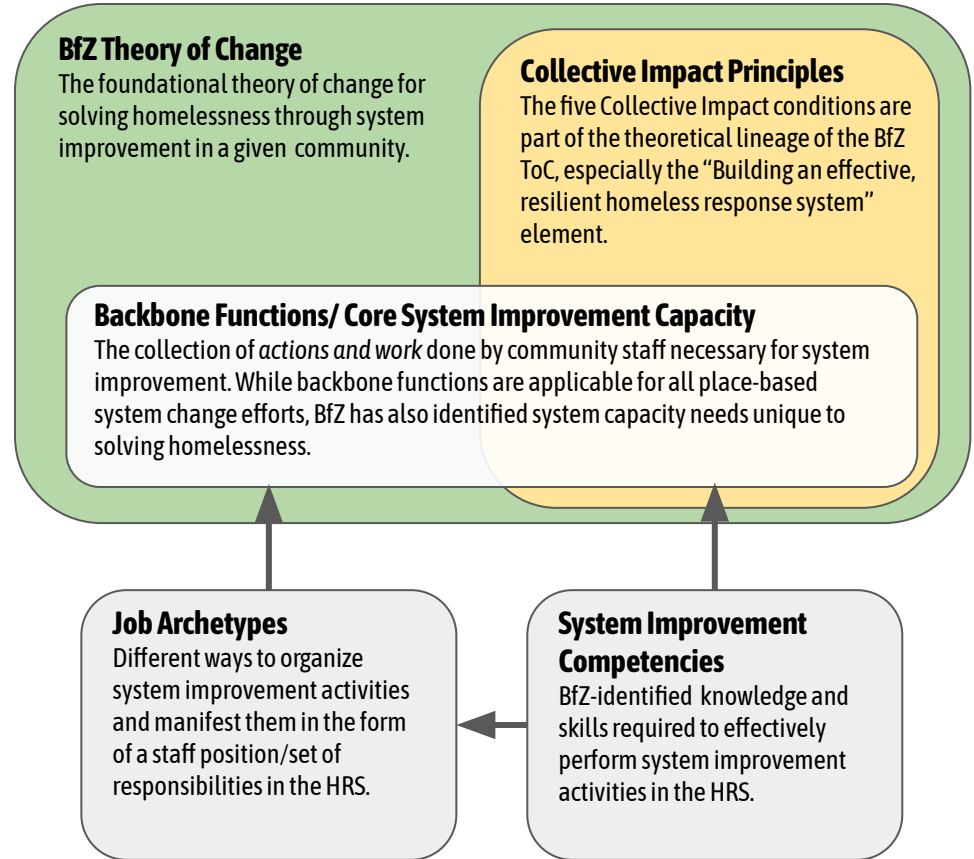
The **BfZ Theory of Change** (ToC) is the foundation of the HRS staffing theory - “fully staffed” is when a community has the capacity and capability to change their systems and move toward ending homelessness.

The BfZ ToC is built directly on **Collective Impact Principles**, especially in the “Building an effective, resilient HRS” section.

Both the BfZ ToC and Collective Impact Principles identify **key system level functions** a community must be able to execute in the form of the BfZ ToC “Set Foundations” and “New Ways of Working” elements and Collective Impact “Backbone Functions.” Again, the BfZ ToC draws heavily from Collective Impact here.

The **Job Archetypes** are a collection of ways to organize key system improvement capacity into staffed positions.

The **System Improvement Competencies** are the knowledge and skills necessary to execute those key system improvement functions and job archetypes.

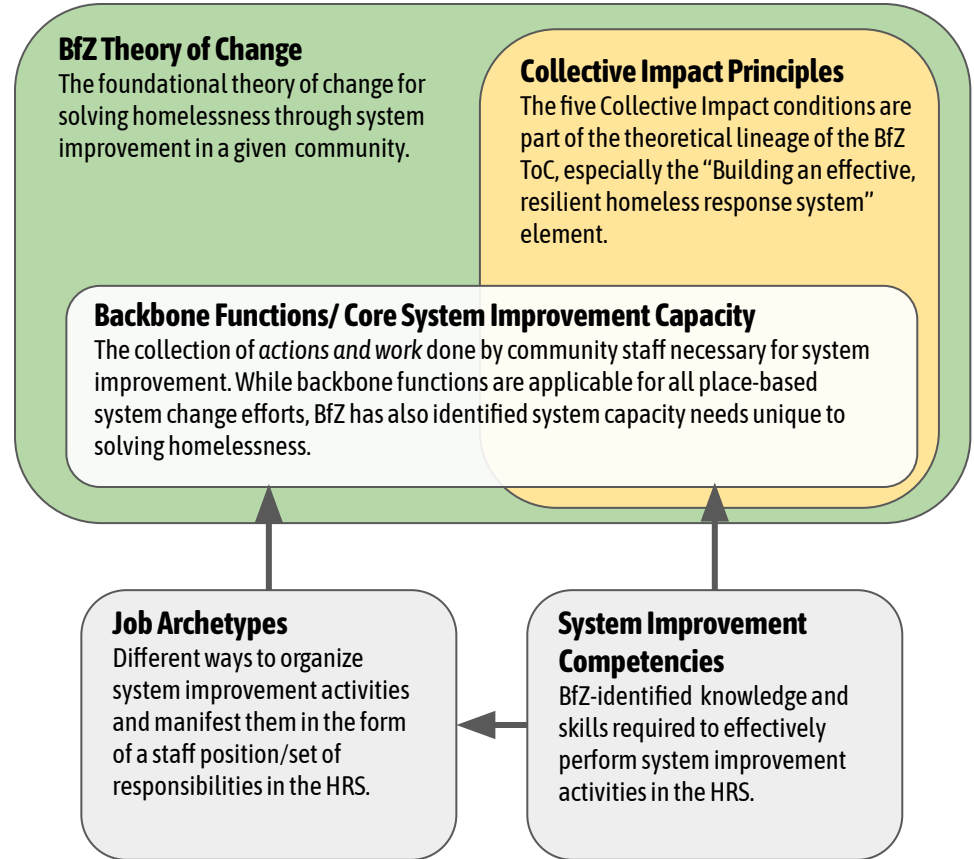


## Why understanding the relationships between frameworks matters

Frameworks represent theories that can be tested and iterated on.

Defining the relationships between frameworks allows for **critical analysis** of those theories and allows us to identify their strengths and weaknesses.

Critical analysis of the relationships between frameworks forces questions about the validity and utility of both theories.



## Backbone Functions

A community effectively executing backbone functions is one way to define “fully staffed” in the HRS staffing theory. A community that can execute on these functions has the necessary capacity to sustainably improve their systems:

- Community Engagement and Network Building
- Visioning and Goal Setting
- Partnership Coordination and Communications
- Fund Development and Resource Alignment
- Measuring Community-Level Impact
- Building Partner Capacity
- Organizing and Advocacy for Systems Change

## Resources

- [Nonprofit Finance Fund: How Place-based Partnerships Can Improve Communities](#)
- [Backbone 101](#)
- [BfZ System Leader Hiring Guide](#)
- [System-Level Functions and Capacity Assessment](#)

## Job Archetypes

These job archetypes are one way to operationalize system improvement activities into staff positions. These job archetypes were derived through conversations with BfZ coaches.

## Core System Positions

- [System Coordinator](#) - Leads system improvement practices and embeds it into community ways of working.
- [Data Lead](#) - Creates quality data infrastructure, policies, and procedures and fosters community data culture.

## Specialized System Positions

- [Housing System Coordinator](#) - Establishes a centralized housing system and incorporates it into community strategy.
- [Lived Experience Engagement Coordinator](#) - Ensures PWLEH input is systematically leveraged in decision-making.
- [Health and Homelessness Coordinator](#) - Builds streamlined hand-off systems between healthcare and the HRS.
- [Place-Based Coach](#) - Acts as a local improvement advisor for a geographic region.

## System Improvement Competencies

These competencies are the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to successfully execute system improvement functions and job archetypes.

The HRS staffing theory categorizes them as:

- Improvement Science Foundations
- Project Management
- Facilitation and Relationship-Building
- Human-Centered Design
- Data for Analysis and Data for Improvement
- Built for Zero Methodology
- Community Knowledge
- Role-Specific Knowledge

## Resources

- [DRAFT System Leader Competency Definitions](#)
- [System Leader Competency Focus Group Synthesis](#)
- [Rapid Cycle Training FAQ](#)



## What's next? What are open questions about the HRS staffing theory?

- What is the overlap between what BfZ has identified as the system improvement capacity needed to solve homelessness and Collective Impact backbone functions? What capacity is uniquely necessary for solving homelessness? What implications does the overlap between the two frameworks have on how we coach communities?
- What are the circumstances where the “Job Archetype” approach of packaging system improvement activities is most appropriate? What about the backbone approach? What are other ways to effectively distribute system improvement responsibilities?

