



Promoting Increased Competitive and Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities

Jamie Kendall, Center for Disability and Aging Policy

September 18, 2014



Session Overview

- ACL Employment priorities, policies and initiatives
 - Federal Partners in Transition Workgroup
 - Collaboration with federal partners
- AIDD Partnerships in Employment (PIE) Grants and Communities of Practice – Employment TA community
- CMS HCBS settings rule and its applicability for employment services and supports: a high level overview of the CMS investment in promoting competitive, integrated employment for people with disabilities and the applicability of the setting rule on employment services and supports

Competitive, Integrated Employment is a Priority

- ***Vision:*** *Individuals with disabilities will not need to choose between health care supports and work to live successfully in the community. All individuals with disabilities will have access to competitive, integrated employment options as a pathway to achieving successful community living.*
- **ACL Goal:** To improve the lives of all individuals with disabilities, ACL will pursue policies that promote improved economic status through employment. ACL will encourage systems that promote competitive integrated employment opportunities, career and skills development, and offer an array of appropriate work supports needed to achieve and maintain employment.

ACL Employment Priorities

- Strengthen the ACL infrastructure focusing on competitive, integrated employment policies and programs.
- Leverage ACL resources and authorities to promote and support competitive, integrated employment, career planning and earnings for individuals with disabilities.
- Strengthen and maintain ACL collaboration with federal partners to promote successful employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.
- Strengthen and maintain ACL collaboration with external stakeholders to promote successful employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities

Federal Partners in Transition (FPT)

- The Federal Partners in Transition (the FPT) was formed in 2005 to improve interagency policy and service coordination to support all youth, including youth with disabilities, in successfully transitioning from school to adulthood.
- The partnership is led by Assistant Secy Kathy Martinez for the Office of Disability Employment Policy at DOL, Acting Assistant Secy Michael K. Yudin for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services at the Dept of Education, who serve as its co-chairs.
- In February 2013, the FPT formed a Strategic Planning Committee comprised of career and senior executive staff from the Department of Education, HHS, Department of Labor, and SSA to develop a federal interagency strategy - the 2020 Federal Youth Transition Plan (the Plan) - to improve transition outcomes for youth with disabilities.
- The FPT 2020 Plan outlines how the FPT will enhance interagency coordination through the identification of compatible outcome goals and policy priorities, ultimately leading to improved outcomes for youth with disabilities by 2020.

Curb Cuts to the Middle Class Initiative

- cross-agency group, including the Departments of Education, Labor, Justice, HHS, VA, SBA, SSA, EEOC, and OPM, will work together, via the Curb Cuts to the Middle Class Initiative, to form bridges across government programs serving people with disabilities at the state and federal levels to ensure that those programs result in good jobs for people with disabilities.
- The Vice President's report, ^{*}*Ready to Work: Job-Driven Training and American Opportunity*, which was released in July 2014, highlighted the efforts of the Curb Cuts to the Middle Class Initiative ("Curb Cuts Initiative"), a cross agency effort working to increase equal employment opportunities and financial independence for people with disabilities, with a particular emphasis on people with significant disabilities.
- Curb cuts in the streets, together with similar modifications in buildings, transportation and telecommunications, have helped make America a more accessible and fairer nation. The Curb Cuts to the Middle Class Initiative brings the same ingenuity and commonsense solutions to ensure that workers with disabilities, like all Americans, have the opportunity to obtain and succeed in good jobs and careers.

Curb Cuts to the Middle Class Initiative

- The new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) places significant new responsibilities on several Cabinet-level agencies that have the responsibility for enhancing the employment of people with disabilities, in particular the Department of Labor and the Department of Education. These agencies will take the primary lead in furthering various initiatives within their departments designed to advance employment opportunities for people with disabilities

Competitive Employment Workgroup (CEWG)

- Cross agency effort
- Focus is Competitive Integrated Employment
- Run out of DOJ – Olmstead Focused
- Looking at blending and braiding of funds

Contact information

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Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) Employment Initiatives

Partnerships in Employment Systems Change
(PIE)

Community of Practice (CoP) for Supporting Competitive
Integrated Employment

Larissa R. Crossen, M.Ed.

September 18, 2014



AIDD's Employment Initiatives

AIDD currently funds two employment initiatives that help improve employment outcomes for individuals with I/DD. Funded under AIDD's Projects of National Significance, these initiatives are part of AIDD's priority to promote Employment First for individuals with I/DD, which refers to the idea that community-based, integrated employment is the first and preferred option for individuals with disabilities.



Partnerships in Employment System Change (PIE)

AIDD awarded funding to six grantees in 2011 and provided funding to two additional entities in 2012.

Under this initiative, AIDD is enhancing collaboration across state systems to improve employment outcomes for individuals with I/DD, with a focus on youth and young adults. Grantees have established partnerships to improve state service systems by encouraging states to adopt an Employment First approach for individuals with I/DD.

PIE Initiative

2011 Funded States

1. California
2. Iowa
3. Mississippi
4. Missouri
5. New York
6. Wisconsin

2012 Funded States

7. Alaska
8. Tennessee

Outcomes of PIE States

Alaska

- Unanimous passage of Employment First Legislation (cross disability) for the State of Alaska.
- Close collaboration with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and advocating for focus on employment for beneficiaries. As of September 2013, the Trust determined employment as a significant area of need and agreed to invest over a million dollars a year for the next five years in bettering employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

Outcomes of PIE States cont'd

California

- Passage of Employment First Legislation
- No more subminimum wage by California Department of Education's Workability Program for Transition Age Youth

Iowa

- Rate restructuring work that will align with integrated, competitive employment services
- Cross agency workgroup to develop a state data dashboard related to employment

Outcomes of PIE States cont'd

Mississippi

- Mississippi's Governor Executive Order 1335 (January 14, 2014) based on philosophy of Employment First. Signed on "Employment First Day at the Capitol."
- Collaboration of MS Department of Employment Security and MS Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS) leading to the existence of a MOU between the two agencies

Outcomes of PIE States cont'd

Missouri

- Increase in Business Partnerships and number of businesses providing employment opportunities for youth and young adults with I/DD.
- Development of a set of cross systems Guiding Principles with related system and community evaluation components.

New York

- Earlier engagement with VR in schools
- Office of Special Education rolls out work-readiness focused certificate for students exiting with IEPs

Outcomes of PIE States cont'd

Tennessee

- **Legislative and Policy Changes to Increase Funding Streams:**
 - Passing the STEP Up Legislation in 2013 to allow access to financial assistance through lottery scholarship funds for youth with disabilities to post-secondary education programs**
 - Passing the STEP Up Amendment in 2014 to allow second-year students to receive the funding for their program**
 - Providing transitional financial assistance through Vocational Rehabilitation for students eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation and participating in Postsecondary Alliance programs in TN (effective July 2014)**

Outcomes of PIE States cont'd

Wisconsin

- **Governor's Year of the Better Bottom Line initiative:**
 - **Included grants to businesses to encourage them to hire and train workers with disabilities**
 - **Called out inclusion of youth with disabilities in grants for Youth Apprenticeships**
 - **Expanded Project Search to 20 new sites over the next 2 years**
 - **Governor personally announced his interest in more funding for Think College activities.**

CoP for Supporting Competitive Integrated Employment

In 2012, AIDD awarded funding to the Institute of Community Inclusion (ICI) at the University of Massachusetts Boston to establish a community of Practice comprised of 7 states. A community of practice is a group of people who share the same interest and collaborate consistently to share ideas and discuss solutions to challenges. The current CoP states are (KY, ID, ND, MD, MN, DC and NH).

CoP for Supporting Competitive Integrated Employment Cont'd

Goals of the CoP include:

- Identifying emerging and promising practices across States.
- Developing ideas to address challenges and opportunities to improve strategies, policies, practices, and systems supporting competitive/integrated employment for persons with I/DD.
- Providing peer to peer technical assistance.
- Promoting interagency collaboration and partnership.

*Administration for Community Living
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