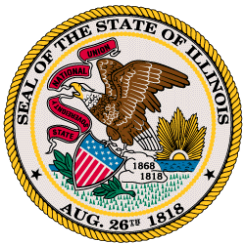
Report from the Employment First Summit

January 31, 2012

Supported By

Illinois' Employment and Economic Opportunity for People with Disabilities Task Force

Office of Governor Pat Quinn



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Employment First Summit Report
Executive Summary

In August 2009, the Illinois legislature established the Employment and Economic Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities Task Force. This task force was established in response to the chronic low employment rate of people with disabilities in Illinois, and the lack of progress in increasing the workforce participation of people with disabilities.

In January 2011, the Task Force submitted its annual report to the Governor and Legislature, and that report included a recommendation that Illinois become an Employment First state – i.e., that employment in the community be the first and preferred option for individuals with disabilities receiving publicly funded services in Illinois. To enact this recommendation, the Task Force developed plans for an Employment First Summit. The invitation-only Summit was held on January 31, 2012 and included a cross-section of individuals with disabilities, family members policymakers, advocates, disability professionals, and educators. This report summarizes the findings from the summit, and lays out a series of recommendations for turning the vision of Employment First discussed at the summit into reality. This *Executive Summary* contains a summary of the recommendations developed as a result of the summit, while the *Full Report* contains much greater detail on these recommendations, along with extensive documentation of the proceedings, links to a wide array of resources within the text, and an extensive series of resources in the appendix.

Employment of People With Disabilities In Illinois: Current Status

In many ways, the challenges of employment of people with disabilities in Illinois are a microcosm of the challenges of workforce participation of people with disabilities nationally. Per US Census data, while 69% of all adults in Illinois participate in the workforce, only 35% of adults with disabilities participate. Workforce participation for adults with cognitive disabilities is even lower, standing at 25%. These figures are reflective of similar trends nationally.

The data clearly show there are areas of significant needs in terms of employment services and supports for people with disabilities, making the case for fundamental changes to increase the workforce participation of individuals with disabilities in Illinois. The data also show inconsistencies within specific state public systems in Illinois that assist and support individuals with disabilities, and indicate areas of need in terms of focus within specific service systems. At the same time there are pockets of success that can be built upon as Illinois moves forward to embrace Employment First and improve the lives of its citizens with disabilities through full workforce participation.

Employment First Strategic Plan: Areas of Focus
One of the core goals of the Employment First Summit was to develop the basis of an Employment First Strategic Plan for Illinois. The following seven areas were identified to form the basis of this plan.

1. Public agency systems change and policy
2. Data measurement, evaluation, accountability
3. Service and support capacity/development
4. Funding – paying for what we want, creating incentives
5. Transition, post-secondary education, career advancement
6. Family and individual awareness/expectations
7. Business and community development

1) PUBLIC AGENCY SYSTEMS CHANGE AND POLICY
For Illinois citizens with disabilities, there are a number of public agencies that assist and support them with their needs. These include:

- **Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)** – Department of Human Services
- **Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)** – Department of Human Services
- **Division of Mental Health (DMH)** – Department of Human Services
- **Workforce Development** - Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) & Department of Employment Security (IDES)
- **Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)**

In addition, there are federal agencies such as Veterans Affairs, and the Social Security Administration (SSA). Forward progress on implementation of an Employment First agenda will require that the resources of these agencies be used in different ways, and that the services and supports they provide be in synch with Employment First.

Consider issuing an Employment First Policy: To set the stage for Employment First effort and the systems change effort that will be necessary, Illinois should consider issuing an Employment First policy via policy directive, legislation, or similar mechanism, which is cross-disability and applies across state agencies. Such a policy, that clearly defines Employment First, will ensure that the vision regarding the direction in the use of public resources to support Illinois citizens with disabilities is both clearly understood and supported at the highest levels of government.

Additional recommendations: Additional specific recommendations in regard to public agency systems change and policy include:

- Defining the "Service System" and current structure, by creating a matrix of the current service system, in terms of agencies, number of individuals served, funding, services provided, etc.
- Cross-agency buy-in and support of Employment First through development of an ongoing integrated planning process, and development of specific policies within each agency that reinforce and actualize the principles of Employment First.
- Creation of a seamless, user-friendly system, through: a) Increased seamlessness with DRS, DDD, DMH; b) Creation of a common intake system; c) Exploration of a common case management/data system; d) Exploring the use of a common identifier for all individuals served; e) Creation of an on-line service portal.

- Creation of a cross-agency coordinator role in the Governor's office, to act as a linkage across systems.
- Examine experiences of other states that have experienced success in increasing the workforce participation of individuals with disabilities through public agency systems change for "lessons learned" that can be applied in Illinois.

2) DATA MEASUREMENT, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY

Having strong data systems is a critical component in terms of understanding and analyzing system performance, and ensuring accountability. The following are recommendations in terms of strengthening the current data systems in Illinois that track employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

- Identify the current data collected on employment of people with disabilities in Illinois and make an effort to consolidate it.
- Create an improved employment data collection system to better track outcomes and processes, using the current data systems as a basis.
- Create systems for making data publicly available as a key piece of understanding performance and ensuring accountability.
- Use data as a management and accountability tool through development of training, tools, and mechanisms so that system staff, service providers, and individuals with disabilities have a high level of access to data, understand how to best utilize data for monitoring of services on an individual job seeker and programmatic level, and also identify areas for improvement on an individual service delivery and programmatic level.
- Identify opportunities for taking advantage of today's technology for data collection, reporting, and analysis including the use of the World Wide Web for collection and reporting of data, as well as the use of Smart Phone Apps, and similar technology advancements.
- Identify examples from other states of states with strong data systems that can be learned from.

3) SERVICE AND SUPPORT CAPACITY/DEVELOPMENT

Having a strong service system that is capable of consistently providing high quality employment assistance and supports is critical to realizing the vision of Employment First. Specific recommendations for improving the capacity of the service system are the following:

- Creation of staff competency standards for staff providing employment services and supports in Illinois.
- Providing resources for ongoing staff training and development and ensure that the training received by staff is linked with competency standards for staff.
- Ensure organizational capacity and competency through development of standards for employment programs that are in line with Employment First principles, and incorporate these standards within contracting, program monitoring, and quality assurance mechanisms.
- Encourage service providers to make internal shifts in terms of their organizational focus, through the availability of technical assistance, and access to information on organizational transformation.
- Transform service models from a Monday to Friday/9 to 3 service model, through:
  a) development of strategies for addressing of the "day custody" issue – i.e., what individuals will do with their time when they are not working, particularly individuals who need some

level of supervision, while avoiding having facility-based services as the de facto answer; b) development of service models that are flexible in their ability to provide supports during the wide variety of hours that individuals may work.

- Undertake methods for greater utilization of the resources of the workforce development system available to all job seekers, through creating greater awareness among service providers and individuals with disabilities regarding the system's resources and exploration of options for leveraging and enhancing collaboration between the workforce development system and disability service systems and providers.
- Enhance awareness of and access to existing resources in Illinois and nationally, such as those focused on assistive technology, transportation, etc.
- Address issues related to the perception of benefits as a barrier to employment, through ensuring there are consistent, clear, and accurate messages regarding benefits, increasing the knowledge base of all staff regarding benefits, and increasing the availability of benefits assistance.
- Individuals with disabilities from diverse backgrounds are often under-served, and as part of general capacity building, it is recommended that efforts be made to increase the capacity to meet the needs of individuals from diverse racial, ethnic, and linguistic cultures.
- Develop service provider networks for exchange of ideas, sharing of information, and provision of mutual support.

4) FUNDING – PAYING FOR WHAT WE WANT, CREATING INCENTIVES

As funding is a primary driver of service system outcomes, the vision of Employment First cannot be achieved without a funding structure that provides sufficient resources and incentives for delivery of quality services, focused on achieving integrated community employment. To achieve this objective, the following strategies are recommended:

- Redesign existing service provider funding, with the following elements: a) Funding rates, based on real costs and achieving outcomes, and not based solely based on consumer contact hours and/or maximizing billable hours; b) Funding rates that reward service providers for efficient and effective use of resources, including job searches that occur at a reasonable pace and result in long-term job retention; c) Incentives for maximizing the income and number of hours that an individual works; d) A funding system that encourages and maximizes the use of natural and community supports, and minimizes over-reliance on professional staff; e) A funding system that ensures a balance between quantity and quality of outcomes; f) Funding rates that ensure that the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities can be met.
- Make changes in Medicaid funding through revamping of existing waivers, to increase hourly reimbursement rates, and provide greater incentives for community employment.
- Improve transition between funding sources, particularly between DRS and long-term support agencies, through the development of guidelines and parameters so there is clarity regarding the responsibilities of the various agencies and service providers.
- Examine the use of education funding to determine how such funding can be better utilized to support employment experiences for students who are still in school, and ensure a smooth transition from school-based funding to adult service funding as necessary.
- Determine the true costs of employment services to ensure that rates are set in a way that allows service providers to focus on employment in the community, provides the necessary

resources for fiscal viability of service providers, and allows individuals to have a choice regarding providers.

- Explore increased opportunities for more self-directed funding options that put more control and discretion on the use of funds in the hands of individuals and families.
- Increase use of Social Security funding options including Ticket to Work, PASS, IRWE, etc.
- Create mechanisms for stronger coordination among funding streams on an individual, service provider, and systems level, and greater monitoring of the various funding streams being utilized.
- To increase support for Employment First efforts, make the case for the cost effectiveness of employment services and supports to legislators, policymakers, and the general public.
- Consult with other states regarding how they have designed their funding systems in a way that creates incentives and supports enhanced community employment outcomes.

5) TRANSITION, POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Key to moving forward on Employment First, is ensuring that every student with a disability has typical teenage employment experiences, and is properly prepared for employment as an adult, while decreasing the use of facility-based services as a accepted outcome of transition. The following recommendations are steps for moving forward towards achieving these objectives.

- Through education and training, ensure that parents are aware of their rights in terms of transition, and how to develop effective IEP goals in terms of their teen's transition.
- Create an expectation early on among young people, parents, and educators, that when students with disabilities leave school they will have jobs, and work and live in the community like all other citizens.
- Develop curricula for teachers and parents that emphasize evidence based, transition practices that lead to employment.
- Consider revisiting Illinois Administrative Code Part 226 and other ISBE rules on transition, to determine if they need to be strengthened in terms of transition and employment.
- Consider policies that make it clear that employment in the community is the expected outcome of transition, and that prohibit or discourage the use of facility-based services during transition or as an outcome.
- Undertake efforts to expand the use of Transition Coordinator positions within school districts throughout the state.
- Integrate students with disabilities in existing career and technical education programs, career exploration, employment and internship options that are available to all students, and use the disability support services to assist in their participation.
- Explore how individuals with significant disabilities can become more integrated within vocational and technical schools.
- Encourage stronger use of post-secondary settings, and use of service learning leading to employment as part of the transition experience.
- Enhance the tracking system for students in transition, in order to properly monitor services, as well as evaluate employment outcomes.

6) FAMILY AND INDIVIDUAL AWARENESS/EXPECTATIONS

Changing family and individual awareness and expectations regarding employment is a critical component of Employment First. The following are recommendations for ensuring that individuals and families are receiving consistent pro-employment messages.

- Identify avenues for information sharing that are trusted sources, through mapping out the full range of entities that serve as information and communication mechanisms for individuals and families, including: general disability advocacy groups, disability specific advocacy groups schools, health care workers, service providers, parent and family networks.
- Create messages that include the following elements: a) The efforts of Illinois regarding Employment First; b) A clear basic message that individuals with disabilities are capable of working in the community; c) Expectations that individuals with disabilities can work successfully and have careers like anyone else; d) Understanding that the shift in Illinois is part of a national movement to community employment; e) The financial and non-financial benefits of employment; f) That public benefits are not a barrier to employment; f) Information on employment rights and responsibilities; g) Information on best practices in transition leading to employment outcomes, h) Understanding service options and funding sources.
- Catalog examples of existing employment-related materials for individuals and families, to determine if they are useful as is, or can be utilized as a basis for creating materials.
- Use of peer-to-peer networks of individuals and families to share information and a pro-employment message.
- In awareness and communication, consider cross-cultural issues in terms of materials development and outreach.

7) BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

It is not possible to fulfill the vision of Employment First without the willingness of employers to hire individuals with disabilities. The following are strategies for strengthening relationships with employers and the business community in ways that increase hiring of individuals with disabilities, with a focus on a "one job - one jobseeker" at a time approach.

a) Develop opportunities for ongoing dialogue between the business community and service providers
b) Work to ensure access by disability service providers and job seekers with disabilities on access to labor market information (LMI) in a way that promotes general understanding regarding the diversity of the labor market, as well as an ability to use LMI to meet the needs of individual job seekers.
c) Develop partnerships with workforce development and economic development to ensure that individuals with disabilities are included in employer initiatives and business start-ups.
d) Consider the development of regional job developer networking groups for peer support, and more coordinated efforts regarding job development.
e) Develop strategies to increase public employment at the federal, state, and local government level.
f) Develop strategies to ensure that self-employment is a viable option for more individuals with disabilities, with a focus in part on use of existing resources available from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and other sources to assist any entrepreneur.

g) Ensure that programs and staff are well versed in strategies for job creation and job carving, rather than simply focusing on existing job openings.

In addition to strategies for increasing engagement of employers, Employment First efforts should also focus on community development, to address such areas as transportation issues. Other options for engaging community resources in support of Employment First should be considered, such as civic groups, community colleges, anti-poverty programs, community-based minority organizations, etc. to gain their support for increasing the workforce participation of Illinois citizens with disabilities forward.

Next Steps

The Employment First Summit created a strong beginning and basis to build from. At the summit, the following were the next steps identified for moving forward on realizing the vision of Employment First.

- Forming of work groups around the seven areas identified. These work groups will take the initial framework developed for each of these issues, and from there create a more detailed work plan for addressing each of these areas, and then work on implementation of that plan.
- An electronic communication mechanism will be set up through a message board, list serv, or social networking platform, and also potentially an on-line project management platform.
- Determination of the mechanism for oversight and coordination of efforts, and the role of the Employment and Economic Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities Task Force in the management and coordination of the various work groups efforts.

Conclusion

Gerry Provencal, a long-time advocate for individuals with disabilities once stated, *"We're far too patient with the passage of time for people with disabilities. Time is as precious for a person with a disability as it is for all of us."* The Employment First movement in Illinois and nationally recognizes that is time for all of us to stop being patient and to create a sense of urgency in terms of ensuring that people with disability have the same employment opportunities as all other citizens. The time has come for our society to welcome people with disabilities into the economic mainstream with real jobs and real wages, that allow them to be full participants in our society with the same opportunities as all other Americans.

Employment First Resources:

- APSE Statement on Employment First – www.apse.org
- APSE White Paper - Establishing a National Employment First Agenda – www.apse.org
- SELN Employment First Resource List – www.seln.org

"It is nearly impossible to make your own future, when you are not part of the economic fabric of the culture you live in." – Patricia Deegan

Illinois Employment First Summit
Full Report

Background and Overview

In August 2009, the Illinois legislature established the Employment and Economic Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities Task Force. This task force was established in response to the chronic low employment rate of people with disabilities in Illinois, and the lack of progress in increasing the workforce participation of people with disabilities, despite the expenditure of millions of dollars in federal and state funds on an annual basis on employment-related services. The Task Force was given the following responsibilities:

- Analyze programs and policies of the State to determine what changes, modifications, and innovations may be necessary to remove barriers to competitive employment and economic opportunity for persons with disabilities, including barriers such as transportation, housing, program accessibility, and benefit structure.
- Analyze State disability systems, including the mental health, developmental disabilities, veterans' assistance, workforce investment, and rehabilitation services systems, and their effect on employment of persons with disabilities.
- Review and analyze applicable research and policy studies, innovations used in other states, and any federal policy initiatives such as customized employment, and federal funding opportunities that would increase competitive employment and economic opportunity for persons with disabilities in Illinois.
- Make recommendations to the General Assembly and to the Governor, including legislative proposals, regulatory changes, systems changes, and budget initiatives, which would advance employment and economic opportunity for persons with disabilities in Illinois.
- Produce an annual report of its activities and recommendations that shall be issued no later than May 1st of each year, the first report being due no later than May 1, 2010.

In January 2011, the Task Force submitted its annual report to the Governor and Legislature, and that report included a recommendation that Illinois become an Employment First state. To enact this recommendation, the Task Force developed plans for an Employment First Summit, to discuss how Illinois can move forward in becoming an Employment First state, and to begin developing the initial stages of an Employment First strategic plan.

The Employment First Summit

On January 31, 2012 a cross-section of individuals with disabilities, family members policymakers, advocates, disability professionals, educators, participated in an invitation-only Employment First Summit at the Governor's Mansion, in Springfield. The purpose of this event was to lay the groundwork for Illinois to join the growing national Employment First movement.

David Hoff of the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston facilitated the event, assisted by Wendy Parent of the Kansas University Center on Developmental Disabilities, and Bob Niemiec of Griffin-Hammis Associates. Materials from the event are attached in as appendices to this report, including the agenda, a list of attendees, and documentation of the proceedings.

The Employment First Summit consisted of three parts:

A. A presentation that provided an overview of Employment First and the current status of employment of people with disabilities in Illinois. A copy of this PowerPoint is contained in Appendix E.
B. A small group brainstorming exercise to both identify core issues, and begin the development of networks among the attendees using the "World Café" format (documentation of the results of this exercise is contained in Appendix A).
C. A small group strategic planning effort, focused on areas that resulted from the earlier discussions. Results of this exercise were then reported out to the larger group (documentation of this planning is contained in Appendix B).

The Report from the Employment First Summit

This report has been prepared as an outcome of the event, in order to serve a number of purposes:

- Provide a summary of the proceedings and action steps identified at the Employment First Summit.
- Identify potential next steps as a result of the summit.
- Expand on the discussions from the Employment First Summit and identify potential areas for consideration as Illinois works to make Employment First a reality.
- Provide links to various resources that can assist Illinois in its Employment First efforts, both within the text of this report, and in the Appendix.

The basis for the narrative of this report are the thoughts and ideas shared and discussed during the summit that have been expanded on in order to serve as the basis of a blueprint for a comprehensive and long-term strategic plan to increase the workforce participation of people with disabilities in Illinois.

Employment First in Illinois - Background

In many ways, the challenges of employment of people with disabilities in Illinois are a microcosm of the challenges of workforce participation of people with disabilities nationally. Per US Census data, while 69% of all adults in Illinois participate in the workforce, only 35% of adults with disabilities participate. Workforce participation for adults with cognitive disabilities is even lower, standing at 25%. These figures are reflective of similar trends nationally. While it may be somewhat encouraging that Illinois is not doing any worse than the national average in terms of workforce participation, the low workforce participation rate of people with disabilities nationally has been increasingly recognized as a major national social issue that needs to be addressed. In signing the Executive Order creating the *Presidential Taskforce on Employment of People with Disabilities* in 1998, President Clinton established a national goal of increasing employment of adults with disabilities to a rate that is as close as possible to the employment rate of the general adult population. In the years since, a multitude of efforts focused both on policy

and practice have been undertaken to make this goal a reality. Examples include enhancements of Social Security Work incentives, encouragement of states to establish Medicaid Buy-In programs, establishment of the Ticket to Work program, eliminating sheltered work as a successful closure for public Vocational Rehabilitation, and others. Despite these efforts, while the examples of individuals with even the most significant support needs working successfully in the community have continued to grow, from a statistical standpoint, there has been little progress in the level of workforce participation of adults with disabilities both nationally and in Illinois.

The Emergence of Employment First

Partially in response to this lack of progress, there has been a growing movement over the last several years, known as "Employment First". At its core, Employment First is essentially a simple concept: that employment in the general workforce should be the first option considered for individuals with disabilities. In terms of practical implementation, the concept of Employment First essentially means that when an individual with a disability is going to receive some type of assistance and support from a public agency, that employment in the general workforce should be the initial focus and first option considered, before considering alternatives (e.g., sheltered workshop, day habilitation, facility-based day program, non-work in the community, etc.). Under Employment First, employment in the general workforce is no longer just among a series of options available to the individual, but rather is the preferred option. There are currently over 30 states that have some form of an Employment First movement under way, and at least 18 states have Employment First as an official public policy as a result of legislation or policy directive. In some cases, these Employment First policies have focused on all individuals with disabilities while in others, these policies have been focused on a subset of individuals with disabilities (e.g., a policy directive from a state Division of Developmental Disabilities). Appendix D continues a listing and links to many of these policies.

In July 2008, the Strategic Planning Leadership Committee of the Illinois Comprehensive Employment Opportunity Medicaid Infrastructure Grant adopted the following vision statement:

> *Every individual will be able to use their abilities in a job where they make a meaningful contribution to their employer and community, secure a financial future, and where employers will be able to use the talents and abilities of all employees.*

Employment First is intended to make that vision a reality, by setting a clear priority in terms of the services and supports for the citizens of Illinois with disabilities. The "Illinois Strategic Plan to Reduce/Eliminate Barriers to Employment for People with Disabilities" and subsequent activities of the Illinois CEO-MIG, have created a basis that can now be built upon and expanded by Employment First.

Employment First: Challenges and Opportunities

While Employment First is about setting a clear vision for people with disabilities in terms of both their individual capabilities and the ability of society to embrace and support those capabilities, creating that vision isn't enough. It is critical that all of those involved in employment of people with disabilities – service providers, service systems, policy makers, legislators, educators, and most importantly people with disabilities and their families – understand this vision and support it. Given the multitude of long-term system and societal

factors that have resulted in the low workforce participation level of people with disabilities in Illinois, it's important to recognize that realizing the vision of "Employment First" is a long-term effort, focused on the full array of complexities of services and supports to people with disabilities. There is no "magic bullet" or simple solution, and it is only through a systematic, deliberate approach that significant increases in workforce participation can be realized.

Avoiding Waiting for System to Fix Itself

While implementing Employment First requires this long-term comprehensive approach, at the same time it is essential to avoid a mindset that no progress can be made until the system "fixes things" through changes in policies and undertaking a major overhaul of how resources are allocated. It is important to focus on what can be accomplished in the short-term without a major revamping of policies and procedures, while still working on long-term solutions – essentially practicing Gandhi's mantra that *"Whatever you do may seem insignificant, but it is most important that you do it."* Such an approach is critical for building momentum and serving as a catalyst for change while ensuring long-term sustainability and adoption of Employment First. For example, in terms of resources, there are two fundamental strategies that can be pursued simultaneously:

a) *Creating greater awareness among individuals, families, and service providers of the resources that are available and how they can be utilized.*
b) *Reorganizing and adding to the existing resources.*

While b) typically requires changes in policy and budget allocation that require significant time, strategies that fall under a) can be implemented much more quickly, particularly if a systematic approach is taken in terms of awareness of resources and how they can be utilized.

Changing The Mindset: Embracing Employment First as Part of the Social Model

One of the fundamental challenges of Employment First is the need to make a fundamental shift in mindset regarding people with disabilities and their role in society. The past 30 years have seen the emergence of the social model of people with disabilities that defines disability as a component of the diverse tapestry of society. Under the social model, the challenges faced by people with disabilities arise primarily from social and societal forces rather than the individual's disability in and of itself - and Employment First is very much the epitome of the social model. However, the current service systems and supports are still heavily entrenched in the medical model of disability – a caretaker model, with the notion that disability is something that can be "fixed", that people with disabilities and society are best served by people with disabilities being kept separate from mainstream society, and that a primary response to disability should be acts of charity. It is critical to recognize (despite verbal claims to the contrary) the entrenched nature of the medical model among service providers, service systems, people with disabilities and their families, and society as a whole. While the "mechanics" of implementation of Employment First (e.g., changes in funding, building a stronger knowledge base regarding community employment, etc.) are a major component of this effort, the success or failure of Employment First will hinge on the ability to make a fundamental cultural change in terms of services and supports for people with disabilities. There is clearly a strong inter-relationship between making actual changes and creating that cultural change (and vice versa), but the conscious and often unconscious intransigence in terms of making such a cultural change should not be underestimated. As management guru Peter Drucker once said, *"Culture eats strategy for breakfast."*

A particular view and mindset by both individuals and systems are the result of habits and perspectives built over many years and influenced by a variety of experiences and forces. As such, challenges to a fundamental view and mindset are not necessarily easily embraced, even if there is clear evidence and belief that a different perspective is not only necessary, but also welcome. Ongoing and continuous examples of individuals with disabilities working successfully in the community are critical in creating this fundamental shift in mindset.

Current Status of Employment of People with Disabilities in Illinois

In considering employment of people with disabilities, it is important to recognize that we are talking about a diverse group of individuals with a diversity of needs, which fall along a continuum.

- Individuals who are born with a disability and who have ongoing needs for support and assistance throughout their lives.
- Individuals who acquire a disability at some point in their life, and have ongoing needs for support and assistance.
- Individuals who acquire a disability, need assistance in returning to work and are not in need of ongoing supports.

For those with support needs, the level of support and specifics of those supports vary immensely. As a result, as many of the attendees at the Employment First Summit noted, available supports must be flexible, responsive, and customized to the needs of the individual.

At the summit, a variety of publicly available data were presented, regarding the current status of employment of people with disabilities in Illinois, and the performance of the service systems available to assist them with their employment needs. These data are highlighted below. Much of this data is from the publication StateData: The National Report on Employment Services and Outcomes (Butterworth, Hall, Smith, Migliore, Winsor, Ciulla Timmons, Domin), published by the Institute for Community Inclusion, UMass Boston. This publication contains a national summary of employment services and outcomes as well as a state-by-state breakdown, and additional data for Illinois beyond what was presented here (www.communityinclusion.org/pdf/statedata2010_finaldraft.pdf).

How many individuals in Illinois have a disability?

According to the US Census, based on self-reported data:

- 656,000 individuals in Illinois of working age (ages 16 to 64) have a disability - 7.8% of the population *(US Census ACS, 2009)*.
- 5.9% of the population identified as having a work limitation *(US Census, CPS, 2010)*

While the US Census data is reasonably reliable based on self-report, the number of individuals on Social Security Disability Benefits (SSDI-Social Security Disability Insurance, or SSI-Supplemental Security Income) is a stronger data source, given that qualifying for these benefits requires determination by a third party that an individual cannot work at above the Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) level due to the nature of their disability. (For 2012, the SGA level is $1,110 per month, $1,690 per month for individuals who are blind.) In Illinois in 2010, 427,000 individuals ages 18 to 64 were on SSI, SSDI, or both. This is 5.3% of the Illinois population ages18 to 64, slightly below the national average of 6.1% *(source: Social Security Administration, 2010)*.

How does Illinois compare to the rest of the United States in terms of employment of people with disabilities?
Illinois is essentially reflective of the issue of low workforce participation and high poverty for people with disabilities that exists within the United States, with the rates in Illinois similar to those across the country *(source: US Census ACS, 2009).*

Workforce Participation	Illinois	National
% of All Adults in Workforce	69%	68%
% of All Adults with Any Disability in Workforce	35%	35%
% of Adults with Cognitive Disability in Workforce	25%	24%

Poverty Level	Illinois	National
% of All Adults Below Poverty Line	12%	13%
% of All Adults with Any Disability Below Poverty Line	26%	26%
% of Adults with Cognitive Disability Below Poverty Line	33%	33%

What is the performance of the service system in Illinois? How does it compare to other states?
For Illinois citizens with disabilities, there are a number of public agencies that assist and support them with their needs. These include:

- **Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)** – Department of Human Services
- **Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)** – Department of Human Services
- **Division of Mental Health (DMH)** – Department of Human Services
- **Workforce Development** - Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) & Department of Employment Security (IDES)

A summary of available data from each of these departments is summarized on the following pages.

DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

While state developmental disability agencies nationally have struggled over the last several years to increase the number of individuals served in integrated employment services, Illinois in particular has experienced significant challenges. Data from the Division of Developmental Disabilities show that only 10% of individuals are served in integrated employment services, well below even the modest national average of 20%. Service funding levels clearly mirror these results, as integrated employment receives the lowest level of the three funding categories, with facility-based non-work receiving by far the vast majority of funding.

Illinois DDD – *Total # Served*: 29,000		
	Illinois DDD	**National***
% Individuals - *Integrated Employment**	10%	20%
% Individuals - *Facility Based Work*	17%	27%
% Individuals - *Facility Based Non-Work*	72%	36%

Illinois DDD – *Total Funding*: $276,000,000		
	Illinois DDD	**National****
% of Funding – *Integrated Employment**	6%	12%
% of Funding – *Facility Based Work*	12%	29%
% of Funding – *Facility Based Non-Work*	82%	30%

* Integrated Employment individual and group employment taking place in the community.

**National data includes additional category of Community Based Non-Work, which brings national total to 100%.

Source: ICI Agency National Survey of Day & Employment Services, 2009

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

In terms of closures into employment settings, and rehabilitation rate for all closures with Individual Plans for Employment, the performance of the Illinois Division of Rehabilitation Services is consistent with other agencies nationally in the most recent data available. It should be noted that these rates have shown a downward trend per the expanded data available in the full report from ICI, StateData: The National Report on Employment Services and Outcomes, and that public VR nationally has been under significant pressure to increase its closure rate into employment settings and rehabilitation rate. Also, while the Division of Rehabilitation Services may be consistent with national averages in some categories, it is lagging behind in terms of mean hours worked and earnings. There may be a number of underlying reasons for this (populations served, etc.), but at a minimum it is worthy of further analysis.

Public Vocational Rehabilitation - Illinois Division of Rehabilitation Services (2009) ***Total Closures*: 17,900**		
	Illinois VR	**National**
% of Closures into Employment Setting	30%	30%
Rehabilitation Rate for All Closures with Individual Plan for Employment	57%	56%
Mean Weekly Earnings at Closure	$274	$357
Mean Weekly Hours at Closure	26 hours	31 hours

Source: Rehabilitation Services Administration 911 (RSA-911)

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH

In terms of the Division of Mental Health, 22% of all individuals served in community mental health programs in Illinois are employed, which is slightly above the national average of 19%. However, almost half of the individuals served (48%) are unemployed (i.e., not employed and looking for work), with the other 30% not in the labor force (i.e., not employed and not looking for work). These figures are fairly comparable to the U.S. as a whole. It would be interesting to take a closer look at this data to determine how "Unemployed" is distinguished from "Not in Labor Force" in the collection of data. The bottom line however is that over 75% of people served in the community mental health system are not working, clearing indicating an area of significant need.

Illinois Community Mental Health System Employment Status				
	Individuals Served *	**Employed**	**Unemployed**	**Not in Labor Force**
Age 18 - 20	7,013 – *100%*	1,347 – *19%*	2,610 – *37%*	3,056 – *44%*
Age 21 - 64	95,797 – *100%*	22,064 – *23%*	48,101 – *50%*	25,632 - *27%*

** Includes individuals for whom employment status can be identified*

Community Mental Health System Employment Status ***Illinois Compared to U.S.***						
	Employed		Unemployed		Not In Labor Force	
	Illinois	**U.S.**	**Illinois**	**U.S.**	**Illinois**	**U.S.**
All Ages	22%	19%	48%	53%	30%	28%

Source: SAMHSA Community Mental Health System Reporting System - 2010

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

The workforce development system is the system that offers services to anyone who needs assistance in finding employment. The 2011 Illinois Workforce Development Annual Report reported the performance of the system in terms of meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities. It should be noted that within this report is also significant information on services for people with disabilities provided via the workforce development system.

- **18,695 individuals with disabilities served in FPY '10/SFY '11 Year**
  Of these individuals, 2,894 served under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act

- **Total of 4,386 individuals placed in jobs**

Source: Illinois Workforce Development Annual Report 2011

In looking at the workforce development system in Illinois as compared to others nationally, the best source of data is the Wagner-Peyser Labor Exchange Data, which counts the number of individuals who use the basic, universally accessible services. In terms of percentage of individuals using the system, Illinois has been consistent with the national average. It is presumed that this is a significant undercount of individuals with disabilities using the workforce development system in Illinois and nationally, as many individuals who use the system don't identify as having a disability.

National Comparison - Wagner-Peyser Labor Exchange:
Percent of Individuals Identified as Having a Disability

	2008	2009	2010
Illinois	2.6%	2.7%	2.7%
National	2.6%	2.7%	2.8%

Source: (Hoff, D., Smith, F.) Job Seekers with Disabilities at One-Stop Career Centers: An Examination of Registration for Wagner-Peyser Funded Employment Services, 2002 to 2009; Boston: ICI, UMass

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Under IDEA each state must now collect data under Indicator 14, to determine the post-school outcomes for students with disabilities – students who are no longer in secondary school, and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school. Per the data below, close to 1/3 of students with IEPs were not engaged in any activity 1-year out of high school, which is of obvious concern. The "Some other employment" category is also of potential concern.

It would be useful to conduct secondary analysis on this data to break down outcomes by disability category, to take a closer look at the breakdown of individuals in sheltered work and receiving less than minimum wage (both of which are collected per the survey instrument), and to determine where non-work facility-based programs fall within this data collection. Information on Indicator 14 in Illinois is at: www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/indicator14.htm

Outcome: 1-Year Post High School – 2009-2010	Number	Percentage
Enrolled in higher education	**623**	**29.5%**
Competitively employed	**572**	**27.1%**
Other post-secondary education & training	**160**	**7.6%**
Some other employment*	**108**	**5.1%**
Not engaged in any activity	**651**	**30.7%**

** Sheltered employment appears to be included within the definition of "Some other employment"*

Data Summary:

- For 2009-2010 (the most recent data available) there were 2,114 "respondents" for Indicator 14 (i.e., individuals who left school in 2008-2009 for whom an outcome could be identified).
- **56.6%** were enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.
- **69.3%** were enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.
- **30.7%** were not engaged in any activity.

Types of Disability: Distribution Among Respondents

* Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities – **12.1%**
* Specific Learning Disabilities – **52.4%**
* Emotional Disability – **13.6%**
* Other Health Impairment – **12.6%**
* All Other Disabilities – **9.3%**

Source: Illinois State Board of Education - *State Performance Plan Part B - Years 2005-2012 Revised February 1, 2012*

Overall Data Summary

The data from the various systems clearly indicate that the challenges in Illinois are reflective of the national challenges regarding employment of people with disabilities, and the need for Illinois to embrace the national efforts underway to increase workforce participation through Employment First. The data show there are areas of significant needs in terms of employment services and supports for people with disabilities, making the case for fundamental system changes to increase the workforce participation of individuals with disabilities in Illinois. The data also show inconsistencies within specific state public systems in Illinois that assist and support with individuals with disabilities, and indicate areas of need in terms of focus within specific service systems. At the same time there are pockets of success that can be built upon as Illinois moves forward to embrace Employment First and improve the lives of its citizens with disabilities through full workforce participation.

> ***"I can't understand why people are frightened of new ideas. I'm frightened of the old ones."***
>
> *– John Cage*

The Employment First Summit: Creating an Agenda for Moving Forward

One of the core goals of the Employment First Summit was to develop the basis of an Employment First strategic plan for Illinois. During the course of the Employment First Summit, seven areas were identified to form the basis of this plan.

1. Public Agency Systems Change and Policy
2. Data Measurement, Evaluation, Accountability
3. Service and Support Capacity/Development
4. Funding – Paying for What We Want, Creating Incentives
5. Transition, Post-Secondary Education, Career Advancement
6. Family and Individual Awareness/Expectations
7. Business and Community Development

Working in small groups, attendees identified a series of potential action items within each of these seven areas, and then reported out the large group. Appendix B contains full documentation of each group's work on these seven areas. Based on the ideas and information generated at the summit, the following section addresses each of these areas with a short summary of each group's findings and proposed action steps, and then provides suggestions for consideration in each of these areas for moving forward on a comprehensive approach to Employment First.

1. PUBLIC AGENCY SYSTEMS CHANGE AND POLICY

Summary of Work Group Discussion

The Public Agency Systems Change and Policy work group stated that in order to achieve the vision for Employment First, there is a need for policies and procedures to be in clear alignment, integrated planning across systems, coordination of funding to maximize resources, and clarification of responsibilities. In terms of information gaps, there is a need to learn from the successes of other states, stronger and consistent data from the various systems, and a better understanding of federal options in terms of the use of resources. Suggested actions for change include creation of a system's coordinator position in the Governor's office, a coordinated plan for state agencies (as detailed on page 9 of the Task Force Report), and working with appropriate state advisory bodies in setting goals, objectives, action steps. Entities to be involved include: local government including school districts, community college systems, state agency heads, staff, advisory bodies, advocates/consumers, service agencies, parents, business representatives, academia, federal funding agencies.

Issues for Consideration and Potential Next Steps

At the core of an Employment First effort in Illinois, is the need for the support of the various public systems responsible for the infrastructure that assist individuals with disabilities with their employment and related needs. The service structure, policies, and funding from these agencies form the core of the service system support that many individuals with disabilities rely on for some or all of their day-to-day needs. At the Employment First Summit, the vision for Illinois in terms of public systems that assist individuals with disabilities is of a system that is easy to access, responsive, seamless, coordinated, consumer focused, with measurable and shared goals and objectives. In contrast to this vision, attendees described the current system as characterized by silos, fragmentation, inconsistency in terms of how funding is accessed and coordinated, organizational cultures that foster fragmentation, and coordination that is reliant on individuals, not systems.

Consider Issuing an Employment First Policy

As noted, to date 18 states have issued some type of Employment First policy, via legislation, policy directive, Executive Order, etc. A listing of and links to a number of examples can be found on the SELN Employment First Resource List, in Appendix D and also available at www.seln.org. Illinois may wish to consider something similar, in order to set a clear vision regarding Employment First across agencies and state government, and the direction of publicly funded services for the citizens of Illinois with disabilities. Such a policy should not only contain the parameters and objectives of such a policy, but also provide a clear and simple cross-disability definition of Employment First - e.g., employment in the general workforce, fully integrated within the workplace, above minimum wage, employer paid (i.e., not on the payroll of a service providers), individual job, with potentially a specified number of minimum hours.

Need to Define the "Service System" and Current Structure

There is a saying to the effect that you need to know where you are to figure out where you are going. To undertake public agency systems change to realize the vision of Employment First requires a solid understanding of the current status of the system. A starting point is identifying the various public agencies involved in employment of people with disabilities, in order to fully understand the range of entities involved. To stay focused and avoid becoming overly expansive, it is important to have a clear definition of what entities should, and should not be included in such an inventory. It is suggested that such a list include only public agencies that fund and/or provide employment services/supports for individuals with disabilities. These agencies include:

- Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) – Department of Human Services
- Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) – Department of Human Services
- Division of Mental Health (DMH) – Department of Human Services
- Workforce Development - Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) & Department of Employment Security (IDES)
- State Board of Education (ISBE)

Consideration may also be given to inclusion of federal agencies such as Veterans Affairs, and the Social Security Administration (SSA).

Creating A Service Matrix

After identification of the various agencies, the next step is to set up a matrix that allows for clear understanding of the roles of these various agencies. Suggested elements to include in such a matrix are:

- Agency name
- Eligibility criteria
- Employment and day support services provided
- Amount of funding provided for employment and other day supports (broken down by service category if possible)
- Services provided (if necessary, broken down by service category)
- Number of individuals served
- Funding mix – federal/state
- Mechanism for accessing services
- Availability of long-term post-placement supports

In putting such a matrix together, it is important to provide sufficient detail to create a clear understanding of the services available from each of the public agencies, while at same time avoiding the provision of a level of detail that distracts from the goal of providing a system overview. This "cataloging of services" approach, serves a number of purposes, providing:

- An understanding of the full range of public agencies involved in provision of employment supports.
- An understanding of the current system options and capacity in terms of employment supports.
- A tool for looking for opportunities for greater coordination and development of a more seamless delivery system.
- A basis for analysis of funding options and potential options for shifts in funding.

- The basis for development of a guide for individuals and families to access services.
- A tool for identification of service gaps.

Cross-Agency Buy-In and Support of Employment First
The endorsement of Employment First by the Employment and Economic Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities Task Force clearly creates the basis for full-scale adoption of Employment First. If Employment First is to become a reality, it is important for each of the agencies that assist and support people with disabilities to agree on and be supportive of the Employment First vision.

In order to ensure that the various state agencies responsible for employment supports for people with disabilities take steps to move forward on Employment First, it is recommended that a mechanism be developed for an ongoing integrated planning process (as recommended in the task force report), that includes:

- A clear commitment by all agencies to Employment First principles.
- Specific commitments by these agencies to make forward progress in integrating these principles within their policies, procedures, and operations.
- Commitments to interagency collaboration on an individual service delivery and cross-systems level.
- Ongoing mechanisms for ensuring cross-agency integrated planning and monitoring of progress on Employment First (e.g., ongoing communication, annual reporting requirements, etc.).

Agency Policy Guide Points
As part of this process, it is important for each agency to consider its specific policies and whether they are supportive of this integrated vision of Employment First. It is suggested that the following examples of policy guide points be used by each agency to being examination of its policies and determine how they need to modified to be aligned with Employment First principles:

- CLEAR EMPLOYMENT POLICY UNDERSTOOD BY STAFF: There is a clear agency policy that is well understood by all staff, that employment in the community is the first priority in terms of services for individuals with disabilities.
- PRESUMPTION OF EMPLOYABILITY: Policies and procedures presume that individuals can work successfully in the community, and criteria and professional judgments regarding work readiness and earning the right to a job in the community are avoided.
- EMPLOYMENT AS MANDATED PART OF PLANNING PROCESS: Consideration of employment in the community is a mandated part of any type of individual client/consumer planning for persons of working age, and documentation for non-consideration of employment in the community is a requirement (i.e., it is presumed that individuals will pursue employment; if not, the reasons must be documented).
- DATA SYSTEM FOR TRACKING: The agency has a data system in place that tracks the employment outcomes for individuals served.

- PROVIDERS ALIGNED WITH EMPLOYMENT FIRST: Service provider contracts are awarded to organizations that adopt and embrace Employment First principles, in conjunction with reduced reliance on contractors that reinforce traditional service approaches.
- CLEAR EXPECTATIONS IN PROVIDER CONTRACTS: Service contracts clearly specify expectations regarding service provision and outcomes in line with Employment First principles.
- EMPLOYMENT INTEGRATED WITHIN PROVIDER MONITORING: An expectation of and standards for employment in the community are integrated within program monitoring and quality assurance processes.
- FUNDING INCENTIVES: Funding mechanisms provide incentives for employment in the community.
- SHIFTING OF FUNDING TO COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT: Funding policies support shifting of resources to community employment, and reduced funding of facility-based services.
- COMMUNITY-BASED ASSESSMENTS: There is a clear policy that experiential assessments (e.g., situational assessments) must be conducted in the community and not in facility-based programs.

Creation of a Seamless, User-Friendly System

The concept of the need to do away with silos and create a seamless system, expressed during the Employment First Summit, is one that is often heard. What on the surface appears to be a relatively straightforward objective, becomes much more complex due to a multitude of factors including: the wide range of eligibility criteria for specific services, the lack of integration of data management systems across programs, variations in funding requirements, and confidentiality requirements. Adding to these challenges is that the needs of individuals with disabilities also vary significantly, ranging from individuals who need short-term assistance in getting a job, to individuals who have long-term reliance on service systems for employment support and a wide range of other life needs. One size does not fit all. Also, in considering the concept of seamless systems characterized by common intake process, integrated data systems, and blending of funds, while potentially beneficial in terms of a variety of efficiencies, consideration must be given regarding how such efforts are specifically beneficial to meeting the objectives of an Employment First policy. Fundamentally, the benefits of a more seamless system in terms of Employment First are:

- Easier access to employment supports and services.
- Greater efficiencies in terms of use of available resources.
- Greater efficiencies in terms of services to individuals, avoiding unnecessary delays, and allowing individuals to achieve their employment goals more quickly.
- Consistency in terms of the objectives of the services being provided.
- An ability to better evaluate on an individual and cross-systems level, the effectiveness of employment systems, and identify opportunities for system improvements.

To address the issue of improved seamlessness and integration, as a starting point it is suggested that further discussion and exploration take place that examines the specifics of how the system is currently perceived as "siloed" in terms of service availability and delivery, and whether and

how a more seamless system would have a positive impact on Employment First. In turn, short and long-term strategies could then be developed to create a more seamless system. The following are examples of potential strategies:

- INCREASED SEAMLESSNESS WITH DRS, DDD, DMH: Given that the Division of Rehabilitation Services is among the core funding and service delivery sources for individuals with disabilities seeking employment assistance, examine the current policies in place regarding the use of DRS funding in conjunction with other sources, particularly DDD and MH. Ensure that clear procedures are in place regarding referral, responsibilities for funding of various components of service delivery, etc. Within the development of these procedures, ensure that they are created within the underlying principle of a seamless service delivery system from the job seeker perspective, avoiding breaks in services, with reinforcement of Employment First principles throughout. (The Vocational Rehabilitation Research and Training Center - www.vr-rrtc.org - has done significant work in this regard and may have resources to provide assistance.)
- COMMON INTAKE: If Illinois wishes to pursue a common intake approach, as a starting point, it is suggested this be done using some type of pilot project approach, to determine if such an approach is feasible and supportive of the Employment First effort. It is also suggested that such an approach start with a few core agencies (DDD, DMH, DRS) to determine practicality. Another potential approach is piloting the use of One-Stop Career Centers as an access point, given their primary focus on employment, accessibility to the public, and a core conceptual framework of multiple partners operating within a single environment.
- COMMON CASE MANAGEMENT/DATA: A common case management/data system is a worthwhile goal in terms of creating a seamless system that allows for sharing of information across agencies. At the same time, creation of such a system is a major undertaking for a variety of technological and system-related reasons. It is suggested that Illinois may wish to take a closer look at the potential opportunities and challenges of such a system, examine the experiences of other states, and potentially pilot such an approach as part of determining its feasibility.
- COMMON IDENTIFIER: In an effort to better coordinate services, Illinois may wish to consider the concept of a common identifier across agencies for individuals receiving services. On an individual basis, this would allow for easier coordination of services across agencies, and more efficient service delivery. From a systems level, a major benefit of such an approach would be the ability to better understand the use of public employment support systems by individuals as a whole, and to understand how individuals are using multiple systems to meet their needs. (Note: use of Social Security numbers is not appropriate for such a system, given security and privacy issues.)

Greater Access to Service Options Via Online Portal

While stronger inter-agency coordination is a part of creating a more seamless system, simply ensuring that individuals needing services have a higher level of access to information on service options can assist with this process, and is relatively easy to accomplish. In this regard, Illinois may wish to consider some type of on-line portal for information on employment services and supports. At a minimum, such a portal could provide information in one location regarding the various options for employment assistance and supports across public agencies to allow

individuals to understand options in this regard. Specific information would include agency name, types of services provided, eligibility criteria, and how to apply for services. At least in the initial stages, it is strongly suggested that such a portal be limited to public agencies, and that linkage to private service providers would occur via these public agencies. Inclusion of private service providers in such a portal is a major undertaking, and presents challenges in terms of the quantity of information and ongoing management/updating of information.

Creation of a such a portal simply as a central information point would be a significant step forward in ensuring that individuals understand how to access services and the options available. The next level of this type of portal could be a mechanism that allows individuals to enter demographic and other criteria, and the system would then in turn identify services that could specifically assist them with their employment needs based on their information.

The third level of this type of portal would allow for actual application for services from specific agencies. On an individual agency level, this would be relatively easy to accomplish. A more complicated iteration of this approach would be a common application that would then be "triaged" to the appropriate agency(s). It is suggested that this common application be potentially a long-term goal, but not an initial focus, given the complicated nature of such an approach.

Illinois WorkNet may potentially serve as the basis of a service portal. However, it would need to be significantly reconfigured and expanded to serve as a comprehensive on-line portal for services as outlined above As currently configured, Illinois WorkNet does not represent the full spectrum of service options, nor is it designed in such a way as to make it easy for the job seeker to easily understand the full range of service options available.

Creation of Coordinator Role

Among the specific strategies identified by the public agency work group at the Employment First Summit, is the creation of a cross-agency coordinator role within the Governor's office. This echoes an earlier recommendation by the Employment and Economic Opportunity Taskforce.

> **"**A. Establish a position within the Executive Branch/Governor's Office that will be charged with the authority and responsibility for oversight and coordination of employment related programs for individuals with disabilities. This position will:
>
> 1. Develop a coordinated plan for state agencies that would identify and evaluate all funding sources as they relate to the needs of each disability population and recommend areas where collaboration would be warranted to maximize cost efficiency, effectiveness of service delivery and eliminate duplication for individuals with disabilities, providers and employers;
> 2. Serve as the primary point of contact for identifying policy needs to facilitate employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities statewide and specifically within Illinois code agencies so that Illinois is a model inclusive employer.
> 3. Serve as an advocate for employment programs within the Executive Branch including budget discussions.
> 4. Serve as a member of the Task Force."

Employment and Economic Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities Task Force 2010-2011 Annual Report – January 2011 – p. 9

It is suggested that such a role be utilized to oversee and implement a cross-agency Employment First effort, focused on specific strategies such as those above. It is critical that the person in this type of role have a sufficient knowledge base of employment services and supports, understand the parameters and goals of the role, and possess leadership skills and credibility in order to successfully undertake it. The challenge of such a role is to avoid having the role simply being one of convener of discussions and dialogue without specific, concrete objectives and outcomes for the role, or the ability to influence and serve as a catalyst for change processes.

Lessons from Other States

The experiences of other states that have experienced success in increasing the workforce participation of individuals with disabilities through public agency systems change can be helpful in terms of "lessons learned" that can be applied in Illinois. Examples of resources to assist with such efforts include the State Employment Leadership Network (www.seln.org) and Vocational Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (www.vr-rrtc.org). It is suggested that public agencies utilize their networks in terms of identifying additional resources in this regard.

2. DATA, MEASUREMENT, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY

Summary of Work Group Discussion

The Data, Measurement, Evaluation, and Accountability group at the Employment Summit, expressed a vision of a data system that collects the right data for quality assurance, allows for setting of targets, provides information to individuals on the services they receive, and that data on employment is an outcome measure that all providers rely on. Suggested action steps included determining what data is currently being collected with the goal of consolidating and collecting data at one location, creation of a database for individuals to see what services they are receiving, and consulting with other states regarding best practices in employment data systems. Among the actions for this change process to occur are the development of interagency agreements, collaborative data collection, and connection of existing data warehouse (HFS/ISBE). In terms of who should be involved in the efforts focused on data, measurement, evaluation, and accountability, the list developed by the group included individuals with disabilities and families, legislators, as well as other states with strong data systems to provide technical assistance. Information gaps identified included the need for a breakdown of specific disabilities, and baseline data on SSI recipients.

Issues for Consideration and Potential Next Steps

Consolidation of Existing Data

Having strong data systems is a critical component in terms of understanding and analyzing system performance, and ensuring accountability. As noted by the work group at the Employment Summit, an initial step in Illinois is identifying the current data collected on employment of people with disabilities (examples of which were shared at the summit) and making an effort to consolidate it. Taking such existing data, summarizing it, making it publicly available, and updating it on an ongoing basis, in and of itself will allow for measurement of progress, and a level of accountability. (The www.statedata.info website has available a significant level of data from existing sources that can be utilized in such an effort. The data sources used in the earlier section "Current Status of Employment of People with Disabilities in Illinois" also provide options in terms of data sources.) However, there is clearly a need for enhancements to the current data collection system that would allow for improved understanding of the current status and progress in terms of employment of individuals with disabilities in Illinois.

Creating an Improved Employment Data Collection System

In looking at options for enhanced data collection, an obvious starting point is to look at the current data being collected, and to determine how current data collection systems can be enhanced, rather than creating a new data collection system from scratch. Obviously consideration will need to be made in terms of the benefits and tradeoffs regarding each approach, and the resources required.

As Illinois looks at options in terms of data systems that are supportive of Employment First, it is important to consider the fundamental goals and objectives for such a data system including:

- Measuring the workforce participation of individuals with disabilities using such criteria as placement, hours worked, wages, occupations/industries, retention, etc.
- Understanding needs/outcomes in terms of specific types of disabilities.
- Measuring the performance of public systems that assist and support individuals with disabilities.
- Measuring the performance of specific service providers.
- Identifying areas for performance improvement among public systems and service providers.
- Measuring the performance of transition services and post-secondary outcomes.
- Serving as an accountability tool for public systems and service providers.
- Providing information to individuals and families regarding performance of service providers.
- Serving as a monitoring tool for services provided to an individual.
- Understanding the cost/benefit and return on investment in terms of services and outcomes.
- Performance of the State of Illinois itself as an employer of persons with disabilities as a role model.

The ultimate goal of such an effort should be a data system that clearly measures the progress of Illinois in terms of improving workforce participation for the individuals in a way that is transparent and useful to policymakers, professionals, legislators, individuals, and families. Ideally such a data system would collect consistent measures across systems.

Guidelines for Development of Data Systems

The following are suggested principles for consideration in development of an effective data system:

- Simple, brief, limited number of variables
- Focused on outcomes
- Individual level data as the core data collection
- Tied to an existing work process or flow if possible
- Clear schedule of completion and data verification process

One of the challenges in creating a data system is to have sufficient data for true measurement and accountability, while not collecting so many variables as to make data collection and analysis burdensome. As data systems are developed, consideration should be given to collection of information that allows not only for measurement of outcomes, but for some process measures such as cost per placement, and efficiency of placement services (e.g., hours of job development per placement, length of time between intake and placement, average hours of post-placement supports, etc.).

Making Data Publicly Available

While collecting data and summarizing data is important, ensuring that data is publicly available is a key piece of understanding performance and accountability. As Illinois considers options for data collection and accountability and making data publicly available, the following are some suggested options:

- Creation of an annual disability employment data report for legislators, policymakers, and the general public.
- Availability of data reports that allow service providers to understand how their performance ranks overall, as compared to statewide averages and/or other individual providers.
- Making available provider "report cards" that allow individuals and families to have information in order to determine which service provider will best meet their needs.

Using Data as a Management and Accountability Tool

While collecting and reporting of data are critically important, the ultimate value of data is how it gets used as a management tool. As Illinois enhances its data collection and reporting procedures, efforts need to be made to ensure data is effectively used as a management and accountability tool. In this regard, it is recommended that training, tools, and mechanisms be developed so that system staff, service providers, and individuals with disabilities have a high level of access to data, understand how to best utilize data for monitoring of services on an individual job seeker and programmatic level, and also identify areas for improvement on an individual service delivery and programmatic level. Particularly in terms of systems staff, it is important that use of data be a regular required component of performance monitoring and analysis.

Additional Potential Data Sources

It is suggested that a primary focus of data collection and analysis be on the performance of public systems and the service providers funded by them. However, as the work group indicated, additional data collection and analysis may be useful in terms of understanding the unmet needs of individuals outside the service system, specific needs of certain disability groups, etc.

Taking Advantage of Today's Technology

In terms of data collection and reporting, with advances in information technology, the ease and ability to collect, analyze, and make available data is at an unprecedented level. It is suggested that Illinois consider how to leverage and take full advantage of today's technology, including the use of the world wide web for collection and reporting of data, as well as the use of Smart Phone Apps, and similar technology advancements for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data

Examples from Other States

As noted, Illinois is interested in identifying other states that have developed strong data systems. One of the best examples (although not cross-disability) is the Washington State Division of Developmental Disabilities, which has had a strong data system in place for several years, and has the capacity to provide a regular report to legislators on outcomes and cost-benefit of services. A publicly available online version of this system has recently been made available at: www.statedata.info/washington-ddd. The Institute for Community Inclusion and other entities can assist Illinois in identifying and linking with other examples that may be useful.

3. SERVICE AND SUPPORT CAPACITY/DEVELOPMENT

Summary of Work Group Discussion

The Service and Support Capacity/Development Work Group stated that their vision was one of service providers able to connect job seekers and employers. The current status of service delivery is inconsistent, and success is provider specific. There is also a learned helplessness on part of individuals. In terms of what needs to change, the group stated there is a need for education and training for disability service providers, a change in expectations and mindset by service providers, and a need for sustainability. For Action Steps, the group stated there was a need for clear standards for service providers regarding employment services, a need for a clear vision from the state, and clarity that the success of the employee with a disability comes first. The group also indicated the need for action steps regarding ongoing staff development, the creation of provider networks, and the need for providers to serve on Transition Planning Committees. In terms of who should be involved, the group included service providers, public systems, trade organizations, people with disabilities and employers.

Issues for Consideration and Potential Next Steps

The challenges faced by the service system in Illinois are in part the result of a system that was designed as a caretaker-type of system, which at one point was considered best practice. With the increased understanding of the capabilities of people with disabilities in terms of employment, and shifts in disability policy towards full integration and inclusion in the community, there is a need for a fundamentally different type of service system to assist individuals with disabilities. The embracing of Employment First by the State of Illinois only increases that need.

In order to have a service system that can realize the vision of Employment First requires the following:

- A competent workforce with the knowledge and ability to assist individuals with disabilities with their employment needs.
- Models of service delivery designed to ensure employment in the community receives primary consideration in service delivery.
- Organizations with the necessary structures, resources, and staff in place to properly assist individuals with disabilities with their employment needs.
- A level of resources that provide sufficient resources and incentives to achieve the Employment First vision.
- A policy and funding structure that properly supports organizations and staff to meet the goals and objectives of Employment First.
- A values base that is reflective of the social model of disability and supportive of Employment First..

Creating Staff Competency Standards

As noted by the work group, there is a significant need for improving the knowledge base of staff regarding employment, and to create clear standards for staff. In that regard, it is recommended

that Illinois consider development of required competencies for staff providing employment services and supports. The Supported Employment Competencies from APSE are potentially a good starting point for such an effort: www.apse.org/publications/positions.cfm.
Illinois may also wish to explore whether the competency level of staff could be ensured through the recently launched Certified Employment Services Professional credential, possibly through supporting staff to obtain this credential (www.apse.org/certification).

Staff Training and Development
In conjunction with creation of standards for staff competencies, is the need for resources for ongoing staff development. It is important that consideration be given to ensuring that the training received by staff is linked with competency standards for staff, avoiding a haphazard approach to staff development or an approach that "any training is good training". There are a variety of resources that can assist with staff development, and Illinois should consider whether the state would like to use existing curricula, or create a curriculum specifically for Illinois in line with staff competencies and standards for service providers. As noted by the work group, involvement of the community colleges in staff training and development should be considered. Examples of resources that can be of assistance in terms of staff development include:

- Institute on Disability and Human Development, University of Illinois Chicago - www.idhd.org
- Technical Assistance and Continuing Education Center, Southern Illinois University - www.rcepv.siu.edu
- Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators - www.acreducators.org
- College of Employment Services - http://directcourseonline.com/employmentservices
- Chicago Provider Leadership Network – shared training on relationship based approach to businesses through its job developer network – www.disabilityworks.org

Creating an Employment Knowledge Base at All Staff Levels
As Illinois examines staff development issues, it is important to consider not only the staff development needs of staff directly supporting individuals with disabilities, but also program managers, and service system staff responsible for oversight and monitoring of service delivery and programs. While there is a different level of knowledge needed for individuals who are not providing direct support in terms of job development, placement, and post-placement support, it is still critically important that staff in support and oversight roles have a knowledge base and belief in best practices in employment supports. It is also important for program managers and service system to understand how within their roles, they can be supportive of Employment First efforts.

The Challenge of Staff Shifting from Facility to Community
In consideration of staff training and development needs, there needs to be a recognition of the opportunities and challenges for staff who have worked in traditional facility-based programs such as sheltered workshops, as they move to positions supporting individuals in integrated community employment. Such a shift, from a caretaker to a community facilitator/support role, requires a fundamental shift in mindset in terms of individuals with disabilities, and the role of staff and program in assisting them. Too often, there has been a presumption that the skills and competencies of staff from facility-based services can be easily transferred to integrated employment services. It is absolutely critical to recognize the need for training for staff shifting

from positions in facility-based programs to community employment assistance and supports, and to also recognize that not all staff from facility-based services have the capacity to make such a shift.

Ensuring Organizational Capacity and Competency

While having competent staff is important, it is critical that these staff work within organizations that are structured and operated in a way that will support an emphasis on employment in the community. It is recommended that in conjunction with the development of staff competencies that Illinois develop standards for employment programs that are in line with Employment First principles, and that these standards be incorporated within contracting, program monitoring, and quality assurance mechanisms. Examples of standards that can be used as a starting point in this regard include the APSE Supported Employment Quality Indicators (www.apse.org/publications/positions.cfm), and the Dartmouth Evidence-Based IPS standards (www.dartmouth.edu/~ips).

Creating Catalysts for Organizational Change

As noted one of the challenges that Illinois faces, like many states, is that many service providers are operating under a traditional service model, with limited emphasis on community employment. If Illinois is to make progress in terms of increased workforce participation, there is a need for a significant shift in how many service providers deliver services. Doing so in part will require changes by funding agencies in policies and funding mechanisms, discussed elsewhere in this report. However, simply waiting for the state to make such changes and/or assuming that such changes will be a sufficient catalyst for these organizations to undertake necessary changes is insufficient. Service providers will need to undertake internal steps in terms of organizational change, with support from the state. Illinois may wish to consider mechanisms for encouraging service providers to undertake such shifts including:

- Making available technical assistance resources to organizations to shift the focus of their operations over to community employment.
- Asking service providers to develop a long-term plan for reducing reliance on facility-based and non-work day services.
- In conjunction with other efforts on data, working with service providers on development of internal tracking mechanisms that can assist them in understanding the current status of their community employment efforts, and identifying areas for improvement.
- Reviewing the significant existing body of literature that exists regarding organizational change, and utilizing those findings as "lessons learned" that can be applied in Illinois. Examples are at: www.communityinclusion.org/page.php?page=get_article&id=17&type=topic&scope=all

Transforming From a Monday to Friday Service Model

One of the challenges faced in transformation of a service system, is that many individuals served in "day programs" either require or have come to expect a daily program of services on a Monday to Friday basis, and that programs have been designed to operate on the typical Monday to Friday, 9:00 to 3:00 schedule. The reality is that, particularly in today's business and labor environment, provision of employment supports is not a Monday to Friday, 9 to 3 service.

Day Custody Issue: In dealing with these issues, two factors need to be addressed. One is the "day custody" issue – i.e., what individuals will do with their time when they are not working, particularly individuals who need some level of supervision. A fundamental strategy for addressing this issue is maximizing the number of hours an individual works, and increasing the ability of individuals to spend time independently on volunteer, recreational, and other activities, or just staying by themselves at home in their off-hours. However, there is going to be a need for service models for some individuals that provide support and assistance during non-work hours. Maximizing the use of community resources, and avoiding the use of intensive staff resources and/or services that reinforce stereotypes is important in addressing this issue. Additionally, service models need to be designed that avoid having facility-based services as the service location during non-work hours, or re-placement in a facility-based service as the de facto response when an individual loses a job in the community. Avoiding situations where individuals are essentially "bouncing" back and forth between facility-based services and community employment, will require both service models that are designed to avoid such scenarios, as well as clear policies that prohibit and/or limit the use of traditional facility-based services during non-work hours or during periods of unemployment.

Services and Supports Available at All Work Hours: In addition to dealing with the "day custody" issue, is the need for service models that are much more flexible than the typical 9 to 3, Monday - Friday approach. Given that individuals may work evenings, weekends, and other hours that do not conform with the traditional service delivery hours, is going to require service providers to have service models that are flexible in terms of hours that staff work and services provided, to account for the reality of the modern-day workplace. Moving beyond this 9 to 3 mindset can often be one of the major challenges in shifting to community employment for organizations, but it is critical for a successful transformation to a system that provides quality assistance and support with employment needs.

The Role of the Workforce Development System

Part of service capacity building should include examination of the role of the workforce development system. Particularly given the various disability-related initiatives that have been undertaken by the workforce development system, including the current USDOL funded Disability Employment Initiative, consideration should be given regarding what is the logical role of the workforce development system and One-Stop Career Centers in meeting the needs of job seekers with disabilities. Recent data has shown that approximately 3% to 4% of individuals who use the One-Stop system nationally are on SSI or SSDI, which shows that the system is viewed by job seekers with disabilities as a potential resource. While the workforce development system is not necessarily intended to serve individuals with high levels of support needs as a primary service option, the system does have capacity to meet the needs of job seekers with disabilities who are somewhat self-directed, and can also play a role in conjunction with other systems and service providers that can assist with more intense needs. There have been numerous examples of such efforts occurring across the country through both formal and informal relationships - for example, some community providers bring individuals to One-Stop Career Centers and support the individuals in using the resource libraries and job seeking classes as part of their job search. An example in Illinois is Parents Alliance Employment Project, an agency co-located at a One-Stop. On ICDD's website is a brochure and video produced on providing services to people with disabilities at One-Stop centers www.state.il.us/agency/icdd/communicating/publications.htm#employment.

Given the resources and tools of the One-Stop Career Center system for basic job seeking assistance – creation of resumes, enhancing job interview skills, linkage with existing job openings, etc. – consideration may be given how these services can be better utilized by job seekers, and possibly integrated within the more intensive services available via community rehabilitation providers. Also, given that the core structure of the One-Stop system is based on the concept of multiple programs and systems coming together in a seamless user-friendly system, consideration may be given regarding how this system may be able to serve in some ways as an enhanced organizing structure for overall service access and delivery. It is suggested that efforts be made to create greater awareness among service providers and individuals with disabilities regarding the resources of the workforce development system, and that there be discussions between the workforce development system at state and local levels to exploring options for leveraging and enhancing collaboration between the workforce development system and disability service systems and providers.

Enhanced Access to Existing Resources

As part of service system capacity building, a key strategy for consideration is creating stronger awareness of and linkages with various resources in Illinois and nationally. Particularly for resources based in Illinois, consideration should be given regarding how they can be utilized in a more coordinated, integrated fashion to support Employment First. Examples include:

- Great Lakes ADA Center - www.adagreatlakes.org
- Illinois Assistive Technology Program - www.iltech.org
- Institute on Disability and Human Development, University of Illinois Chicago - www.idhd.org
- Technical Assistance and Continuing Education Center, Southern Illinois University - www.rcepv.siu.edu
- Equip for Equality - www.equipforequality.org
- WIPA Programs (City of Chicago, Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities; DHS DMH; IATP)
- HDA Illinois Specific: Work Incentives Support Center - www.hdadvocates.org/program_policy/workforce/illinois.asp
- Job Accommodation Network - http://askjan.org
- Easter Seals Project Action – http://projectaction.easterseals.com
- Community Transportation Association of America - www.ctaa.org
- Illinois Rural Transit Center - www.iira.org/outreach/rtac.asp
- Interactive Public and Specialized Transportation Information Management System - www.utc.uic.edu/tranpro

Addressing Benefit Issues

During the summit, benefit issues were particularly noted as an area of need. Addressing this issue requires a multi-prong approach, that includes not only ensuring that staff and individuals have an accurate understanding of benefit issues and access to expertise, but also a fundamental culture shift from a "benefits preservation", "work as supplement", or "benefits as employment barrier" mindset.

The following are suggested strategies in this regard:

- Mandate that all staff working on employment-related issues (including public systems staff) have a core knowledge of basic benefit issues.
- Ensure that there is a clear and consistent message that benefits are not a barrier to employment, with ongoing efforts to separate benefit myths from facts.
- Ensure that there are strong linkages between service providers, individuals, and families, with the Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) programs (assuming they continue) and other benefit experts, as well as an understanding of the availability of resources such as the Illinois Disability Benefits Estimator.
- Particularly given the capacity limitations of the WIPA programs and concerns over reauthorization of WIPA by Congress, it is suggested that Illinois consider options for developing a long-term infrastructure for benefits assistance and counseling that is not solely reliant on WIPA programs, and that is funded via state agencies. For example, such a service could be included as part of Medicaid waiver funded service.

An SELN publication that may be of assistance in developing strategies for addressing benefit issues is *Changing the Culture and Message About Benefits: A Comprehensive Approach for Promoting Employment*.

Building Capacity to Serve Diverse Populations

In terms of service system capacity building, one of the areas for consideration, is capacity building in terms of meeting the needs of individuals from diverse racial, ethnic, and linguistic cultures. Too often, services are designed within a narrow framework that does not account for the full diversity that exists in today's society, and the varied perceptions of disability among different cultures. The Center for Capacity Building on Minorities with Disabilities Research, at the University of Illinois Chicago can be a resource in this regard - http://disabilityempowerment.org,

Provider Networks

One of the suggested action steps was the development of provider networks. As Illinois moves forward on its Employment First efforts, development of such networks for exchange of ideas, sharing of information, and provision of mutual support can be effective. Such networks can possibly be supported via trade and professional associations, and can utilize information technology to support virtual as well as in-person networks. In development of these networks, consideration should be given to developing networks for individuals in different roles (e.g., job coach network, job developer network, program director network, etc.).

4. FUNDING – PAYING FOR WHAT WE WANT, CREATING INCENTIVES

Summary of Work Group Discussion

The Funding work group stated that funding currently is not flexible, and overly reliant on contact hours for generation of revenue. The wide variation in requirements from different funding agencies is a challenge, despite the fact that they provide support for similar employment services. The high reliance on Medicaid, and lack of general funds is also a challenge. Rates are also considered insufficient to provide quality supports, and the need for prior approval for supported employment by DDD is considered problematic.

The vision of the workgroup is of support needs that are identified holistically, and that funding is then utilized from multiple sources and built around the person's needs. For DDD, funding proportions would be reversed with the vast majority of funding going to community employment instead of facility-based and non-work services. When individuals are receiving services from DRS, there would be a smooth transition to long-term support dollars for those who need long-term support. Similarly there would be a seamless transition from school to adult services regarding funding. Rates would provide incentives for community employment.

The Funding work group proposed a number of actions including the following:

- DDD should reverse its current policy, and presume funding/eligibility for supported employment and require prior approval for sheltered employment/facility-based services.
- Develop a rate system based on true costs and that provides incentives for employment.
- Make sure a strong case is made and continues to be made for the cost benefit of employment (using IARF data as basis).
- Develop clarity and clear mechanisms for handoff from DRS to DDD and MH for long-term supports.
- Consider how to systematically increase use of work incentives - such as Plans for Achieving Self Support, Impairment Related Work Expenses, and Blind Work Expenses – as a funding source.
- Develop strategies to utilize workforce development for supplemental sources for funding and services, including WIA funded training, youth services, education/training funds at community colleges, etc.

In terms of who needs to be involved in improving the funding mechanisms, the group felt that it should include the provider community, funding entities and public systems, individuals and advocates, and education and community colleges.

Issues for Consideration and Potential Next Steps

Funding is a primary driver of service system outcomes. The vision of Employment First cannot be achieved, without a funding structure that provides sufficient resources for delivery of quality services, focused on achieving integrated community employment. At a basic level the funding system must have the objectives of:

- Paying for the outcomes it wants to achieve.
- Not paying for the outcomes that it does not want.

Achieving these objectives is much more complicated, given the multitude of potential funding streams and the wide range of individual needs.

Redesign of Service Provider Funding

Given that many individuals with significant disabilities are reliant on assistance from service providers, a primary focus needs to be on the funding sources used by these providers via contracts with public agencies. There are a variety of factors that need to be considered in designing a funding system to support individuals with disabilities with their employment needs:

- Funding rates, based on real costs, which are sufficient for the level of quality services needed to achieve an outcome of employment in the community.
- Funding rates that recognize that employment assistance and supports cannot be solely based on consumer contact hours, given that job development and other essential services may take place without the presence of the individual.
- Funding rates focused on achieving outcomes, and not on maximizing billable hours.
- Funding rates that reward service providers for efficient and effective use of resources, including job searches that occur at a reasonable pace and long-term job retention.
- A funding system that creates incentives for maximizing the income and number of hours that an individual works.
- A funding system that encourages and maximizes the use of natural and community supports, and minimizes over-reliance on professional staff, while at the same time sending a clear message that the use of natural and community supports is not a means for cost cutting or a substitute for qualified professional supports as necessary.
- A funding system that ensures a balance between quantity and quality of outcomes – e.g., not just getting job placements as rapidly as possible, but placements that are a good match for an individual's interests and needs and lead to long-term employment success.
- Funding rates that ensure that the employment assistance and support needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities can be met, and that properly compensates service providers for serving individuals whose needs will require more hours of service.
- Having a funding system that is flexible and allows individuals to receive services on as-needed basis (e.g., when they lose a job, need additional support on a job, etc.).
- Having a funding system that enables service providers to be fiscally viable.

Balancing this array of factors can be a major challenge, particularly since some can at times conflict. The needs of individuals can also often be subjective regarding determining what is a sufficient level of resources to meet their needs, and those needs can vary over time,

Funding Solution: Using Existing Resources Differently

A fundamental approach in addressing funding in Illinois is a recognition that the solution is going to have to be one of using and leveraging existing funding resources differently, as it is unlikely that an expansion of funding will be available given the short and long-term fiscal challenges in Illinois and nationally. As a starting point in dealing with funding issues, it is suggested that Illinois develop and use the funding matrix recommended under area # 1 - *Public Agency Systems and Policy*, to analyze current funding options. In examining current funding,

one of the fundamental questions should be how current funding can be shifted to support community employment in a way that is reflective of Employment First, while simultaneously reducing funding support for services that are not reflective of Employment First.

Changes in Medicaid Funding

In looking closely at the current funding in Illinois, it seems clear that the Medicaid Waiver for DDD needs to be closely examined and revised, in order that it is designed to be more supportive of employment in the community. One of the fundamental issues with the waiver is that the rate for employment in the community is only $13 per hour. This is not at all sufficient to support individual employment services. In addition the language of the waiver needs to be supportive programmatically of employment. It is suggested that the recent CMS guidance on waiver language that promotes employment (http://www.cms.gov/CMCSBulletins/downloads/CIB-9-16-11.pdf), as well as other more pro-community employment waivers from other states be examined, and consideration be given to revamping of the waiver to better support the vision of Employment First.

In addition to revising the Medicaid Waiver for DDD, it is suggested that Illinois examine all other Medicaid Waivers and other Medicaid related funding that currently or could potentially fund employment assistance and supports. As a result of recent federal legislation there are a number of new options. The chart in Appendix F, from Health and Disability Advocates (HDA), in Chicago provides a summary of potential Medicaid funding streams that can be utilized for employment supports. The Medicaid Leadership Group, supported by HDA, may be of assistance in development of strategies for better support of employment via Medicaid: www.hdadvocates.org/program_policy/mlg.asp

Transition Between Funding Sources

An issue raised in regards to funding was the transition between DRS funding and long-term support funding from DDD or MH. This is not an uncommon issue, and it is often found that one of the core issues is a lack of understanding regarding the parameters, opportunities, and limitations of various funding streams. In some states, the fact that service providers are not vendors for multiple funding agencies has also been an issue, resulting in individuals having to change service providers to access services. It is suggested that in examining this issue that the fundamental issues be clearly examined and understood, and that guidelines and parameters be developed so there is clarity regarding the responsibilities of the various agencies and service providers, with the possible development of memorandums of understanding or similar agreements. The goal of this effort should be to ensure that eligible individuals can easily access DRS services, and that for those individuals needing it, there is a smooth transition between DRS and long-term funding. Part of this effort also needs to be educating individuals, families, and service providers regarding the options for transition between funding sources.

Education Funding

While much of the focus on funding is on public Vocational Rehabilitation and Medicaid, it is also important to consider the role of school funding. As noted by the work group at the summit, particularly given the entitlement that individuals have to funding prior to age 22, it is critical that the resources available prior to individuals leaving school be maximized. Part of the analysis of funding should include an examination of funding used for transition, and determining

whether such resources could be better utilized to support employment experiences and employment outcomes. Part of such an analysis, as noted by the work group, is a smooth and seamless transition from education funding to adult services.

Need to Determine True Costs

As part of an overall examination of funding, determining the true cost of services is a suggested goal. Too often, systems set rates that appear to have little if any basis in actual service costs – i.e., rates are set on what the system can afford, rather on determining what it truly costs for the level and quality of services that the system expects. Inadequate rates result in limited choices in terms of service providers for individuals, and are in conflict with the desire of Medicaid for individuals to have a sufficient choice of service options. The development of inappropriate rates is also often the result of rates being set by rate setting authorities with limited context and understanding of the services being delivered. Without a fiscally viable service provider system, moving forward on Employment First will be a major challenge. While recognizing the challenges of developing rates that adequately compensate service providers in the current fiscal environment, it is critically important to have a true understanding of costs in forming the basis of honest discussions and dialogue regarding funding, rate setting, etc. Within such discussions is it critically important that service providers and practitioners be involved.

Opportunities for More Self-Directed Funding Options

As Illinois considers its options for revamping of funding, it is suggested that the state use this opportunity to experiment with various funding options, particularly those that put more control and discretion on the use of funds in the hands of individuals and families. Examples include expanding the use of self-directed funding approaches where individuals control their funding and have greater discretion over how funds get used.

Increased Use of Social Security Options

The funding sources available via Social Security are often under-utilized, and it is suggested that Illinois consider how to significantly expand their use. The primary option in this regard is Ticket to Work. Ticket to Work provides funding to service providers after an individual becomes employed; the initial payment points are when an individual earns $720 per month, and the potential total payments for an individual are approximately $22,000 spread out over several years (see the 2012 EN Payments-at-a-Glance chart for a detailed summary of Ticket payments). While Ticket to Work is not without its challenges, it is the only source of funding that is not subject to federal or state budget allocations, and does not have any specific limits – and it can generally be combined with other funding sources. Over the last few years, the Social Security Administration has undertaken a wide variety of efforts to simplify the administration of Ticket to Work. It is suggested that Illinois consider how the funds available via Ticket can be better utilized on an individual service provider and systems level, and discuss systems options with Social Security. (The State of Missouri, where the Developmental Disability system recently became an Employment Network under Ticket, is an example in this regard.) In addition to Ticket, the use of Social Security Work Incentives as funding sources (Plans for Achieving Self-Support, Impairment Related Work Expense, etc.) for employment supports is an option. Use of these work incentives can in some ways be challenging, but given the data on the current usage of these, there are certainly opportunities for expanded use, through a more systematic and deliberate effort.

Use of Work Incentives by People On SSI in Illinois

- Total number of SSI recipients – **242,327**
- Plans for Achieving Self Support (PASS) – **40**
- Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE) – **123**
- Blind Work Expense - **40**

Source: Social Security Administration SSI Disabled Recipients Who Work, 2009

Other Potential Funding Sources

In addition to the primary sources of funding, as noted by work group, options in regards to supplemental sources of funds should be considered. These are funding sources that may not necessarily be primary sources of funding, but at the same time, can provide some level of expansion of existing funding sources. Options in this regard include use of workforce development funds for training and services (e.g., WIA Adult funding, WIA Youth funding), use of education and training funds for expanding the skills of individuals with disabilities, etc.

Coordination of Funding: Individual, Service Provider, System Level

Possibly in the perfect world, there would be one funding source that would provide for all needs. However, that is not the world in which employment services and supports for individuals with disabilities operate. Therefore, one of the considerations in examining funding issues is determining where responsibility lies in terms of coordination of funding. The fundamental goal in such efforts is ensuring there is a high degree of awareness of various funding streams, that there is coordination as necessary between them, and to avoid leaving the primary responsibility for identification of and coordination of funding up to the individual, who is often at a disadvantage in understanding various funding options. It is suggested that Illinois consider the following multi-prong approach:

- As previously noted, make efforts at a systems level to ensure there is coordination across funding streams, particularly the "core" funding streams of DRS, DDD, and DMH.
- Ensure there is a high degree of user-friendly awareness (i.e., clear and simple information) among service providers and individuals with disabilities regarding the full range of funding options and how to access them.
- For funding streams that do not fall under the responsibility of DHS (e.g., Ticket to Work, workforce development systems, adult education, etc.), ensure that service providers and individuals are aware of these resources, and develop mechanisms to assist in accessing them.
- On an ongoing basis, measure and monitor the various funding streams being utilized for employment supports to ensure that funding streams and options are being used to maximum advantage to support Employment First.

Making the Case for Cost Effectiveness

As noted by the work group, in terms of funding it is important to make the case to legislators, policymakers, and the general public, that funding of employment services and supports is cost effective in a number of ways: reducing long-term, lifetime reliance on day services; reducing the use of public benefit programs; increasing the number of individuals paying taxes, etc. To expand the efforts that have already been undertaken in this regarded, it is suggested that Illinois may wish to look at the work of Dr. Robert Cimera (rcimera@kent.edu) at Kent State University, who has done significant work and published extensively in this area. An example of Dr.

Cimera's work can be found at:
http://www.bookstore.aamr.org/media/PDFs/ajmr11501021REV.pdf

Learning from Other States

As part of revamping rates and funding, as with other issues, it is suggested that Illinois consult with other states to examine different approaches to funding (the 2008 SELN Publication – "State Employment Practices: Funding for Employment Services" is an example of a reference that can be utilized for this purpose). Experience from other states clearly shows there is no perfect funding mechanism, and states need to determine what is going to work best for them based on their system goals, needs, and overall fiscal options. At the same time, it is possible to design a funding system that provides incentives and supports for the achievement of integrated community employment as a desired outcome, in line with the goals of Employment First.

5. TRANSITION, POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Summary of Work Group Discussion

The work group focused on transition stated that the current status of transition varied dependent upon the location, with too much emphasis on compliance and not on activities and outcomes. Low expectations are considered an issue, and the resources to achieve quality employment outcomes are often not in place. The group felt that what needed to change was developing adequate and competent staff, opportunities for actual employment and real world experiences during school years, raising parent expectations, stronger knowledge of parents in developing IEP goals, stronger participation by adult agencies (DRS, others), more focus on students with 504 plans, and better understanding of accommodations at college.

Proposed solutions from the group included: early start on transition with a stronger focus on employment, better understanding by schools and parents regarding resources, better understanding of student and parent rights, leaving the high school building after 4 years and gaining experiences in other settings before graduation, greater use of post-secondary options, and greater evaluation of post-high school outcomes. In terms of who needs to be involved with these solutions, the group came up with a lengthy list, including the legislature, Governor, public agencies, parents, people with disabilities, employers, school districts, higher education, and vocational schools. The suggestions for how this change should occur included incorporating transition into school improvement plans, and promoting the scaling-up of evidenced-based transition practices in all school districts.

Issues for Consideration and Potential Next Steps

In many ways, transition is the catalyst for the long-term success of Employment First. If Illinois can take the current transition pipeline from schools to facility based or non-work services and/or unemployment, and redirect this pipeline to employment in the community, the expansion of workforce participation via Employment First will become a reality.

One of the primary challenges of transition is the locally controlled nature of education, creating major challenges in having a consistent approach to transition across the state. IDEA, the federal law that specifies the requirements for transition, has fairly strong language in terms of transition requirements and expected outcomes. The challenge is application of these requirements, ensuring that they are enforced, and as noted by the work group, that the focus is not just on compliance, but actual outcomes. As the state looks at improvements in transition, consideration must be given to what elements of transition the state has control and influence over, and determine how to intervene in those areas to improve employment outcomes.

In consideration of transition, a core philosophy should be ensuring that high school students with disabilities have similar employment experiences as other young people, including gaining their first work experiences after school and on summer vacation. The challenge in this regard is that supporting such efforts is not always a typical education system role, and yet in terms of students with disabilities, schools are expected to assist with employment-related needs.

As Illinois works to improve transition outcomes, consideration should given to the following strategies, which echo many of the comments and suggestions of the work group:

- INCREASED PARENT AWARENESS: Through education and training, ensure that parents are aware of their rights in terms of transition, and provide assistance to parents in understanding how to actively participate in the IEP team and develop effective IEP goals in terms of their teen's transition.
- EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS EARLY: Create an expectation early on among young people, parents, and educators, that when students with disabilities leave school they will have jobs, and work and live in the community like all other citizens.
- DEVELOP CURRICULA: Develop curricula for teachers and parents that emphasize evidence-based, transition practices that lead to employment.
- CHANGES IN RULES AND REGULATIONS: Consider revisiting the Illinois Administrative Code Part 226 and other State Board of Education Rules impacting transition, to determine if they need to be strengthened in terms of transition and employment. As part of such a review, the state may wish to consider policies that make it clear that employment in the community is the expected outcome of transition, and that prohibit or discourage the use of facility-based services during transition or as an outcome. Another potential policy is prohibiting or limiting the presence of students on high school campuses after age 18, and encouraging employment and use of other settings during the last few years of school enrollment, for those who remain enrolled until age 22.
- EXPAND USE OF TRANSITION COORDINATORS: The creation of Transition Coordinator positions within school districts has been found to be an effective strategy in ensuring that transition services are occurring properly and focused on the right priorities. Illinois may wish to consider mechanisms for encouraging expanded use of such positions throughout the state. It is important that the competencies and credentials for such positions be clearly delineated to help ensure their effectiveness, and positions must be designed in a way that other staff still recognize their responsibilities in the transition process, rather than assuming the Transition Coordinator will handle all transition responsibilities. In addition Transition Coordinator positions must be dedicated full-time positions, not an "add-on" to an existing staff's workload.
- INTEGRATE STUDENTS WITHIN EXISTING CAREER EDUCATION PROGRAMS: Instead of focusing on creating separate work experience programs for students with disabilities, integrate students with disabilities in existing career and technical education programs, career exploration, employment and internship options that are available to all students, and use the disability support services to assist in their participation. Similarly, develop linkages with the workforce development system, so that young people with disabilities have access to their youth services and programs (e.g., summer jobs programs).
- EXPAND APPRENTICESHIPS AND INTERNSHIPS: Examine the current availability of apprenticeships and internship programs to young people, and determine how young people with disabilities can be integrated within these. Additionally, consider strategies for expansion of employment internship/apprenticeships specifically for individuals with disabilities that are fully integrated within the workforce.
- EXPLORE USE OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS: Examine how vocational and technical schools are currently supporting students with disabilities and determine if there

are ways that more students with disabilities could utilize these programs to build their job skills and gain experience.

- INCREASE USE OF POST-SECONDARY SETTINGS: Encourage stronger use of post-secondary settings through greater awareness of the right to accommodations, etc. and through more systematic efforts with college and university disability coordinators. As part of such efforts, Illinois should examine best practices for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities (see www.thinkcollege.net).
- EXPAND USE OF SERVICE LEARNING: Illinois should consider efforts for greater use of service learning leading to employment as part of the transition experience (see National Service Inclusion Project - www.serviceandinclusion.org and Next Step Project).
- ENHANCE TRANSITION TRACKING: Examine the current tracking system for students in transition and determine if enhancements can be made to enhance real-time monitoring of services, as well as evaluation of outcomes. As part of overall improved efforts for data collection, Indicator 13 (measurement of transition services) & Indicator 14 (measurement of post-school outcomes) should be closely monitored both in terms of results and to ensure they are truly reflective of the effectiveness of transition in Illinois. This includes ensuring that the response rate is maximized, and to obtain a breakout regarding the percentage of individuals in facility-based services and being paid less than minimum wage. (Information on Indicator 13 & 14 specific to Illinois are on the Illinois State Board of Education website.)
- THE IMPORTANCE OF REAL WORK EXPERIENCE, NOT A "JOBS PROGRAM": At the core of good transition practices is ensuring that students gain real work experience while in school, and receive career guidance that allows them to consider and explore a wide array of options. A strong partnership between schools, parents, the business community, and the community at large are critical to ensure this. Within this must be a clear understanding by school personnel of best practice in employment (individual job matches, use of natural supports, experience in the community, etc.) and avoidance of the classic "jobs program" in the school (e.g., cleaning cafeteria tables, working in the school library). This requires schools finding the resources and developing the capacity to assist students with their employment needs in partnership with the students and parents. Part of the challenge in this regard includes avoiding ongoing dependence on school personnel for job supports.

Career Advancement

Career advancement, beyond the transition years, was not specifically addressed by the work group, but is an area that needs to be given consideration. If individuals with disabilities are going to experience true employment success in a way that results in stable employment at wages that increase financial independence, the ability to enhance job skills as adults is critically important. As part of its Employment First efforts, Illinois should consider how individuals with disabilities could enhance their current job skills through further education and training programs (e.g., short-term certificate programs, employer/industry sponsored initiatives, etc.). The disability service system, with its expertise on accommodations and supports, could look at how it can work more closely with such programs, to "stretch the boundaries" of individuals who can participate and successfully complete such programs, expanding their ability to take advantage of the opportunities in today's labor market.

6. FAMILY AND INDIVIDUAL AWARENESS/EXPECTATIONS

Summary of Work Group Discussion

The actions steps developed by the work group on Family and Individual Awareness and Expectations included providing education and awareness to families on employment, creating an expectation regarding employment in all layers of the system, getting information about best practices to parents and individuals, and a clear and consistent message from caretakers and medical personnel at an early age regarding the expectation that as young people with disabilities grow up, they should be prepared to enter the general workforce like all other individuals. In terms of who needs to be involved in the change process, the group indicated this should include school systems, early intervention, health care personnel, social workers, Illinois State Board of Education, Local 708 Boards, post-secondary education, and the state legislature. In terms of how the change process should occur, the group felt this should occur top down via policy, legislative avenues, and also bottom up via families and individual demands, with an organized consistent message.

Issues for Consideration and Potential Next Steps

Changing family and individual awareness and expectations regarding employment is a critical component of Employment First. Individuals with disabilities receive very mixed messages regarding both their ability to become successfully employed as well as the expectation of being employed like other adults. Families also receive similar mixed messages. For individuals born with a disability, these mixed messages start at an early age, and continue on into adulthood. For individuals who become disabled as adults, the mixed messages from Social Security, public systems, family, and friends, often reinforce that having a disability equals no longer employable. As noted by the work group, countering this, requires a clear and consistent message reinforcing Employment First principles – that individuals with disabilities can work, should expect to work, and like other adults in our society be employed in the general workforce.

Identifying Information Sources

The avenues for a pro-employment message must be via trusted sources. It is important to be expansive in consideration of potential sources. A starting point for is mapping out the full range of entities that serve as information and communication mechanisms for individuals and families, including: general disability advocacy groups, disability specific advocacy groups (e.g., The ARC, NAMI, Learning Disabilities Association of Illinois, Illinois Down Syndrome), schools, health care workers, service providers, parent and family networks. Once these avenues have been identified, the next step is identifying the avenues these entities use for communication: newsletters, websites, conferences, social media, etc., and then determining how the Employment First message can be integrated within them.

Creating the Message

Illinois should consider what the primary message should be in terms of content. To an extent, the message is going to vary depending on the audience, but may include:

- The general premise of Employment First and the efforts of Illinois regarding Employment First.

- A clear basic message that individuals with disabilities are capable of working in the community.
- Expectations that individuals with disabilities can work successfully and have careers like anyone else – and that the ways to accomplish that start with the same strategies used by anyone else (beginning work as a teenager, gaining experience, etc.).
- The shift, in Illinois and nationally, to community employment with reduced reliance on facility-based services and traditional day programs.
- The benefits of employment, both financial and non-financial.
- Not allowing public benefit issues to become a barrier to employment and specific guidance on benefit issues.
- Addressing common fears and challenges regarding employment: safety and security, transportation, impact on disability, etc.
- Information on accommodations and assistive technology.
- Information on employment rights and responsibilities.
- Information on best practices in transition leading to employment outcomes, including incorporation of employment into IEPs.
- Information on best practices for employment services and support (individual planning, use of natural supports, full integration in the workforce, etc.).
- Understanding service options and funding sources.
- Guidance on choosing a service provider for meeting employment needs

Individual success stories are very powerful, and should be integrated within these messages.

Examples of Materials

In developing materials, and creating a message, it is suggested that Illinois look at the wide range of materials for individuals, families, and others that already exist, to determine if they are useful as is, or can be utilized as a basis for creating materials. A few examples include:

- NICHCY
  - *Employment Connections* - http://nichcy.org/schoolage/transitionadult/employment
  - *Transition Goals in the IEP* - http://nichcy.org/schoolage/transitionadult/goals
- Pacer Center
  - *Transition Planning and Employment* - http://www.pacer.org/tatra/resources/transitionemp.asp
  - *Resources on Preparing for Employment* - http://www.pacer.org/tatra/resources/empprep.asp
- Institute for Community Inclusion
  - *Starting with Me: A Guide to Person-Centered Planning for Job Seekers* - www.communityinclusion.org/article.php?article_id=54&type=topic&id=11
  - *Getting the Most from the Public Vocational Rehabilitation System* - http://www.communityinclusion.org/article.php?article_id=129

Use of Peer Networks
One of the most powerful tools for increasing awareness and support for Employment First is the use of peer-to-peer networks – i.e., individuals with disabilities speaking to others with a disability, families talking to families, etc. It is suggested that Illinois consider how to help organize and support these types of peer-to-peer efforts. These could include developing peer-to-peer presentations that could then be presented at meetings, conferences, etc. An example of such an approach is in Massachusetts, supported by the states Department of Developmental Disabilities, where self-advocates have been supported in creating a curriculum on employment and job seeking that they now present to groups around the state. The peer support networks prevalent in mental health programs can also be effective in this regard.

Inclusion of Cross-Cultural Issues
As messages are developed and delivered, it is critically important that cross-cultural issues be considered, particularly given the racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity within Illinois. As with program development, it is important to consider the differing views of disability among various cultures, and how messages should be framed so that they are perceived positively within a cultural framework. Part of this is also ensuring that outreach and information sharing includes diverse cultures and communities. The Center for Capacity Building on Minorities with Disabilities Research, at the University of Illinois Chicago can be a resource in this regard - http://disabilityempowerment.org

7. BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Summary of Work Group Discussion

The Business and Community Development group at the summit developed four objectives:

- Engaging employers and the business community.
- Building networks among providers for coordinated engagement of employers, and collecting and sharing effective strategies.
- Developing forums for engagement with employers and employer groups, to create understanding of disability, learn how to improve skill development and training, and create mechanisms for productive discourse and problem solving.
- Address policy and system issues for improving business development, including greater use of workforce development system, fostering self-employment, use of tax incentives, and ensuring that people with disabilities are at the table when Illinois tries to attract new businesses.

In terms of who needs to be involved in the change process, the group included service providers, legislators and policymakers, state agencies, business groups, employers and people with disabilities.

Issues for Consideration and Potential Next Steps

It is not possible to fulfill the vision of Employment First without the willingness of employers to hire individuals with disabilities. One of the fundamental goals of employer and business engagement is the critical need to do so in a way that ensures reinforcement of an individualized approach to job development and job placement, and promotes job seekers with disabilities as a diverse competent group with a variety of skills and abilities.

There is often a thought that generally raising awareness among employers about hiring people with disabilities and providing training to employers will result in increased hiring. However the results of such approaches are typically negligible. Too often there have been well-intended outreach campaigns that have reinforced the concept of individuals with disabilities as a homogeneous group and/or have simply had little real impact in terms of actually increasing employer interest in hiring people with disabilities. (for further discussion on this topic, see "Enough with the Employer Awareness Already!", by Richard Luecking of TransCen).

Ultimately, the best job development is one person and one job at a time, using and expanding on the strategies used by any job seeker. At the same time, there have been various efforts around the country to work with employers in a more coordinated fashion through job development networking groups and similar arrangements. The recent report by the National Organization on Disability that reported a low degree of satisfaction by employers in regards to service providers (www.2010DisabilitySurveys.org/octsurvey), clearly calls for different and more responsive approaches with employers. As noted by the summit work group, part of the efforts in Illinois need to be focused on promoting ongoing dialogue with employers regarding how businesses and service providers can work together to mutually meet each other's needs.

The following are specific suggestions Illinois may wish to consider in enhancing employer engagement and expanding employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities:

- OPPORTUNITIES FOR ONGOING BUSINESS COMMUNITY/PROVIDER DIALOGUE: Develop opportunities for ongoing dialogue between the business community and service providers, in a way that is not focused on immediate job openings, but rather as an opportunity to develop mechanisms and models that are mutually responsive to employer needs, job seekers with disabilities, and the programs that assist them.
- GREATER USE OF LMI: Work with the Illinois workforce development system on mechanisms for ensuring access by disability service providers and job seekers with disabilities to labor market information (LMI) in a way that promotes general understanding regarding the diversity of the labor market, as well as an ability to use LMI to meet the needs of individual job seekers.
- STRONGER PARTNERSHIPS WITH WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Develop partnerships with workforce development and economic development to ensure that individuals with disabilities are included in employer initiatives and business start-ups.
- CREATE REGIONAL JOB DEVELOPER NETWORKS: Consider the development of regional job developer networking groups for peer support, and more coordinated efforts regarding job development in a way that is respectful of individual job seeker needs, rights to privacy, and avoids reinforcing stereotypes. Examples of such a network include the Chicagoland Provider Leadership Network at disabilityworks, and the Rhode Island Employment Services Network. For further discussion of this topic, see the ICI publication, *Increasing Placement Through Professional Networking*.
- INCREASE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT: Develop strategies to increase public employment at the federal, state, and local government level, including awareness of the federal government's initiatives under Schedule A, that can be utilized at federal offices and facilities in Illinois. [Information on these federal efforts is available from the EEOC LEAD Initiative.] Work to create similar public employment efforts at the state and local level.
- INCREASE EMPLOYMENT WITH FEDERAL CONTRACTORS: With the increased requirements from the Office of Federal Contract Compliance for federal contractors to take affirmative action in employing individuals with disabilities, undertake efforts to ensure understanding of these efforts by individuals with disabilities and service providers, and creation of linkages with federal contractors.
- ENHANCE AVAILABILITY OF SELF-EMPLOYMENT: Develop strategies to ensure that self-employment is a viable option for more individuals with disabilities. The use of resources available via the Small Business Administration, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and other resources should be part of this focus to ensure that they are available and responsive to entrepreneurs with disabilities.
- UTILIZE JOB CREATION/JOB CARVING, NOT JUST DEMAND STRATEGIES: As part of staff development, ensure that programs and staff are well versed in strategies for job creation and job carving, and developing opportunities with employers based on identified employer needs that match with job seeker interests, rather than simply focusing on existing job openings.

Community Development

While the work group at the Employment Summit focused on employer relationships, there are other community resources that should be also be considered as part of addressing employment needs. A primary example is community development to address transportation issues. As previously noted, the resources of Easter Seals Project Action (http://projectaction.easterseals.com) and the Community Transportation Association of America (www.ctaa.org) are excellent national resources for assisting with transportation. However, addressing the transportation needs of job seekers with disabilities requires not just accessing national experts, but linking with other members of the local community with similar transportation needs, and engaging transportation providers, planning councils, civic leaders, etc. at a local level. The Interactive Public and Specialized Transportation Information Management System, and Human Service Transportation Planning Process (www.utc.uic.edu/tranpro) are good resources for a starting point in this regard.

Transportation is just one example of how Illinois can engage in community development to meet the goals of Employment First efforts. Similarly, Illinois should consider other options for engaging community resources in support of Employment First, including civic groups, community colleges, anti-poverty programs, community-based minority organizations, etc. to gain their support for moving the workforce participation of Illinois citizens with disabilities forward.

Employment First in Illinois: Next Steps

- **Forming of work groups**: At the end of the summit, it was agreed that work groups would be formed around the seven areas identified. These work groups will take the initial framework developed for each of these issues, and from there create a more detailed work plan for addressing each of these areas, and then work on implementation of that plan. Some existing groups may be identified to expand their role to serve also as the Employment First workgroup if there is an alignment of focus. The specific strategies discussed within this report under each of the seven areas can be used as a basis and starting point for development of these work plans.

- **Electronic communication mechanism:** It was also decided that some type of electronic information sharing mechanism would be set up through a message board, list serv, or social networking platform. The group may wish to also give consideration to use of an on-line project management platform that allows for easy sharing and storage of documents and centralized communication among a work group (e.g., Base Camp, Dropbox, Box.com).

- **Oversight and coordination of efforts:** At least initially, it is assumed that the Employment and Economic Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities Task Force will serve in an oversight and coordination role in terms of these various Employment First work groups. One of the initial needs to be addressed is the governance and coordination structure for these groups, and the role of the Task Force within the overall Employment First effort. It is recommended that mechanisms and structure be put in place for management and coordination of these various work groups, to ensure they continue to make forward progress, and that their work and efforts are reflective of the values and philosophy decided upon at the Employment First Summit, as well as Employment First as a whole.

Conclusion

Employment is a primary means for participation by adults in American society. Individuals without jobs not only live lives characterized by financial poverty - but also lives characterized by poverty in terms of relationships, a sense of purpose, and a sense of fulfillment. For too long, too many individuals with disabilities in Illinois and across the country have been non-participants in the general workforce, and the cost on an individual and societal basis has been huge. The Employment First movement is an effort to make a fundamental change in that dynamic, using the collective wisdom of the past 30+ years that clearly shows that with the right type of assistance and support, individuals with disabilities can succeed at employment in the general workforce.

The Illinois Employment First Summit provided a strong basis for moving forward to a time and place when employment in the general workforce is truly the first and preferred option for all citizens of Illinois with disabilities. This report is an effort to both document the ideas generated during the summit, and to provide a blueprint and specific action items within the seven areas identified for making Employment First a reality in Illinois. The success of this effort however, will be dependent on a number of factors. These include:

- Ongoing leadership from state leaders that maintains the vision and focus on Employment First, and ensures there is accountability for the actions and outcomes necessary to realize that vision.
- The willingness of those involved to believe in and embrace the common vision of Employment First.
- A recognition that realizing this vision will require collective action, and changes in both current thinking and practice by everyone - including policymakers, service systems, service providers, employers, individuals with disabilities, and families.
- A willingness by all involved to devote the significant time, energy, and resources necessary to move forward on this blueprint.
- A recognition that this is a long-term effort, that will require working steadily on fundamental systems change and a multitude of initiatives and details, while still maintaining a clear vision and adherence to the vision and goals of Employment First.

All of the attendees at the Employment First Summit made clear that the time for action is now, and that Employment First must avoid a fate of empty words and empty promises on behalf of people with disabilities. There is no doubt that through strong leadership and ongoing commitment by all to undertake the necessary actions, and a willingness to face the challenges ahead, that employment in the general workforce will be the first and preferred option for the citizens of Illinois with disabilities. The end result will be lives characterized not only by economic empowerment and full participation in the economic mainstream, but the opportunity for each individual to truly realize their potential and become full participants in our society.

"There are always two choices. Two paths to take.
One is easy. And its only reward is that it's easy." - Anonymous

"The bottom line of the social section is changed lives." – Peter Drucker

Appendices

Appendix A: Summit World Café Exercise – Summary of Results

Appendix B: Documentation of Summit Strategic Planning

Appendix C: APSE Statement on Employment First

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Appendix F: Health and Disability Advocates: Medicaid Fiscal Authorities for Employment Functions/Services

Appendix G: Illinois Employment First Summit Agenda

Appendix H: Illinois Employment First Summit Attendees

Appendix A:

Illinois Employment First Summit
World Café Exercise

Summary of Results

APPENDIX A

Illinois Employment First Summit World Café Exercise
Summary of Results

The initial group exercise at the Employment First Summit was a World Café. The purpose of this exercise was to generate a free flow of ideas and provide the basis for the beginning stages of development of strategies to move forward on Employment First.

World Café is a facilitation method where individuals work in small groups, to discuss a key question in three round. All groups discuss the same question each round. Except for the table facilitator, participants switch tables during each round (i.e., people don't stay in the same groups).

The three questions for the World Café at the Illinois Employment First Summit were:

1. What is employment success for individuals with disabilities in Illinois?
2. What types of assistance should be available to achieve that success?
3. What does an effective employment support system look like?

The following is a summary of the responses generated during the World Café exercise. The information below is intended to provide documentation of the exercise. Editing has been done in an effort to combine redundant items, and to organize them into categories for easier interpretation. However, no additions or changes have been made in terms of the actual responses.

WHAT IS EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN ILLINOIS?

General Elements

- Make employment the assumption
- Having a live worth living
- Not being constrained by handcuffs of system
- Inclusion in fabric of the workforce – not in segregated/isolated environment
- No stigma
- Support a person in their dream to follow a career path

Monetary/financial benefits

- Enough money to live independently
- Enough income to live on
- Self-sufficient
- Minimum wage or better
- Prevailing wage
- Benefits – access to health, paid time, retirement, etc.

Equal opportunity

- A level playing field for job seekers and employees with disabilities
- Dignity of risk and freedom to take risk
- Same measures of success as other people in the community
- High expectations for the individual and system
- People viewed the same as anyone else

Good Job Match

- More than "got a job"
- Match job with abilities and interests – not just any job
- Matching skills with the job
- Working with individual's strengths
- Mutual benefit to the employer

Opportunities to Build Skills and Advance

- Skill development
- Opportunities and the ability to advance
- Longevity on the job
- Opportunities to change jobs

Types of Employment

- Employment across industries
- Having a choice about the kind of work and place of work

- Development of relationships in the community

Supportive Work Environment

- A universal environment that is responsive to every employee's needs
- Employers are educated and comfortable with disability
- Supportive employers who "buy in" to hiring a person with a significant disability

Self- Employment

- Self-employment for those who want it

Transition

- Going from school to employment in the community

WHAT TYPES OF ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO ACHIEVE THAT SUCCESS?

Quality Assistance and Support as Needed

- Assistance as needed in finding and keeping a job
- Employer as primary forum of support – use of natural supports
- Availability of ongoing quality supports as necessary – but only as necessary
- Relying on job coach only as necessary
- Individualized supports
- Availability of after hours supports
- Opportunities/supports/encouragement to take risks
- Availability of peer mentoring and peer support

Accommodations

- Knowledge of and access to reasonable accommodations
- Assistive technology – individualized and training on

Financial Assistance

- Financial support with job related needs – clothes, equipment, credentials etc.

Job Development

- Quality job development – individualized, person-centered
- Effective employer engagement
- Target more to small businesses – use tax credits more
- Someone to broker relationships
- Identify employer needs and match them

Job Search Issues

- Support in dealing with criminal records
- Strategies for dealing with pre-employment tests

Job Counseling

- Assistance with identifying strengths
- Career counseling – not just a job

Employer Awareness and Supports

- Employer buy-in –support from private businesses to change perspectives
- Supports to employers as needed
- Employer awareness and education
    - Technology use
    - How to accommodate/modify
    - Know their obligations
    - ADA

Education and Training

- Access to education and training for jobs individual wants
- Supported education

Opportunities for Work Experience

- Opportunities to try out jobs
- Exposure to different jobs
- Internships – multiple opportunities
- Work experience early – while in school
- Multiple opportunities for work experiences

Education and School Transition

- Start early to think about work and how school experience supports this
- Transition services and supports that lead to employment

Education/Advocacy with Job Seekers

- Teaching individuals what to ask for – what their needs are
- Supports and encouragement to move up or move to different jobs
- Support to realize "choice driven options"
- Support for self-determination starting at a young age

Financial Counseling

- Benefits and work incentives education, awareness, assistance – job seeker and family
- Financial literacy training
- Money management training

Transportation

- Transportation options for people to get to work
- Transportation in rural areas

Family Support

- Families supportive
- Education and support for families to encourage work as a goal

Funding/Systems Issues

- Waiver needs rewrite – incentives for providers to want to find jobs
- Funding streams that are more integrated; break funding silos
- More creative individualized support options
- Sufficient funding levels for supported employment ($13/hour is insufficient)
- Funding not driven by contact hours
- Moving out of facility-based environments

Staff

- Quality staff to provide assistance
- Creativity in terms of jobs and job supports
- Job developers and job coaches who are well trained
- Use community colleges to develop/train job coaches so you have trained/skilled job coaches that have certification
- Training provided within all divisions and community partners

WHAT DOES AN EFFECTIVE EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SYSTEM LOOK LIKE?

Overall Philosophy/Vision

- Has a blueprint for sustainability for community employment on an individual and programmatic basis
- A shared vision – universal understanding
- All systems believe person can work
- Allows acceptable risk
- Not time limited – understands that disability does not go away
- Employment results in individual reward and achievement
- Supports success of all people
- Supports risk taking
- No one size fits all mode
- Restorative in value/vision/approach
- Allows for both support and independence, in both regulation and mindset
- Person centered – no "one solution design"
- Involves the voice of people with disabilities
- Meaningful participation by individuals with disabilities
- System held accountable to outcomes
- "System: is broadly defined

Community Based Services

- Services integrated in the community
- Move away from sheltered workshops/facility-based services

Funding and Rates

- Flexible funding not tied to 1:1 time with job seeker
- Integrated funding streams – no silos
- Adequate resources
- Philosophically as well as practically – money follows the person for outcomes
- Coordinated rate system that avoid different rates among different agencies that are confusing and restricting
- Pay/reimburse against outcomes and measures
- Funding focused on community integration/independence
- HFS funding available for communication devices, equipment etc. as part of job support needs

Schools, Transition, Education

- Schools have expectation that students with disabilities will work in the community
- Facilitate opportunities for real jobs while in school
- Start early to think about work and how school experience supports this
- Transition plans individualized, thoughtful, and include real employment objectives – not just fulfilling the process
- Include community partners in transition that can meet specific student needs

- Coordinated transition with adult service system
- Higher education and community college systems are responsive to accommodations and support needs

Service Structure

- A cross-disability system that avoids duplication
- Services integrated and not working at odds
- Use strengths of each system to serve needs of person
- Maximize eligibility across agencies, so individual has access to what is best for their needs, and choice over services
- Navigable with a centralized entity that leads people to proper support
- Holistic - not limited to employment – also includes things that impact employment
- Use of workforce development/One-Stops as part of services

Service Delivery

- Individualize and customize to person – example in MH: know integrate MH and voc supports; strength base;
- Use of creative individualized support options
- Allows person to try out different opportunities

Stakeholders

- Communication between stakeholders
- Education among stakeholders

Services Available

- Discovery/planning/job exploration system so people find where they function best, in term of job skills, and mental and physical capacity needs of job
- Individual benefits planning
- Viable job finding model
- Working with the employer to educate/train
- Assistance with non-work supports, such as, hygiene, getting to work on time, etc.
- Effective and responsive building of employer relationships
- Quality job site analysis
- Robust and flexible way to get know a business and their needs, and match to the skills and conditions of an individual
- Support for self-employment
- Supports provided through life transitions
- Support for people who commit crimes while symptomatic (e.g, MH)

Data

- Integrated data systems

Parent Partnerships

Parent partnerships with schools and community agencies

Appendix B:

Illinois Employment First Summit

Documentation of Summit Strategic Planning

APPENDIX B

Illinois Employment First Summit
Documentation of Summit Strategic Planning

As a result of the morning discussion at the Employment Summit, seven focus areas were identified as areas of action for moving Illinois forward on Employment First.

- Public agency systems change and policy
- Data measurement, evaluation, accountability
- Service and support capacity/development
- Funding – paying for what we want, creating incentives
- Transition, post-secondary education, career advancement
- Family and individual awareness/expectations
- Business and community development

In small groups, brainstorming and initial planning was done regarding how to address each of these areas. The results were then reported out to the larger group. The following is a summary of this initial planning conducted in each area. While a proscribed format was suggested, groups varied in their level of documentation. The information is presented and summarized in a way that best captures each group's work and ideas. Editing has been done in an effort to clarify the information presented. However, the information is presented simply as documentation of each group's work. No additions or changes have been made in terms of the actual content.

1. Public Agency Systems Change and Policy

Vision (Long-Term Goal)

- Responsive
- Easy Access
- Coordinated
- Seamless
- Consumer focus/oriented
- Measurable objectives
- Interagency shared goals/measurements – equal owner/same definitions
- Same data systems
- Eliminate silos

Current Status

- Silos
- Non-coordinated
- Separate dollar sources
- Different dollar priorities
- Fragmented
- Individuals, not system, drive any levels of coordination
- Organizational cultures foster fragmentation

What needs to change

- Stronger coordination (policies and procedures need alignment)
- Integrated planning
- Coordinated dollars/maximize resources
- Clarify responsibilities (e.g., DDD and DRS)
- Location of service delivery
- Equal access with supports for special needs
- Information sharing with families needs to be consistent
- Evaluation and re-evaluation process for individuals
- Financial incentives

Information Gaps

- Successes of other states
- Basic employment data
- Coordinated data systems
- Federal options

Actions for Changes

- Create new positions
- Qualified coordinator in Governor's office

- Coordinated plan for state agencies (p. 9 – Task Force Report)
- Work with appropriate state advisory bodies in setting goals, objectives, action steps
- Data integration
- Integrated strategic plans
- Tie dollars to outcomes
- Monitoring
- Leverage consent decree

Who needs to be involved?

- Local government including school districts
- Community college systems
- State agency heads, staff
- Advisory bodies
- Advocates/consumers
- Service agencies
- Parents
- Business representatives
- Academia
- Federal funding agencies

2. Data measurement, Evaluation, Accountability

Vision

- Collecting right data for quality assurance model of checks and balances
- To set targets to achieve within certain timeframe – i.e., P20 report for ISBE report – by X date will have certain employment increase by a certain percent
- Individual receives smart card printout of what they receive
- Employment needs to be an outcome measure that all providers needs to rely on
    - Evidence based
    - Numbers of certified job trainers

Action Steps

- Create multi-agency survey of current data being collected with goal of consolidating and collecting at one location
- Create state agreement of employment as indicator of pay per performance
- Create database for individuals to see what services they are receiving
- Include families and individuals with disabilities in data collection
- Consult with other states with employment data systems

Who Should Be Involved

- Family surveys/participant
- Legislators
- Technical assistance from states with indicators

How Should Change Process Occur

- Interagency agreement
- Collaborative data collection
- Connecting existing data warehouses (HFS/ISBE)

Information Gaps

- Breakdown of specific disabilities – i.e., learning disabled not accounted for; breakdown of SSI
- Need: national clearinghouse – baseline data on SSI recipients
- How do we measure if people are over qualified? Just getting a job is just a start, right job – i.e., disability works, employer match – not going to be reopened once a person gets a job – evaluate program through eyes of a person who uses the program

3. Service and Support Capacity/Development

Vision

- Services providers are able to connect employee/employer
- Understand goals and needs
- Connect people

Current Status

- Below the expectation
- Success is not widespread; provider specific
- Service providers are comfortable with status quo
- Individuals with disabilities are considered second class
- Lack of opportunities
- Learned helplessness on part of individual
- Lack of understanding regarding benefits

What Needs to Change

- Education and training for the disability services providers
- Skill development for providers
- Remove the status quo mentality
- Sustainability for service providers
- Collection of data by service providers
- Availability of different type of services
- Change expectations of service providers

Action Steps

- Create common language among system
- Change the Mindset of Service Providers
    - Share stories of success
    - Communicate vision from state
    - Make clear: success of employee with disability comes first
- Create clear standards for service providers around employment services (certification, quality assurance)
- Create ongoing staff development on employment for service provider staff
- Ensure consistent knowledge regarding benefit issues
- Build provider networks and conduct provider roundtables
- Have providers serve on Transition Planning Committees

Who should be involved?

- Service providers
- Public systems
- Trade organizations
- People with disabilities
- Employers

4. Funding – Paying for What We Want, Creating Incentives

Current Status

- Funding is not flexible – based on contact hours
- Medicaid match drives funding – no general grants
- Wide variation in funding systems requirements/payments despite support for similar employment services (DDD, MH, DRS)
- Rates insufficient to provide quality supports
- DDD – currently need prior approval for supported employment

Vision

- Support needs are identified holistically – funding is utilized from multiple sources and build around person's needs
- Funding is flexible and unlinked to living setting
- DDD – Funding proportions are reversed with vast majority going to community employment rather than facility based services
- Smooth transition of funding from DRS to long-term support dollars
- Rates provide incentive for community employment
- Seamless transition from school to adult services regarding funding

Proposed Actions

- DDD – require prior approval for sheltered employment/facility based services; presume funding/eligibility for supported employment (vs. SEP)
- Systematically examine how Ticket to Work could be better leveraged to fund employment
- Consider how to systematically increase use of work incentives – PASS, IRWE, BWE – as a funding
- Develop strategies to utilize workforce development for supplemental sources for funding and services, including WIA funded training, youth services, education/training funds at community colleges, etc.
- Develop rate system based on true costs, and that provide incentives for employment
- Use funding from SODC closure toward community employment
- Need to make case regarding cost/benefit of employment supports as compared to facility-based day programs (IARF has data); also note that dropping individuals from services results in incarceration, emergency room visits, higher costs
- Develop clarity and clear mechanisms for handoff between DRS and MH/DD
- Maximize funding from education and other sources

Who needs to be involved?

- Provider community
- Funding entities
- Participants/advocates
- Public systems and policymakers
- Education and community colleges

5. Transition, Post-Secondary Education, Career Advancement

Current Status

- Varies depending on location
- No clear definition
- Transition – perceived differently in different schools
- Poor outcomes
- Too much emphasis on compliance, not on activities/outcomes
- Resources often not in place
- Networking not taking place – too minimal
- Low expectations
- Not enough choices/not individualized for students
- Resentments from non-special education
- Infrastructure not in place

What Needs to Change

- Adequate staff
- Competent staff
- Everyone needs an attitude and vision to have higher expectations
- Real world work experiences during school years
- Parent expectations
- Push for diploma rather than certificate of completion
- Parents knowledge of how to write good IEP goals
- Availability of accommodations and modifications
- Different ways of utilizing class ranking
- Stronger partnerships with DRS and other agencies
- More focus on students with 504 plans, especially psychiatric
- Better teacher training
- Better understanding about accommodations at college

Proposed solutions

- Better understanding of parent's rights – by families and educators
- Better understanding by schools and parents regarding resources
- Speaking about transition in a way that everyone understands
- Support for postsecondary options
- Start transition focused on employment early
- Comprehensive learning plans (individual) for all solutions
- Education from kindergarten to post secondary – more emphasis on transition
- Plan out existing services for 4 or 5 years out
- Leave high school campus after 4 years and gain experience in other settings

- More evaluation of post high school outcomes
- Tracking after college

Who Needs to be Involved

- Legislature
- Governor
- Public agencies
- Parents
- People with disabilities,
- Employers
- School districts
- Higher education
- Vocational schools
- Local government
- Community at large

How should the process occur

- Buy in from all involved
- Change needs to be equitable – cultural competency
- Get parents involved with regular parents group
- Cultivate leaders in school, etc. to change
- Class action lawsuit if needed
- Empower parents (parent mentor)
- Cultivate leaders

How Change Occurs

- Development of best practices – replication made consistent
- Transition built into school improvement plan
- Youth internships – well defined policy aligned with learning
- Use general guidelines from governor's taskforce

6. Family and Individual Awareness/Expectations

Action Areas and Steps

- Train families to demand employment
- Provide education and awareness to families
- Create expectation that everyone works
- Integrate expectation for employment in all layers of system
- Get information about best practices to parents and individuals
- Remove word unemployable from Illinois language
- Start with hospitals, doctors, nurses at early age– expectation of work
- Organized consistent message and infuse in systems change
- Ingrained expectation within all layers of service system

Who needs to be involved in change process

- Hospitals, Doctors, Nurses, Social Workers
- School Systems
- Early intervention
- Illinois State Board of Education
- Post secondary education
- Local 708 Board – CCDI
- Legislature

How should change process occur?

- Top Down – policy, legislative
- Via families and individual demands
- Organized consistent message (big billboard campaign)
- Ban workshops!

7. Business and Community Development

Objective # 1: Engage employers and the business community

- Sell skills and abilities
- Find out what the employer wants - what are their priorities
- Give them that person
- Tell the story
- Market the person

Objective # 2: Build networks among providers

- Build network among providers for coordinated engagement of employers
- Use to collect and share effective strategies
- Coordinated outreach/education with employers

Objective # 3: Develop Forums for Engagement with Employers

- Develop discussion forums to promote dialogue with employers and employer groups (BLN, Chamber of Commerce, etc.)
- Create understanding of disability
- Learn how to improve skill development and training
- Create a mechanisms for productive discourse and problem solving

Objective # 4: Policy and Systems Issues for Improving Business Development

- Utilize workforce development system
- As Illinois tries to attract new businesses, include people with disabilities at the table
- Examine efficacy/usefulness of tax credit for employers in hiring people with disabilities (like Missouri)
- Self-employment
- Workforce Centers
- Examine policies that are perceived as barriers by small business

Who needs to be involved in change process

- Service providers
- Legislators and policymakers
- State agencies
- Business groups
- Employers
- People with disabilities

Appendix C:

APSE Statement on Employment First

APSE Statement on Employment First

Employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred outcome in the provision of publicly funded services for all working age citizens with disabilities, regardless of level of disability.

Underlying Principles

- The current low participation rate of citizens with disabilities in the workforce is unacceptable.
- Access to "real jobs with real wages" is essential if citizens with disabilities are to avoid lives of poverty, dependence, and isolation.
- It is presumed that all working age adults and youths with disabilities can work in jobs fully integrated within the general workforce, working side-by-side with co-workers without disabilities, earning minimum wage or higher.
- As with all other individuals, employees with disabilities require assistance and support to ensure job success and should have access to those supports necessary to succeed in the workplace.
- All citizens, regardless of disability, have the right to pursue the full range of available employment opportunities, and to earn a living wage in a job of their choosing, based on their talents, skills, and interests.
- Implementation of Employment First principles must be based on clear public policies and practices that ensure employment of citizens with disabilities within the general workforce is the priority for public funding and service delivery.
- Inclusion or exclusion of the specific term "Employment First" does not determine whether a public system or agency has adopted Employment First principles. Such a determination can only be made in examining whether the underlying policies, procedures and infrastructure are designed for and ultimately result in increased integrated employment in the general workforce for citizens with disabilities.

Characteristics of Successful Implementation of Employment First

- There are measurable increases in employment of citizens with disabilities within the general workforce, earning minimum wage or higher with benefits.
- Greater opportunities exist for citizens with disabilities to pursue self-employment and the development of microenterprises.
- Employment is the first and preferred option when exploring goals and a life path for citizens with disabilities.

- Citizens with disabilities are employed within the general workforce, regardless of the severity of disability and assistance required.
- Young people with disabilities have work experiences that are typical of other teenagers and young adults.
- Employers universally value individuals with disabilities as an integral part of their workforce, and include people with disabilities within general recruitment and hiring efforts as standard practice.
- Individuals with disabilities have increased incomes, financial assets, and economic wealth.
- Citizens with disabilities have greater opportunities to advance in their careers, by taking full advantage of their individual strengths and talents.
- Funding is sufficient so that quality services and supports are available as needed for long-term employment success.
- A decision not to consider employment in the community for an individual is re-evaluated on a regular basis; the reasons and rationale for this decision are fully documented and addressed in service provision.

Adopted by the APSE Executive Board on October 11, 2010.

Appendix D:

SELN Employment First Resource List

Employment First Resource List

Revised April 2012

Introduction

The emergence of the concept of Employment First in the disability field has resulted in the development of a multitude of documents, including state legislation, policies, reports, articles, etc. The attached list, developed by the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN), is an attempt to provide a comprehensive listing of these documents, to serve as a resource to policymakers, advocates, and others on issues related to Employment First. A primary emphasis with this list has been to identify legislation, regulations, and policy directives that have resulted in official Employment First policies. In addition, a variety of other reports from individual states, as well as variety of documents that provide a national perspective, have been included.

In compiling this list, use of the term "Employment First" per se has not necessarily been a requirement for including or excluding a document. Instead the focus has been on documents that reinforce the principles of Employment First, that employment in the community should be the first and primary option for individuals with disabilities. There are number of examples (e.g., Washington State, Oklahoma) where the term "Employment First" is not part of the policy, and yet clearly the policy is an example of Employment First principles.

Eighteen states that have an official Employment First policy, based on legislation, policy directive, etc. have been identified including: **Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, Washington.** In some cases, these policies focus exclusively on individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In others, they are cross-disability. The other 13 states on this list have Employment First efforts and initiatives underway, but at this point it appears that an official Employment First policy has not been issued.

It is important to recognize that, in the course of developing this document, the focus has been on including as many examples as possible, particularly in terms of resources from individual states. The underlying rationale for doing so is to provide an understanding of the wide range of approaches to Employment First. Inclusion of specific policies and documents on this list should in no way be viewed as an endorsement of these documents, and in fact, the Employment First legislation/policies that have been developed vary significantly in terms of the strength and clarity of their language.

The wide range of attention and emphasis on Employment First has been encouraging, and provides a potential catalyst for the long needed increase in workforce participation for individuals with disabilities. At the same time, it is important to recognize that creation of documents, reports, and policies, in and of itself, will not result in increase in workforce participation, without a long-term commitment to action steps that make the Employment First vision a reality for all citizens with disabilities.

General Information on Employment First

1. **APSE PUBLICATIONS**
   a. **APSE Employment First Statement:** Statement outlining principles of Employment First - www.apse.org/docs/APSE%20Employment%20First%20Statement%20-%20FINAL-1.pdf
   b. **APSE Employment First White Paper:** "Establishing a National Employment First Agenda" paper from APSE - www.apse.org/docs/Employment%20First%20Paper%20609%5B1%5D.pdf
   c. **APSE Connections-Employment First:** Article from JTPR APSE Connections advocating a national Employment First agenda

2. **Alliance for Full Participation:** The Alliance for Full Participation (AFP) site contains a number of Employment First documents and updates from various states on their Employment First activities - www.allianceforfullparticipation.org

3. **Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Article – *Employment First: A Beginning Not an End*:** August 2011 Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities journal article summarizing the principles of Employment First - http://aaiddjournals.org/toc/mere/current

4. **NACDD Report – *The Time is Now: Embracing Employment First:*** November 2011 report from the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities, providing an overview of Employment First, with a particular focus on DD Council efforts - www.nacdd.org/documents/EmploymentFirstFINALNov132011_PRINT.pdf

5. **NASDDS Article – Workers First:** Article from June 2009 Community Services Reporter, published by National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services providing an overview of Employment First efforts - www.nasddds.org/pdf/WorkersFirst(Moseley).pdf

6. **NTAR Leadership Center Blog:** Blog post on Employment First by Wendy Parent, Kansas University - http://ntarseedingchange.blogspot.com/2010/03/employment-first.html

7. **ODEP-USDOL Employment First Memo:** January 2009 memo from the US Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy stressing importance of Employment First - www.dol.gov/odep/events/employmentfirst/employmentfirst.htm

8. **SELN PUBLICATIONS**
   a. **SELN Employment First Publication:** "Q & A's on State Employment First Policies": publication from the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) providing an overview of Employment First, and specific efforts in Colorado, Florida, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Washington State, Georgia, Minnesota, and Indiana - http://selnmembers.org/images/stories/site_documents/dmr%20request%20employment%20policy%203-08rev.pdf
   b. **SELN Maintaining Focus:** Article from March 2009 Community Services Reporter, published by National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services "Maintaining a Focus on Employment in Tough Economic Times" – intended to encourage state systems to maintain focus on employment despite current economic conditions - www.nasddds.org/pdf/MaintainingFocusOnEmployment.pdf

State Specific Information

1. **ARKANSAS –** Governor's Executive Order: Executive order establishing the Arkansas Employment First Initiative - www.arkdisabilityrights.org/doc/eo_1017.pdf

2. **CALIFORNIA**
   a. **CA Employment First Legislation Overview:** Overview of AB 287 from California State Council on Developmental Disabilities - www.scdd.ca.gov/Legislation/AB287/Learnabout-AB287_9-09combined.pdf
   b. **CA Legislation (passed):** Text of AB 287, California's Legislation on Employment First, signed into law in October 2009 - www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/09-10/bill/asm/ab_0251-0300/ab_287_bill_20091011_chaptered.pdf
   c. **Committee on Employment First:** Materials from State Council on Developmental Disabilities Committee on Employment First - www.scdd.ca.gov/Committee/EmploymentFirstCommittee.htm

3. **COLORADO:** Colorado Division for Developmental Disabilities rule 16.626 stating that integrated employment is considered the primary service option for adults Day Habilitation Services and Supports - www.imaginecolorado.org/documents/QA/RulesStandardsGuidelines/DDD/DivisionForDevelopmentalDisabilitiesRulesProgramServicesAndSupports.pdf

4. **CONNECTICUT**
   a. **CT Employment First Policy:** Employment First Policy issued by Connecticut Department of Developmental Services issue in April 2011 - http://www.ct.gov/dds/lib/dds/dds_manual/ic5/ic5po001_employment_first.pdf
   b. **CT Policy Regarding Employment as a Priority:** Companion to April 2011 Employment First policy regarding implementation steps in individual planning process: http://www.ct.gov/dds/lib/dds/dds_manual/ic5/ic5pr001_employment_first.pdf
   c. **CT DDS Newsletter:** Connecticut Department of Developmental Services self-determination newsletter discussing state's Employment First efforts - www.ct.gov/dds/lib/dds/self_determination/newsletters/sd_newsletter_june_2008.pdf

5. **DELAWARE**
   a. **Delaware Employment First Statement:** Statement from Delaware Division of Developmental Disabilities Services on Employment First - www.dhss.delaware.gov/ddds/emp_first.html
   b. **Delaware DDDS Newsletter:** Newsletter from Delaware DDDS with further details on Employment First - www.dhss.delaware.gov/ddds/files/learn_curve_june09.pdf

6. **FLORIDA Developmental Disabilities Council Employment First Statement:** Statement from Florida DD Council in support of Employment First - http://www.fddc.org/about/employment

7. **GEORGIA:** Employment First Georgia Website - www.employmentfirstgeorgia.org

8. **INDIANA**
   a. **IN APSE Employment First 2009 follow-up:** Summary of follow-up items from 2005 Indiana Employment First Summit - www.inapse.org/styles/inapse/defiles/summit%20update%2012-15-09.pdf
   B. **IN Employment First Fact Sheet:** Fact sheet summarizing 2005 Indiana Employment First Summit - www.apse.org/docs/IN_APSE_empl_first_fact_sheet.pdf

9. **IOWA**
   a. **Iowa's Employment First Initiative: A Call for Change of Historical Proportion:** Fall 2009 white paper outlining vision for an Employment First initiative in Iowa - www.allianceforfullparticipation.org/component/content/article/196-iowas-employment-first-initiative
   b. **Iowa Employment First Initiative Summary Points:** One-page summary of rationale for Employment First in Iowa
   c. **Iowa Employment First Initiative Summary of Findings:** October 2011 report - www.iowa-apse.org/summit/findings2.pdf

10. **KANSAS**
   a. **Kansas Employment First Legislation (passed):** Text of Kansas House Bill 2336 that establishes a statewide policy of employment first for all people with disabilities. Bill was signed into law in May 2011 - www.kslegislature.org/li/b2011_12/year1/measures/documents/hb2336_enrolled.pdf
   b. **Kansas Employment First Website:** Website with information on Employment First efforts in Kansas - http://employment1st.org
   c. **Kansas Employment First Oversight Commission:** Website with materials from commission established by Kansas legislature - www.kcdcinfo.com/index.aspx?NID=246
   d. **Kansas Employment First Initiative Work Group Information:** Information from the work group that undertook the initial Employment First efforts in Kansas - http://www.srs.ks.gov/agency/css/Pages/DDWorkgroups.aspx#employment1st
   e. **Kansas Report – Employment First Workgroup:** May 2009 from Employment First Initiative Work Group - www.apse.org/docs/aaaemployment_first_work_group_initial_report.pdf
   f. **Kansas Executive Orders:** Executive orders from the Governor of Kansas issued 8/26/10, related to employment of individuals in the community

11. **LOUISIANA:** Employment First policy statement from the Louisiana Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities - http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/OCDD/Other/Employment_First_MEMO.pdf

12. **MARYLAND**
   a. **Development Disabilities Administration Position Statement on Employment Services -** http://dhmh.maryland.gov/dda_md/Training/DDA91809.pdf
   b. **Employment First Overview: Overview of Maryland's Development Disabilities Administration Employment First initiative -** www.reinventingquality.org/docs/ColleenGauruder-08.pdf

13. **MASSACHUSETTS**
   a. **MA Employment First Policy:** 2010 policy issuance from Massachusetts Department of Developmental Disability Services
   b. **MA DDS RFQ:** Excerpts from 2009 Massachusetts Department of Developmental Disability Services service provider solicitation, highlighting a shift in Massachusetts to an Employment First Policy

14. MINNESOTA

a. **MN Employment First Summit Report I: Report of 2007 MN Employment First Summit:** A Manifesto on the Employment of Minnesotans with Disabilities in the Integrated, Competitive Workforce - www.mnapse.org/Employment-First-Report.pdf

b. **MN Employment First Summit Report II:** Report of 2008 MN Employment First Summit - A Progress Report on Employment First Performance in Minnesota - www.mnapse.org/Employment-First-Report-Summit-2.pdf

Minnesota Employment First Web Links:

- **Minnesota Employment Policy Initiative Website:** www.mn-epi.org/main
- **Minnesota Employment Training & Technical Assistance Website:** www.mntat.org/main
- **Minnesota Employment First Blogs:** http://employment1st.blogspot.com
  www.mn-epi.blogspot.com

15. MISSOURI: January 2011 Employment First Policy, issued by the Missouri Department of Mental Health, Division of Developmental Disabilities – www.dmh.mo.gov/docs/dd/employmentpolicyfinal.doc

16. NEW MEXICO Webinar: "Making Employment First a Reality in NM" webinar and text - www.health.state.nm.us/DDSD/meaningfullife/EmployFirstRsrcs.htm

17. NEW JERSEY: Governor's press release announcing that New Jersey is an Employment First state - http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lwdhome/press/2012/20120419_employment_first.html

18. NEW YORK

a. **NYS Office For People with Developmental Disabilities – Statewide Comprehensive Plan – 2010-2014:** October 2010 report indicating that "OPWDD is promoting *Employment First* as a preferred outcome for all people with developmental disabilities" - www.opwdd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/final507_2010-2014.pdf

b. **OPWDD 2011 Interim Report on State Plan**: February 2011 interim report on 2010-2014 OPWDD Statewide Comprehensive Plan, that includes summary of efforts on Employment First (pp. 6-7) - www.opwdd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Interim_5_07_Rpt_Final_2_15.pdf

c. **OMRDD 2010 Interim Report on State Plan**: February 2010 interim report on 2009-2013 OMRDD Statewide Comprehensive, that includes summary of efforts on Employment First (p. 5) - www.opwdd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/OMR_Interim_Report_2_10_Final.pdf

19. NORTH CAROLINA APSE Article: Article from North Carolina APSE calling for an Employment First Policy - www.ncapse.org/WhitePaperEmploymentFirst.pdf

20. NORTH DAKOTA Employment First Summit Report: October 2011 report summarizing the findings and plan of action resulting from the state's Employment First summit in October 2010 - www.independencecil.org/News.aspx?ID=22

21. OHIO

a. **Ohio Employment First Executive Order:** March 2012 Governor's Executive Order establishing an Employment First Policy and Taskforce to Expand Community Employment Opportunities for Working-Age Ohioans with Developmental Disabilities - www.olrs.ohio.gov/sites/olrs.ohio.gov/files/u5/gov-employ-exec-order-2012-05k.pdf

b. **SELF Waiver Employment First Policy:** Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities Self Empowered Life (SELF)Waiver, effective July 1, 2012, that institutes Employment First Policy. Documents available include waiver (Employment First reference on p. 76), Employment First Form, and PowerPoint providing overview of SELF Waiver - http://odmrdd.state.oh.us/medicaid/Pages/Self-Empowered-Life-Funding-(SELF)-waiver-.aspx

22. OKLAHOMA DDS Employment Policy: Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Services employment policy, stating that the optimal goal of waiver services is full-time employment in the community - www.okdhs.org/library/policy/oac317/040/07/0001000.htm

23. OREGON

a. **Oregon DDS Employment First Initiative:** Includes information on Oregon's Employment First Initiative with link to Oregon Office of Developmental Disability Services Policy on employment for working age individuals - www.dhs.state.or.us/dd/supp_emp/initiative.html

b. **Article on Employment First:** Opinion piece published in Oregon newspapers - http://theportlander.com/2010/03/16/employment-first-for-all-oregonians

c. **Oregon Employment First Plan:** Plan developed for implementation of Employment First in Oregon - https://www.sidestreetshop.com/stores/195/libraries/articulate/wise_or_ef_recommendations_paper_1_28_2011_final_w_o_copyright_notice_1_.pdf

24. PENNSYLVANIA

a. **PA Employment Legislation:** State legislation, passed in 1991, that mandates access to community employment - www.pacode.com/secure/data/055/chapter6000/subchapKtoc.html

b. **PA Employment Policy - General:** 2005 policy document from Pennsylvania Office of Mental Retardation on community employment as a priority - www.temple.edu/thetrainingpartnership/resources/mrBulletins/misc/00-05-07.pdf

c. **PA Employment Policy – ICFs/MR:** 2005 policy document from Pennsylvania Department of Public welfare on supporting community employment for individuals living in Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Mental Retardation, indicating community employment as a priority without regard to level of disability - www.temple.edu/thetrainingpartnership/resources/mrBulletins/icf/00-06-08.pdf

d. **PA Employment Policy – 1990**: 1990 policy document from Pennsylvania Office of Mental Retardation directing that community employment be considered as a service option before less integrated, more restricted options - www.temple.edu/thetrainingpartnership/resources/mrBulletins/misc/6000-90-06.pdf

25. RHODE ISLAND

a. **Employment First Summit Report:** Report of Employment First Summit held in March 2010 - www.rhodestoindependence.org/docs/final%20summary%20report.pdf

b. **Employment First Policy White Paper:** Paper discussing options for Employment First legislation in Rhode Island - www.rhodestoindependence.org/docs/Policy%20White%20Paper%20-%20Final%20%20-%2011.23.10.pdf

c. **1115 Waiver Group Report:** September 2009 paper which contains initial proposal for Rhode Island to be an Employment First state - www.ohhs.ri.gov/documents/documents09/Employmt_Wkgp_recs.pdf

26. TENNESSEE

a. **ARC of TN Statement**: Statement from ARC of Tennessee in support of Employment First - www.thearctn.org/Employment.php

b. **TN DMRS Employment First Statement:** 2003 statement of support from the Tennessee Division of Mental Retardation Services in support of Tennessee's Employment First! Initiative - www.onestops.info/resources/TN_CEP/Employment_First_Final.doc

c. **TN DMRS Newsletter 07:** 2007 Tennessee Division of Mental Retardation Services newsletter containing article on employment first – pp. 3-5 - http://tennessee.gov/dids/newsroom/publications/personally_speaking/march_07.pdf

d. **TN DMRS Provider Manual Excerpt:** Excerpt from 2005 Tennessee Division of Mental Retardation Services provider manual regarding Employment First, and requirements for vocational evaluation (situational assessment) every three years. To find this excerpt, go to the full manual and search for "Employment First" – www.state.tn.us/dids/provider_agencies/Provider%20Manual.pdf

e. **TN Employment First Overview:** Publication from the Institute for Community Inclusion providing an overview of Tennessee's Employment First policy - www.communityinclusion.org/article.php?article_id=202

27. TEXAS – Legislation (proposed): Text of Texas House Bill 785 requiring that employment services be structured to ensure employment of people with disabilities in integrated settings. Current status (7/11) is that bill has not been acted on. - www.statesurge.com/bills/hb-785-texas-452277

28. UTAH – Legislation (passed): Text of Utah House Bill, that requires that employment be the first priority for individuals with disabilities receiving publicly funded supports. Bill was signed into law in March 2011. - http://le.utah.gov/~2011/bills/hbillenr/hb0240.htm

29. VIRGINIA – Legislation (proposed): Text of Virginia House Bill HJ 633 to develop an Employment First Initiative - http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?111+ful+HJ633+pdf

30. WASHINGTON STATE

a. **ICI Pub-Washington WAAP:** Publication from the Institute for Community Inclusion providing an overview of Washington's Working Age Adult Policy - www.communityinclusion.org/article.php?article_id=222

b. **Washington State Policy:** Washington Division of Developmental Disabilities Working Age Adult Policy, initially adopted in 2004 - www.dshs.wa.gov/pdf/adsa/ddd/policies/policy4.11.pdf

c. **Washington State Legislation:** Legislation passed in 2012 establishing parameters around employment as first priority for individuals with developmental disabilities, with option of alternative community access program - http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2011-12/Pdf/Bills/Senate%20Bills/6384.pdf

31. WISCONSIN

a. **WI Employment First Flyer:** Wisconsin APSE Employment First flyer

b. **WI Employment First Plan 2010:** Wisconsin Employment First plan developed in 2010

c. **WI Employment First Rationale-FAQ:** Wisconsin APSE rationale and frequently asked questions regarding Employment First - www.wiapse.org/WI%20Employment%20First%20Initiative%20Rationale.doc

d. **WI Mission and Values Statement:** Wisconsin Employment First Mission and Values Statement, asking individuals to commit to Employment First

e. **Employment First Wisconsin Booklet:** Report from Employment First Wisconsin - www.wiapse.org/documents%20folder/EmploymentFirstBooklet.pdf
f. **WI Managed Care and Employment Task Force:** Recommendation that managed care long-term care system should support integrated employment as the preferred employment option (pp.6-8) - www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wipathways/pdf/MCETF%20Final%20Report.pdf

International Efforts

Australia – Website of Employment First Australia
http://employmentfirst.org.au

Developed by David Hoff, Institute for Community Inclusion, UMass Boston
Copies of items that are not available on the worldwide web can be obtained by sending an email to david.hoff@umb.edu; phone: 617-287-4308

www.seln.org

SELN Working Document
The State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) is a cross-state cooperative venture of state MR/DD agencies that are committed to improving employment outcomes for adolescents and adults with developmental disabilities. Working documents contain information collected in response to state requests, and federal, state and local initiatives of interest to the SELN membership. They are intended to share work in progress but may not be a comprehensive analysis or compilation. Working documents are updated over time as information changes.

Appendix E:

Illinois Employment First Summit

PowerPoint Slides

The Illinois Employment Picture in Context

Illinois Employment First Summit
January 31, 2012

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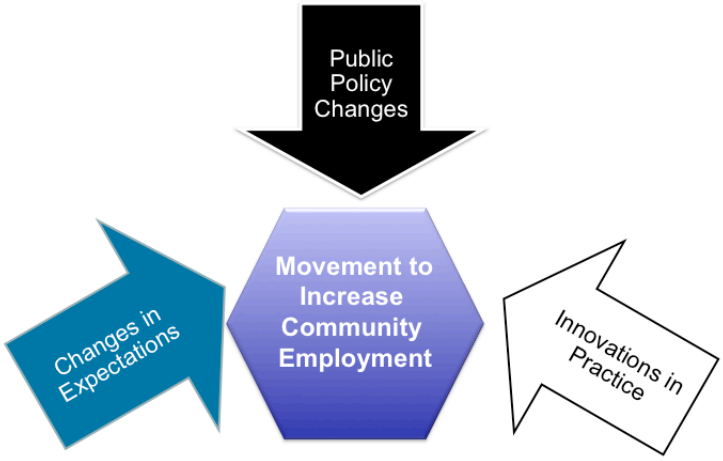


Public Policy Changes

- Americans with Disabilities Act (1990)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) – *integration, inclusion, increased emphasis on transition and employment*
- Ticket to Work and Work Incentive Improvements Act (1998)
- Workforce Investment Act (1998) – *emphasis on disability*
- Olmstead Decision (1999)
- Changes in RSA Regulations: *successful employment outcome must be in integrated setting* (2001)
- CMS: New suggested Medicaid Waiver service definitions emphasizing community employment (2011)

Innovations In Practice

- Movement from medical model to social model
- Mid 1980's – Emergence of supported employment
  - "Train & Place" transformed to "Place & Train"
- 1990's – Expanded use of "natural supports"
- Mental health – employment as part of recovery
- Ongoing innovation and expansion in use of accommodations and assistive technology
- Innovations in transition practices focused on employment
- Self-determination and self-direction
- Changing workforce & workplace – flexible, more diverse, evolving use of technology
- Universal Design

[C] Institute for Community Inclusion

2012: Where We Are At

- Individuals with even "most severe" disabilities working successfully
- Disability no longer seen as insurmountable barrier to employment
- Expectations are changing
  - *Individuals and families*
  - *Public systems & policymakers*
  - *Society*

[C] Institute for Community Inclusion

Employment First: *What Is It?*

- **General theme:**
  Employment in the community is the first/primary service option for individuals with disabilities

APSE Statement on Employment First

Employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred outcome in the provision of publicly funded services for all working age citizens with disabilities, regardless of level of disability.

[C] Institute for Community Inclusion

Employment First 2012

- **30+ states have some type of "Employment First" movement**
  - About **3/4** of efforts are directed by state policy units or are legislatively based
  - About **1/4** of efforts are grassroots based – i.e., outsiders working to influence state policy and practice
- At least **15** states have official Employment First legislation and/or polices

IC Institute for Community Inclusion

Employment First: Why It's Different

- **Clear state policy:** employment as first priority
- Broadly focused on all aspects of system
- While it may begin in the grassroots, ultimately must be adopted and implemented by the system
- Primary focus is **not** on eliminating facility-based services

IC Institute for Community Inclusion

"The world is full of good intentions, and I never met a nonprofit whose mission statement I didn't like. But I have not met all that many who could present some evidence of specific accomplishments that would lead in the direction of fulfilling their mission."

- *Norton Kiritz*
  Founder, The Grantsmanship Center

IC Institute for Community Inclusion

People with Disabilities in Illinois: *Who are we talking about?*

- US Census: 656,000 people of working age identified as having a disability (7.8% of population) – *Source: ACS, 2009*
- US Census: 5.9% of population identified as having a work limitation – *Source: CPS, 2010*
- Working Age Adults on Social Security Disability Benefits (SSI or SSDI): 427,000 – *Source: Social Security Administration, 2010*

ICI Institute for Community Inclusion

Workforce Participation	Illinois	National
% of All Adults in Workforce	69%	68%
% of All Adults with Any Disability in Workforce	35%	35%
% of Adults with Cognitive Disability in Workforce	25%	24%

Poverty Level	Illinois	National
% of All Adults Below Poverty Line	12%	13%
% of All Adults with Any Disability Below Poverty Line	26%	26%
% of Adults with Cognitive Disability Below Poverty line	33%	33%

ICI Institute for Community Inclusion

Source: US Census ACS, 2009

Social Security Disability Insurance & Supplemental Security Income

	Illinois	National
Working Age (18-64) on SSI, SSDI, or Both	5.3%	6.1%

– *Source: Social Security Administration, 2010*

ICI Institute for Community Inclusion

Divison of Developmental Disabilities

Illinois DDD – *Total # Served*: 29,000		
	Illinois DDD	National*
% Individuals - *Integrated Employment*	10%	20%
% Individuals - *Facility Based Work*	17%	27%
% Individuals - *Facility Based Non-Work*	72%	36%

Illinois DDD – *Total Funding*: $276,000,000		
	Illinois DDD	National*
% of Funding – *Integrated Employment*	6%	12%
% of Funding – *Facility Based Work*	12%	29%
% of Funding – *Facility Based Non-Work*	82%	30%

*National data includes additional category of Community Based Non-Work, that brings national total to 100%

ICI Institute for Community Inclusion

Source: ICI Agency National Survey of Day & Employment Services, 2009

Vocational Rehabilitation

Illinois Vocational Rehabilitation *Total Closures*: 17,900		
	Illinois VR	National
% of Closures into Employment Setting	30%	30%
Rehabilitation Rate for All Closures with IPE	57%	56%
Mean Weekly Earnings at Closure	$274	$357
Mean Weekly Hours at Closure	26 hours	31 hours

Source: RSA 911 Data, 2009

ICI Institute for Community Inclusion

Community Mental Health System

Illinois Community Mental Health System Employment Status				
	Individuals Served *	Employed	Unemployed	Not in Labor Force
Age 18 to 20	6,942– 100%	1,486 – 21%	2,560 – 37%	2,896 – 42%
Age 21 to 64	98,452 – 100%	24,309 – 25%	49,041 – 50%	25,102 - 25%

* Includes individuals for whom employment status can be identified

Community Mental Health System Employment Status *Illinois Compared to U.S.*						
	Employed		Unemployed		Not In Labor Force	
	Illinois	U.S.	Illinois	U.S.	Illinois	U.S.
All Ages	22%	19%	48%	53%	30%	28%

ICI Institute for Community Inclusion

Source: SAMHSA Community Mental Health System Reporting System - 2010

Workforce Development System

FPY '10/SFY '11 Year

- 18,695 individuals served
  - Of these individuals, 2,894 served under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act
- Total of 4,386 individuals placed in jobs

Source: Illinois Workforce Development Annual Report 2011

National Comparison - Wagner-Peyser Labor Exchange:
Percent of Individuals Identified as Having a Disability

	2008	2009	2010
Illinois	2.6%	2.7%	2.7%
National	2.6%	2.7%	2.8%

Institute for Community Inclusion

Source: Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services. State by State Program Year Performance – PY 2008-2010 - USDOL.

Use of Work Incentives by People On SSI in Illinois

- **Plans for Achieving Self Support (PASS)** – 40
- **Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE)** – 123
- **Blind Work Expense** - 40

Social Security USA Administration

Institute for Community Inclusion

Source: Social Security Administration
SSI Disabled Recipients Who Work, 2009

What We've Learned

- Systems change must fit within overall culture of state
- Systems change requires both:
  - big picture perspective and leadership
  - willingness to get into "nitty gritty" policy and practice details
- Slow and steady wins the race
- It's not one thing, it's a lot of things

Institute for Community Inclusion

"Solutions to poverty are going to need to be as complicated as everything that causes it."

Dr. Claire McCarthy
Martha Eliot Health Center, Boston

Institute for Community Inclusion

" A ship in harbor is safe --- but that is not what ships are built for. "

- ***John A. Shedd***

Institute for Community Inclusion

Examples of Illinois taxpayers working towards prosperity

ANDY

Position: Parts inventory and other tasks at auto dealership

- Customized position created at height of recession when "no one was hiring"
- Position obtained via Kiwanis Club connection and shared interest in sports with manager
- *Now on the board of the Kiwanis Club*

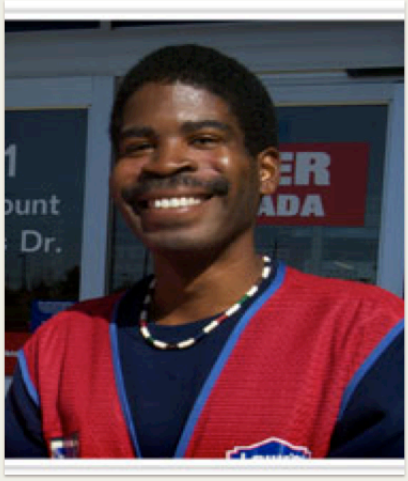
Illinois Citizens with Disabilities – ***Working Towards Prosperity***

Laura

Position: Chef - Charlie Trotters, Chicago

- Graduated from IL School for Visually Impaired
- Attended Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind
- Received DRS assistance with vocational training at Le Cordon Bleu, College of Culinary Arts
- Would like to own her own restaurant

Illinois Citizens with Disabilities – ***Working Towards Prosperity***



Daniel

Position: Team Member - Lowe's Home Improvement

- Received transition services from DRS & partnering services through Challenges Unlimited
- Has received Employee of the Month
- Received DRS support in moving from group home to own apartment
- National Rehabilitation Association Nominee

Illinois Citizens with Disabilities – ***Working Towards Prosperity***

Jared

Position: Service Clerk - Jewel

- Has worked for 4 years; past year without a job coach
- Advocates with state legislators
- Has own driver's license – 4 year process
- Now owns a MINI Cooper

Illinois Citizens with Disabilities – ***Working Towards Prosperity***

ANNIE

Position: Employee at After School Program

- Customized position created based on interest in working with children
- Started as a Snack Aide; now reads to children as part of her job
- Initially required 100% job coaching; within 9 months, no job coaching

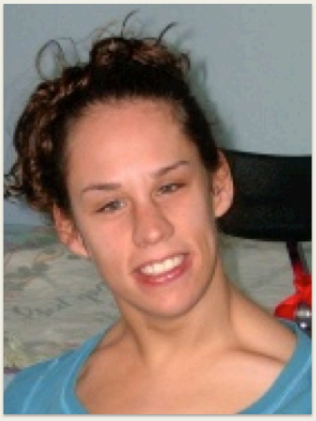
Illinois Citizens with Disabilities – ***Working Towards Prosperity***

Devon

Position: Mail Clerk at small hospital

- Devon likes to organize; focused on potential jobs that use those skills
- Customized position created through taking over mail duties previously done by nurses
- Increased efficiency, boosted morale

Illinois Citizens with Disabilities – ***Working Towards Prosperity***



Jennifer

Position: Artist

- Verbal abilities are limited, so started expressing herself through painting in elementary school. Passion for art grew from there
- Art will be on display in local coffee shop in April & May
- Looking for additional employment

Illinois Citizens with Disabilities – ***Working Towards Prosperity***

Examples of Jennifer's Work

Web page – St. Louis Art Directory:
http://myslart.ning.com/profile/JenniferWalter

Appendix F:

Health and Disability Advocates: Medicaid Fiscal Authorities for Employment Functions/Services

Appendix F

Medicaid Fiscal Authorities for Employment Functions/Services

The following table outlines a variety of options available via Medicaid to support employment functions and services, and the specific services these options will support. An additional overview of these and related options can be found at: https://www.cms.gov/IntegratedCareInt/Downloads/At_A_Glance.pdf

(Table and information courtesy Health and Disability Advocates)

EMPLOYMENT FUNCTIONS - SERVICES	*Possible Medicaid Service Category*	Rehab Option – State Plan (a) (13)	Targeted Case Manage-ment – State Plan 1905 (a)	1915 (i) – State Plan	1915 (k) – State Plan	Section 1915 (b) (3) - Waiver	Section 1915 (c) – Home & Community Based Waivers	DRA Bench-mark Plans – 1937 – State Plan
EDUCATION & OUTREACH ON EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS	*Individual Counseling; Community Support*		✔	✔	✔		✔	✔
INFORMATION & REFERRAL TO ENS, VR OTHER EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS & RESOURCES	*Community Support or Targeted Case Management*	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
EMPLOYMENT PLANNING - WORK INCENTIVES ANALYSIS	*Targeted Case Management; Community Support; Individual Counseling*	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
CUSTOMIZED BENEFITS PLANNING & COUNSELING	*Targeted Case Management; Community Support; Individual Counseling*	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
ON-GOING BENEFITS MANAGEMENT	*Community Support or Independent Living Skills*		✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYMENT PLAN SERVICE/GOAL SETTING	*Community Support; Targeted Case Management; Individual Counseling*	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
PROVIDING ADVISEMENT ON HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE OPTIONS	*Community Support; Targeted Case Management; Individual Counseling*	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
COUNSELING	*Community*	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

YOUTH IN TRANSITION	*Support; Targeted Case Management; Individual Counseling*							
JOB SKILLS TRAINING & EDUCATION	*Community Support; Supported Employment; Prevocational Services*	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
JOB READINESS TRAINING – RESUMES, INTERVIEW SKILLS	*Community Support; Supported Employment'; Prevocational Services*	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
JOB DEVELOP – JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES	*Supported Employment*	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	
JOB RETENTION SERVICES – JOB COACHING	*Community Support; Peer Supports; Supported Employment*	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	
PEER MENTORING/SUPPORT	*Peer Supports*	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

_____ Appendix F: HDA: Medicaid Fiscal Authorities for Employment Functions/Services

EMPLOYMENT FUNCTIONS/SERVICES	*Possible Medicaid Service Category*	Money Follows the Person - Admin	Money Follows the Person - Demo	Cash & Counseling	Aging & Disability Resource Centers
EDUCATION & OUTREACH ON EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS	*Individual Counseling; Community Support*			✔	
INFORMATION & REFERRAL TO ENS, VR OTHER EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS & RESOURCES	*Community Support or Targeted Case Management*	✔		✔	✔
EMPLOYMENT PLANNING/WORK INCENTIVES ANALYSIS	*Targeted Case Management; Community Support; Individual Counseling*	✔	✔		✔
CUSTOMIZED BENEFITS PLANNING & COUNSELING	*Targeted Case Management; Community Support; Individual Counseling*		✔		✔
ON-GOING BENEFITS MANAGEMENT	*Community Support or Independent Living Skills*		✔		✔
INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYMENT PLAN SERVICE/GOAL SETTING		✔	✔		
PROVIDING ADVISEMENT ON HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE OPTIONS		✔	✔	✔	✔
COUNSELING YOUTH IN TRANSITION		✔			
JOB SKILLS TRAINING & EDUCATION			✔		
JOB READINESS TRAINING-RESUMES, INTERVIEW SKILLS			✔		
JOB DEVELOPMENT – JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES			✔		
ONSITE EMPLOYMENT			✔		
JOB RETENTION SERVICES – JOB COACHING			✔		
PEER MENTORING/SUPPORT			✔		

Appendix G:

Illinois Employment First Summit

Agenda

Illinois Employment First Summit
January 31, 2012
AGENDA

8:30	Registration and Continental Breakfast
9:00	Opening Welcoming Remarks from Lt. Governor Sheila Simon
9:45	Presentation: The Illinois Employment Picture in Context
10:15	Employment in Illinois – What's the Vision? *A World Café Exercise*
11:15	Group Work: Issues and Solutions – Part 1
12:00	Lunch
12:45	Group Work: Issues and Solutions – Part 2
2:45	Discussion: Making a Personal Commitment
3:00	Reflecting Back: What We've Heard
3:30	Open Discussion and Final Thoughts
3:45	Closing and Evaluation

Presenters/Lead Facilitators:

- **David Hoff**
  Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts
  david.hoff@umb.edu; 617-287-4308
- **Wendy Parent-Johnson**
  Kansas University Center on Developmental Disabilities
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- **Bob Niemiec**
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Appendix H:

Illinois Employment First Summit Attendees

Attendees

Illinois Employment First Summit

January 31, 2012

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Attendees

Illinois Employment First Summit

January 31, 2012

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Attendees

Illinois Employment First Summit

January 31, 2012

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Attendees

Illinois Employment First Summit

January 31, 2012

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Attendees

Illinois Employment First Summit

January 31, 2012

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Karen	Ward	karen@equipforequality.org	Equip for equality	312-895-7330
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Attendees

Illinois Employment First Summit

January 31, 2012

First Name:	Last Name:	Email Address:	Company:	Phone:
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Kim	Zoeller	kimz@raygraham.org	Ray Graham Association	630-620-2222