



## WHAT IS EMPLOYMENT FIRST?

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- ★ Framework of Principles to assist in guiding and facilitating employment system change
- ★ Employment as the primary day activity for *all working age adults*, including adults with disabilities
- ★ Promotes informed choice
- ★ Having right supports & services in place helps produce more successful outcomes



## WHY EMPLOYMENT FIRST?

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- ★ Puts a focus on competitive integrated employment outcomes
- ★ Helps support necessary change to state agency employment policies and practices
- ★ Supports community integration for all
- ★ Increase income beyond poverty level: Less dependent on state benefits
- ★ Promotes quality of life
- ★ Aligns with intentions and expectations of WIOA and HCBS Regulations



## KEY DIRECTIVES OF THE EMPLOYMENT FIRST STRATEGIC PLAN

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- ★ Foster and maintain **COLLABORATION** to increase the competitive employment of people with disabilities
- ★ Increase **AWARENESS** of the potential of people with disabilities and **ADVOCATE** for their competitive employment
- ★ Prepare **YOUTH** for competitive employment, including in high potential employment sectors and self-employment
- ★ Foster **JOB** creation, hiring, retention, promotion, and self-employment
- ★ Create and promote **POLICIES** that lead to successful employment of people with disabilities
- ★ Foster the development of employment- focused **SUPPORTS**



## WHAT'S DRIVING THE CHANGE?

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- ★ Federal Rulings & National Priorities
  - ★ **Employment First**
  - ★ Department of Justice settlements
  - ★ **Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services (CMS)/Home & Community Based Services (HCBS) regulations**
  - ★ Office of Disability Employment Policy/Department of Labor
  - ★ **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014**
  - ★ Youth Employment Demonstration Projects
  - ★ The ABLE Act
  - ★ Employment Outcome Data



## CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS & SERVICES

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- ★ **AHCCCS/HCBS**
  - ★ Rules mandate that settings for ALTCS members must:
    - ★ Be integrated in and support full access to the greater community;
    - ★ Be selected by the individual from among setting options;
    - ★ Ensure individual rights of privacy, dignity and respect, and freedom from coercion and restraint;
    - ★ Optimize autonomy and independence in making life choices; &
    - ★ Facilitate choice regarding services and who provides them
- ★ Purpose is to ensure that individuals receiving services are integrated into their communities & have full access to the benefits of community living to the same degree as individuals not receiving ALTCS



## CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS & SERVICES

### ★ WIOA

- ★ Will help job seekers and workers increase access & opportunities to engage in employment, education, training, and support services
- ★ Highlights for Students who have Disabilities:
  - ★ Increase emphasis on provision of transition services to youth.
  - ★ 15% budget set aside for **Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)** for In-School Youth and graduates attending post-secondary training. This includes making services available to "potentially eligible" youth who have not been determined eligible for VR
  - ★ Up to 4 years of Supported Employment (Title 19/ALTCS and Non-Title 19/ALTCS) for Pre-ETS population, with 50% of the Supported Employment budget set aside for youth
  - ★ **Limitations on subminimum wage (Section 511)**



## PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES: WHO CAN RECEIVE?

- ★ Pre-ETS are provided to "students with disabilities", defined as...
  - ★ Students in an educational program (i.e. HS Public/Charter, HE, juvenile justice);
  - ★ 14-22 years old;
  - ★ eligible for and receiving special education or related services under IDEA; OR is an individual with a disability for purposes of section 504 of the Act;
- ★ Who are...
  - ★ Eligible for VR services; or
  - ★ Potentially eligible for VR services (i.e. all students with disabilities, including those who have not applied or been determined eligible for VR services).



## PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES: WHAT ARE THE ACTIVITIES?

**5 Required Services, which can be provided in group setting or on an individual basis:**

- **Job exploration counseling:** Provided in Classroom/School or in Community Setting
- **Work based learning experiences;** may include in-school, after school or community based opportunities
  - must be provided in an integrated setting in the community to the maximum extent possible
  - VR must exhaust all opportunities for work-based learning experiences in integrated settings before placing an individual in a non-integrated setting
- **Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational program at institutions of higher education**
- **Workplace readiness training** to develop social skills and independent living skills
- **Instruction in self-advocacy**



## WIOA SECTION 511/SUBMINIMUM WAGE LIMITATIONS: REQUIREMENTS

Individuals age 24 or younger may not begin work paying subminimum wage (less than Federal or State minimum wage) unless the following actions have been completed:

- 1) **Transition services** under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and/or *pre-employment transition services* under WIOA were completed;
- 2) **Vocational rehabilitation (VR):**
  - a. the youth applied for VR services and was found ineligible OR
  - b. the youth applied for VR services and was found eligible AND
    - i. had an individual plan for employment (IPE) AND
    - ii. worked toward an IPE employment outcome for a reasonable period without success; AND
    - iii. the VR case was closed;
- 3) **Career counseling**, including information and referrals to Federal and State programs and other resources in the individual's geographic area.



## WIOA SECTION 511/SUBMINIMUM WAGE LIMITATIONS: REQUIREMENTS (CONT)

**Requirements Related to Individuals of ANY Age:**

- 1) If an individual with a disability, regardless of age, wants to maintain his or her employment at subminimum wage, he or she must obtain the following from VR:
  - **Career counseling;** and
  - **Information and referral services**
- 2) The VR agency may provide these services directly or may contract with another provider of such services in the community.



## WIOA IMPACT ON THE DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (DDD) EMPLOYMENT SERVICES



## DDD EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS & SERVICES IMPACTED BY WIOA

### ★ Group Supported Employment

➤ Community integrated work setting where member is supervised by provider staff and paid by the hour. Pays individual sub-minimum or minimum wage dependent upon individual productivity and position: WIOA requirements apply

### ★ Center-Based Employment

➤ Paid work and vocational skill building at a facility-based, non-integrated setting. Supervised and paid by agency. Wages typically at sub-minimum wage: WIOA requirements apply



## DDD EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS & SERVICES NOT IMPACTED BY WIOA

### ★ Transition to Employment

➤ Time Limited, classroom based training service with goal to get member work-ready. Focus on soft skill development. Intended outcomes is employment. This is a training service-not a paid job.

### ★ Individual Supported Employment

➤ Job Coaching and/or Job Search for a Competitive Job in the community. Wages paid by Employer.

### ★ Employment Support Aide

➤ 1-to-1 on-the-job support in an integrated or competitive employment job setting. Can include assistance for Personal Care, Behavioral Support and Long term on the job follow along.

### ★ Transportation for Employment

### ★ Career Preparation and Readiness (COMING SOON!)

➤ Time Limited, skill building service available to members who are currently in Center-Based Employment. Goal is to increase the number of members making progressive moves from CBE into integrated employment settings. This is a training service- not a paid job.



## HOW TO IMPLEMENT EMPLOYMENT FIRST PRINCIPLES



## SET HIGH EXPECTATIONS

*The most powerful force in changing transition outcomes for young people with significant disabilities is not ultimately found in the transition plans we craft, the educational services we offer, the instruction we provide, the systems we build, but rather in the expectations and aspirations individual parents hold for their sons and daughters.*

*What Matters Most: Research on Elevating Parent Expectations (Erik Carter)*



## EMPLOYMENT FIRST IMPLEMENTATION

★ Cross-stakeholders sub-committee collaborative work:

- ★ Agency Leadership
- ★ Communications
- ★ System Transformation
- ★ Employer/Community Engagement
- ★ Youth and Young Adult Efforts



## HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION

★ SET HIGH EXPECTATIONS & START PLANNING EARLY

- ★ Educate yourselves about available employment supports and services
- ★ Promote agency collaboration at the IEP team table: Bring your transition partners to the meetings
- ★ Encourage individuals to plan for employment
- ★ Provide diverse work experiences for individuals as early as possible



## HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION

- ★ *Connect eligible individuals to DDD Transition to Employment Services (TTE) and other employment related services; summer work, career prep readiness:*
  - ★ TTE: A service that provides a DDD member with individualized instruction, training, and supports to promote skill development for integrated and competitive employment
- ★ *Inform and connect individuals to Independent Living Centers and other advocacy agencies that can provide:*
  - ★ Training in self advocacy, self-determination, independent living skills, youth leadership skills (e.g. AZ Youth Leadership Forum)
- ★ *Be aware of what Raising Special Kids (AZ Parent Information and Training Center) can offer:*
  - ★ Workshops on variety of topics (e.g. Getting and keeping your first job, Guardianship)
  - ★ Young Adult Advisory opportunity (partnership with OCSHCN)



## HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION

- ★ Understand and utilize Person-Centered Plans and Principles
  - ★ Utilize Student-Led IEP models
  - ★ Explore assistive technology that may support individuals in the community and employment
  - ★ Look at career and technical education options
  - ★ Utilize DB101 to understand benefits to work
  - ★ Investigate Project SEARCH & other employment programs for youth
- Be accountable, and hold your transition partners accountable too!**



## POTENTIAL RESOURCES & PARTNERS

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| ★ Voc Rehab   | ★ CTE/JTETS Programs               |
| ★ DDD   | ★ AZ Job Connection                |
| ★ Governors Office of Youth, Faith, Family (AmeriCorps)                   | ★ AZ Workforce Connection          |
| ★ AZ Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (ADDPC)                  | ★ AZ Youth Leadership Forum (SILC) |
| ★ Office for Children with Special Health Care Needs (OCSHCN)             | ★ AZ Young Advisors (RSK/OCSHCN)   |
| ★ University Centers for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) | ★ Job Corps                        |
| ★ Raising Special Kids  | ★ Apprenticeships                  |
| ★ AZ DD Planning Council (ADDPC)  | ★ Certificate Programs             |
|   | ★ Project SEARCH                   |
|   | ★ Disability Benefits 101 (DB 101) |



## COMMUNITY PROVIDERS SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION

- ★ Educating and working with DDD staff, consumers and families on the benefits of employment and the resources to support employment, including ABLE ACT accounts
- ★ Supporting, guiding and assisting consumers to make informed decisions/choices regarding employment options
- ★ Engaging in more employment related services, to include: **self-employment, customized employment, providing Transition to Employment (TTE) curriculum**
  - ★ In development: offer/provide Pre-ETS and Career Prep Readiness services in schools & community
- ★ Being aware of options available:
  - ★ Ticket-to-work, PASS plans, DB101, AHCCCS Freedom to Work



## COMMUNITY PROVIDERS SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION

- ★ Engaged in committee work to help system and policy change
- ★ Working with all involved agencies to move WIOA & CMS/HCBS forward in a meaningful way for people who have disabilities
  - ★ Looking to create additional partnerships with schools to provide employment related services to youth and young adults
- ★ Engaging more employers:
  - ★ to consider a more diversified work force
  - ★ to create opportunities (i.e. job shadows, internships, mentoring, work-based learning opportunities)
  - ★ to build partnerships



## BUILDING CAPACITY FOR PROVIDERS TO INCREASE COMPETITIVE INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

- ★ Researching and implementing evidence based and best practices
- ★ Professional Development, Training & Technical Assistance for staff
  - ★ Customized & Supported Employment, Discovery, Person Centered Planning
- ★ Utilizing the Providers Association to support their needs
- ★ Beginning to discuss & make fundamental changes to increase CIE outcomes
  - ★ Provider and System Transformation: Funding/Incentive employment, Credentialing, seamless transition from one agency to another (e.g. DD/VR/BH).



## Agency Collaborations

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- ★ Data Sharing Agreement between ADE/RSA
- ★ Pre-employment transition services workshops for students are available
  - ★ Provided by VR Personnel at this time. Contact your local VR office.
  - ★ Pre-ETS Solicitation went out in June 2017, other providers to be identified
- ★ Developed handouts on WIOA/Section 511 & Joint Guidance Document
- ★ Stakeholders updated the Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) on Transition (ADE/VR/DDD)
- ★ Updating professional development for Educators
- ★ Communities of Practice on Transition
- ★ Engaged with our National TA Centers to provide support to increase competitive integrated employment outcomes: NTACT, WINTAC, Y-TAC, SELN



## Contact Information

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## Questions...

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