



**State Employment Leadership Network**

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**A Framework for Employment**  
**August 2008**



A joint program of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services

[www.selnmembers.org](http://www.selnmembers.org)

## Strategic goals and operating policies

Element	Descriptors	Examples of the Strategy
<p><b>State mission, goals and operating policies emphasize employment as a preferred outcome.</b></p>	<p>There is a clear understanding across stakeholders of the philosophical beliefs that support the state's service delivery model.</p> <p>Short and long term policy goals establish clear benchmarks for expanding integrated employment.</p> <p>The state's commitment to furnishing services that enable individuals to obtain employment is emphasized by state policy and regulation.</p> <p>State practices clearly support employment and allow and encourage stakeholders to use innovative methods to meet policy expectations.</p> <p>The state agency allocates resources including staff dedicated to employment and clear accountability at all levels (state, county, regional, area).</p> <p>Local service management units (e.g. county or area boards/agencies) have flexibility to initiate pilot activity or direct resources toward employment innovation and development.</p>	<p>Concrete annual goals address increasing employment outcomes. (FL, CO)</p> <p>State case managers identify employment as the priority outcome/service for all individuals receiving services or entering the system.</p> <p>Employment outcomes have been clearly defined at the state level.</p> <p>Stakeholders have a common understanding and definition of a successful outcome. (OK)</p> <p>A policy that clearly states employment as the preferred outcome for day supports. (WA, OK)</p> <p>ISP process requires the inclusion of employment goals. (CO)</p> <p>Requirement that each individual who is not working complete a situational assessment in a community job site every three years. (TN)</p> <p>Individuals are supported in jobs outside of the hours of 9 to 5. The state does not require a minimum number of hours of support.</p> <p>State level program manager(s) focus on policy, outcomes management and contracting. (OK, WA, CO)</p>



Strategic goals and operating policies		
Element	Descriptors	Examples of the Strategy
		<p>Regional/local program staff work with providers and stakeholders around employment. (WA, NH, FL)</p> <p>Family or other community members can provide employment supports.</p> <p>Expansion of self determination and individual budgets with a focus on the achievement of employment in integrated settings.</p>

Leadership		
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<p><b>Local and state level administrators are clearly identifiable as “champions” for employment.</b></p>	<p>Central office has a full or part-time position dedicated to employment.</p> <p>Local regions have dedicated staff persons that focus wholly or in part on employment.</p> <p>A network of dedicated and longstanding stakeholders (within the state system and beyond) continually work towards furthering employment in the state.</p> <p>High-level staff communicate a continuous and consistent employment message on a regular basis across a variety of audiences and formats.</p>	<p>County coordinators that are specifically focused on day/employment supports have enabled targeted success in furthering employment. (WA)</p> <p>Florida has an individual in each regional office to spearhead the employment initiative.</p> <p>Several states have established working groups focused specifically on employment strategy and policy.</p> <p>PA has point individuals identified in each county and region that connect regularly. MA has developed cross stakeholder Employment Solutions Teams at both the regional and state levels include state agency staff, providers, self advocates and family advocates.</p>



## Financing and contract methods

Element	Descriptors	Examples of the Strategy
<p><b>Funding mechanisms and contracts with providers emphasize employment as the preferred outcome.</b></p>	<p>Providers receive greater financial compensation for community employment compared to other outcomes.</p> <p>Contracts and funding levels provide incentives for integrated employment.</p> <p>Goals and/or benchmarks for achieving integrated employment outcomes are included in provider contracts and operating agreements.</p>	<p>Funding allocations and reimbursement rates emphasize employment as a preferred outcome. (TN, CT, OK, FL)</p> <p>Funding is portable between non-work services and employment.</p> <p>Providers have consequences for not meeting goals to increase employment and are rewarded if they do.</p> <p>The state institutes a moratorium for new funding for sheltered employment. (VT)</p> <p>Financial incentives to increase employment; use of multiple or pooled funding sources; flexible use of Medicaid waiver funding.</p> <p>Alternate models, particularly community based non-work, are not better funded than integrated community employment.</p> <p>Pilot programs for funding are encouraged at the local level, such as outcome-based funding for follow along support in Mecklenberg County, NC.</p>



Training and technical assistance		
Element	Descriptors	Examples of the Strategy
<p><b>There is a sustained and significant investment in employment-related training and technical assistance.</b></p>	<p>Training and technical assistance is available to providers to support organizational change and development.</p> <p>Competency-based training is expected or required for direct support professionals working in employment supports</p>	<p>Employment staff that provide direct supports are required to complete a basic training course in employment support. (ME, TN)</p> <p>Provider level technical assistance is available to support organizational development. (CT, TN, CO)</p> <p>Statewide conferences such as Washington’s Ellensburg Conference and other forums showcase innovation and emphasize employment.</p> <p>Training for direct support staff is available at low or no cost. (CT, CO)</p> <p>Support for conversion of sheltered workshops into individualized supported employment opportunities. (VT)</p>



Interagency collaboration		
Element	Descriptors	Examples of the Strategy
<p><b>Through interagency agreements and relationships, provider collaboration, and outreach to stakeholders, employment is shared as a common goal.</b></p>	<p>Cooperative networks exist within the provider community and across state agencies to support employment goals.</p> <p>Specific marketing and outreach efforts are geared at all levels of stakeholders including policymakers, families, providers, state agencies, individuals, and the business community to ensure that there is a unified outreach effort promoting community employment.</p>	<p>Local training councils direct resources for employment TA and training. (NH)</p> <p>ID/DD coordinates funding with VR for job placement.</p> <p>State working groups exist for employment development. (CO, IN, MN)</p> <p>Newsletters, brochures and other agency communication highlight employment.</p> <p>Partnership with agencies including DOL, VR, DOE, and provider associations in providing employment-related training and technical assistance. (PA)</p> <p>Pilot project involving VR counselors co-locating with Community Centered Board staff. (CO)</p>



<b>Services and service innovation</b>		
<b>Element</b>	<b>Descriptors</b>	<b>Examples of the Strategy</b>
<p><b>The state ID/DD agency works to create opportunities for providers, individuals, and families to make optimum use of the resources available for employment. This includes the dissemination of information related to creative strategies to support individuals in employment.</b></p>	<p>The state targets transition-age individuals to move directly into employment opportunities.</p> <p>Comprehensive benefits-planning is available to individuals and their families when choosing employment options.</p>	<p>Targeted funding for employment services for youth and young adults between the ages of 16 and 26 in transition to adult life. (PA)</p> <p>Outreach projects target transition age students and families prior to graduation. (King County Parent Training Initiative)</p> <p>Local innovation drives strategy: King County in Washington developed an innovative government employment initiative that spread to state government and other counties.</p>

<b>Employment performance measurement, quality assurance, and program oversight</b>		
<b>Element</b>	<b>Descriptors</b>	<b>Examples of the Strategy</b>
<p><b>Comprehensive data systems that are used as a strategic planning tool to further the state's goals of increasing employment.</b></p>	<p>The state collects and publishes data on employment outcomes.</p> <p>Information on employment outcomes is collected on a regular basis and shared in summary form with stakeholders.</p> <p>Data are used to inform strategy and contracting.</p>	<p>Core outcome variables including individual earnings, hours of employment, benefits, level of workplace integration, and job satisfaction are assessed on a regular basis. (FL, NH, WA, MA)</p> <p>Provider level employment data are made available to consumers and families.</p> <p>The provision of data to the state is a requirement in provider contracts.</p>



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