



**State of Illinois**

**Employment First Strategic Plan Draft**

**December 29, 2014**

**Submitted by:**

**Illinois Task Force on Employment and Economic  
Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities**

**Robin A. Jones, Co-Chairperson**

## **Acknowledgements:**

This Draft Strategic Plan was developed in collaboration with many individuals knowledgeable about best practices in employment for persons with disabilities and Employment First policy. They brought passion and expertise to the process which is reflected in the final product. This document is intended to be a starting point from which the Final State of Illinois Strategic Plan for the full implementation of Employment First will be developed and implemented (Due June 30, 2015).

I wish to acknowledge the members of the Illinois Task Force on Employment and Economic Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities for their work on this document in addition to the many community partners who lent their knowledge and expertise to this process. Specifically, I would like to acknowledge the work of Nicole Jorwic, Manager of the Employment First Initiative, Senior Policy Advisor, Illinois Department of Human Services for her tireless work creating the template for this document and many hours of editing. In addition, I would like to acknowledge the following individuals who serve as members of the Employment First Strategic Plan Steering Committee:

- Mark Doyle, Governor's Office
- David Hanson, Director, Division of Rehabilitation Services
- Kevin Casey, Director, Division of Developmental Disabilities
- Margie Harkness, Illinois Developmental Disabilities Council
- Dorelia Rivera, Senior Policy Advisor, Illinois Department of Human Services
- Nicole Jorwic, Manager of the Employment First Initiative, Senior Policy Advisor, Illinois Department of Human Services
- Katherine Burson, Director of Rehabilitation Services, Division of Mental Health
- Phil Milsch, Attorney, Task Force Member
- Daryl Jackson, Deputy Director, Division of Developmental Disabilities

Furthermore, I wish to acknowledge the guidance and support provided throughout this process by Cristal Thomas, Deputy Governor, State of Illinois, Barbara Otto, CEO, Health & Disability Advocates and Teresa Garate, Department on Disability and Human Development, University of Illinois at Chicago.



Robin A Jones, Co-Chairperson

Illinois Task Force on Employment and Economic Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities

**Contents:**

**Background.....4**

**Current Status of Employment of People with Disabilities in Illinois.....9**

**Specific Challenges.....10**

**Strategic Plan.....14**

**Overall Systems Change.....14**

**Data Workgroup.....24**

**Provider Workgroup.....27**

**Transition Workgroup.....31**

**Employer Engagement Workgroup.....35**

**Workforce Development-Internal Workgroup.....38**

**References.....43**

**Appendix A.....44**

## Employment First Strategic Plan

### Background:

In August of 2009, the Illinois legislature established the Employment and Economic Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities Task Force. 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.

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. The Summit culminated in a report which identified seven major areas for needed change: 1) public agency systems change and policy; 2) data measurement, evaluation and accountability; 3) service and

support capacity and development; 4) funding; 5) transition and post-secondary education and career advancement; 6) family and individual awareness and expectations; and 7) business and community development.

Consistent with the recommendations of the Summit and the work of the Task Force and other disability related organizations, most notably the ARC of Illinois, the Employment First Act was signed into law by the Governor on July 16, 2013. The Act establishes as state policy that: “Competitive and integrated employment shall be considered the first option when serving people with disabilities of working age.” It also requires “all state agencies to follow this priority and ensure that it is effectively implemented in their programs and services.”

To continue the momentum and move Employment First towards reality in Illinois, Governor Pat Quinn issued an executive order on June 3, 2014. The Executive Order names 12 state agencies (Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), the Department of Human Services (DHS), the Department of Central Management Services (CMS), the Department of Labor (DOL), the State Board of Education (ISBE), the Department of Veteran’s Affairs (DVA), the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS), the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and the Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICDD)), and charges these agencies, under the leadership of an “Employment First Liaison” housed in the Governor’s Office in collaboration with the Task Force, to develop a preliminary plan by December 31, 2014 and a final plan to be completed by June 30, 2015.

The plans must be developed with the following considerations:

- How to align policies, financing, incentives, procedures, eligibility, enrollment and planning for services and supports for individuals with disabilities with the objective of increasing opportunities for informed choice community integrated employment;
- How to maximize funding to support employment-related initiatives;
- Best practices and evidenced-based practices for successful placement in integrated community employment opportunities to implement or expand model programs;
- Consistent with the National Governor’s Association “A Better Bottom Line: Employing People with Disabilities” a blueprint for increasing employment of persons with disabilities, agencies shall identify:
  - Effective strategies for partnerships, including with employers, foundations, advocates and other entities committed to creating integrated community employment opportunities and;
  - Effective strategies for recruiting businesses to hire people with disabilities based on their capabilities, interests and strengths;

- Opportunities for shared services among existing providers of services, including employment services, for people with disabilities;
- How to enhance existing state technology to create a cross-agency point of access to document and track the outcomes of persons with disabilities employed in private integrated settings; and
- Appropriate benchmarks for improving employment outcomes that increase system-wide accountability and transparency.

Several initiatives currently underway in Illinois further support implementation of Employment First. Specifically, recent funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Transformation Block Grant to transform lives through supported employment. The purpose of this program is to enhance state and community capacity to provide and expand evidence-based supported employment programs (such as the Individual Placement and Support model) to adults with serious mental illnesses including persons with co-occurring mental and substance use disorders.

The expected outcome of the program is for states to have the necessary infrastructure in place to maintain and expand supported employment services throughout the state and increase the number of individuals with serious mental illness and co-occurring mental and substance use disorders who obtain and retain competitive employment. The Department of Mental Health has been meeting with the Task Force to align the strategic plans where possible to ensure that there are not duplication of efforts.

Illinois also received funds through CMS' Balancing Incentive Program (BIP). The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) received over \$4 million specifically to support Employment First initiatives. As part of the Employment First Initiative, DRS was approved to work with community providers to establish the following innovative demonstration employment and supported education projects.

1. Individual Placement and Support (IPS) for adults with developmental disabilities.
2. IPS for youth with mental illness.
3. IPS for youth with serious mental illness.
4. IPS for youth with developmental disabilities.
5. Self-employment / entrepreneurial initiatives to support businesses owned by individuals with disabilities.

In addition, the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) was granted \$3.2 million of BIP funds. As part of the Employment First Initiative, DDD was approved to develop and implement a plan for reviewing its current service options and assisting individuals to find and maintain meaningful employment in integrated settings at no less than minimum wage.

The first phase of this project will include working with a consultant (or consulting group) and stakeholders to:

- Define the types of opportunities DDD wish to promote;
- Determine provider qualifications;
- Review and, as needed, modify current rate structure;
- Discuss maximum utilization issues; and
- Establish data collection and benchmark expectations.

The second phase will include obtaining services through an RFI process to:

- Assist 200 individuals in the Adult DD Waiver in accessing supported and competitive employment; and
- Develop a procedural guide and other materials for use by providers throughout the Illinois system in assisting and supporting individuals to find and maintain employment.

These efforts will be coordinated with those of the Division of Rehabilitation Services, which is proposing as part of this Work Plan to fund demonstration programs for employment opportunities involving both youth and adults with developmental disabilities. The demonstration programs will be used to better inform both phases of this project.

To coordinate the efforts of the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Rehabilitation Services and the Division of Developmental Disabilities, the Department of Human Services hired a Manager of the Employment First Initiative/Senior Policy Advisor. This Manager is working with DHS to coordinate the BIP funds and working with the Task Force and the Governor's office to draft the Preliminary Plan required by the Executive Order.

Additional funds and programs are operating within agencies such as DCEO which was recently awarded over two million dollars under the Round V Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) from the U.S. Department of Labor, Office on Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) with the focus being the full inclusion of individuals with disabilities in career pathways to attain credentials and full employment.

The objectives of this initiative are as follows:

- 1) Increase employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities and maximize their economic self-sufficiency;
- 2) Add flexible and innovative strategies into intensive training programs that increase participation of individuals with disabilities; and

- 3) Expand capacity of the public workforce system to serve individuals with disabilities, especially in existing career pathway programs, including partnerships, policies, and practices.

The Illinois Task Force has been participating in the ODEP sponsored Employment First Community of Practice since 2013. Through that program Illinois participated in the Vision Quest program in 2014 aimed at gaining additional information to support making changes in the State's Transition programs/process for students with disabilities. That effort ended in September 2014 and resulted in a commitment from key agencies to reconstitute the Illinois Interagency Coordinating Council in an effort to address on-going issues related to effective transition services across state agencies. This Council has not met since late 2012.

Most recently the State of Illinois was selected as a Core State for ODEP's Employment First Leadership State Mentoring Program (EFLMP), a cross-disability focused, cross-systems change initiative. EFLMP is providing the impetus for selected states to pursue systems change to fully implement the Employment First approach as the primary service delivery system for people with the most significant disabilities. As a selected Core State Illinois will have the opportunity to receive onsite and virtual technical assistance and training support, as well as participation in the policy-focused Vision Quest Policy Working Group Series. EFLMP will continue to focus on providing technical assistance and policy development support to State government teams in an effort to assist the state's Employment First efforts. Illinois was awarded onsite and virtual policy consulting, technical assistance in the following categories:

1. Capacity Building in Effective Practices: Focused on building the capacity of a state's front-line disability service workforce in the successful implementation of evidence-based effective practices (including Customized Employment, Individualized Supported Employment, IPS-Supported Employment, Self-Employment, and Financial Capability/Asset Development) through the development of: (i) consistent definitions and state plan goals across specific systems; (ii) coordination of eligibility determinations, enrollment processes, service delivery strategies and funding/resources; and (iii) cross-systems training plans, consistent provider requirements, and direct support certification standards.
2. Provider Transformation: Focused on working with disability service provider networks on funding diversification, cost-modeling, staff decentralization, and operational reforms essential to transitioning from facility-based, segregated services to business models that focus solely on the provision of individualized integrated employment and other person-centered home & community based services.

For our second opportunity to participate in a Vision Quest workgroup, the State will receive in

person and virtual support we were selected for: Rate/Reimbursement Restructuring: Focused on the use of waiver authorities, state plan options, and rate structures to design innovative pay-for-performance reimbursement structures in one or more systems to incentivize a focus on the delivery of effective-practices that lead to improved integrated employment outcomes of PWD.

The EFSLMP FY 2015 program will include a robust core state component, comprised of onsite and virtual training, technical assistance, and policy consulting. Core states will receive:

- Onsite and virtual policy consulting from the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in implementing a technical assistance/training plan developed by each core state in collaboration with ODEP and EconSys;
- Engagement in a time-limited, policy-focused Vision Quest Policy Working Group Series (VQWGS);
- A budget of monetary resources to assist in travel and meeting expenditures related to the engagement of SMEs and state ambassadors ;
- Travel reimbursement for up to five (5) representatives of each Core State team to attend ODEP's 2nd National Employment First Meeting; and
- Ongoing participation in ODEP's virtual CoP activities.

### **Current Status of Employment of People with Disabilities in Illinois:**

Per the US Department of Labor's current data, while 69% of all adults in Illinois participate in the workforce, only 20.1% of adults with disabilities participate. Workforce participation for adults with cognitive disabilities stands at 25%. According to more recent statistics from SELN's 2012 National Report on Employment Services and Outcomes only 22.5% of Illinois citizens, of all ages, with cognitive disabilities are employed. Looking specifically at DD Outcomes by Employment Settings, the data shows additional disturbing overreliance on facility-based non-work settings. In fact, the 2012 data reflects that of the 24,013 individuals served, 22,437 or 93.4% are served facility-based and non-work settings.

This is particularly concerning because not only are individuals segregated from their typical peers but they are not working towards employment. Only 1,453 or 6% were reported to receive integrated employment in 2012. 95% of DDDs agency day and employment spending goes to facility-based non-work.

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).

For transition aged youth in Illinois, 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.

These are only a sample of the initiatives and activities that have and are supporting Illinois Employment First efforts. The State has made great strides in coordinating efforts and the Executive Order signed in June of 2014 is the thrust behind assuring that the 12 named state agencies (listed above,) work together to align policies, funding and efforts.

#### **Specific Challenges:**

**Systemic Culture Change:** A fundamental factor that will determine whether or not Employment First is a successful is a shift in the culture surrounding people with disabilities, their abilities and their role in the community. Illinois’ Employment First Activities must be based upon a presumption of competency and employability in integrated settings, consistent with the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992. There must be continued movement away from the paternalistic or medical view of individuals with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities are not meant to be “cared for” or “fixed,” but are to be supported to lead independent lives in the community. Ongoing and continuous examples of individuals with disabilities working successfully in the community are critical in creating this fundamental shift in mindset.

The culture shift must occur from the ground up, involving and building understanding with individuals with disabilities and their families. Just as important is building buy-in and understanding of presumed competence with those on the ground with VR counselors, PAS agencies (DDD’s case management entities) and transition professionals working with school age individuals. An example of a current policy that is not consistent with Employment First is the DDD policy that is based on presumptive eligibility for individuals served under their waiver for the DT or Developmental Training Programs instead of for employment. Changing this

policy to support integrated, competitive employment will provide an opportunity for VR services to be better coordinated with the Department of Development Disabilities. DRS can currently fund supported employment services for 18 months, however there is not a clear handoff or system in place to transfer that individual to DDD's supported employment. This can lead to lost opportunities for the individual.

**Funding:** The funding for employment services offered to individuals with disabilities is not adequate in dollar investment or in the numbers of individuals served. For example, 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 (82%) of funding.

Between divisions there are also disparities in funding. The average rate for job coaching for DRS is \$38/hour, while for that same service DDD pays on average less than \$12/hour. The rates are not paying for the services provided even at the high end, leading to overreliance on segregated "one-size-fits-all" non-work day programs. The rates paid for supported employment services should be adjusted to reflect the actual cost of the service provided and be consistent between DRS and DDD. The State must also support Community Providers to shift to integrated programs with wraparound integrated community supports based on person-centered plans to support individuals when they are not at their community job.

**Rebalancing:** As the State has taken steps to rebalance the system away from Institutional settings, a needed change, employment has not been a large enough part of the conversation. Along with the rebalancing initiative, to close state operated facilities, there must be additional change in the provision of employment and day services.

The segregated nature of the majority of day services for individuals with a variety of disabilities and sheltered workshops is a huge hurdle to Employment First implementation and the State's reliance on these types of programs are not in alignment with the new Federal HCBS. Providers must be supported in efforts to change their culture, staff competencies, infrastructure and programming. State agencies must also change where their investments are going when it comes to funding programs.

**Transition:** As referenced above, there has been a recent reinvigoration of the Interagency Coordinating Council, co-chaired by the Secretary of Human Services and the Superintendent of

ISBE. This revival important, ISBE's active participation is a critical component in advancing the Employment First Initiative.

Per state regulation: Transition services are defined as a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that:

- Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- Is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and
- Includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills, benefits planning, work incentives education, and the provision of a functional vocational evaluation. (105 ILCS 5/14-8.03(a)).

Throughout the state, transition plans and services are inconsistent depending on access to available resources. Often times, due to lack of the required individualization, services and plans can be "one-size-fits-all," the vocational and post-secondary goals included are often cookie-cutter and not based on the actual preferences, abilities and needs of an individual. Vocational evaluations, interest inventories, on-the-job training and job shadowing and a Discovery process that is not based on comparative assessment should all be included to give transition-aged youth the opportunity explore their interests and to develop the skills required to be successful.

***Data:*** For adult services and transition, the lack of reliable data is a detriment to transforming services and implementing innovative service delivery models. In addition, the lack of systems that allow the sharing of data across agencies to facilitate planning, service delivery and track outcomes. As we move to more integrated initiatives, with the BIP pilots and other programs it is essential that a robust data system be available that tracks outcomes for participants specific to employment and associated services and enables the sharing of data across agencies.

***Engagement of Individuals, Families and the Business Community:*** In order to build awareness, understanding and provide training, information must be provided to individuals and families in a timely manner. Service and supports must be created with significant input from a variety stakeholders. The business community must also be engaged from the outset so that the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities are evident.

**Special Populations:** Since 2005 three class-actions lawsuits have been brought with complaints based on non-compliance with the ADA and *Olmstead*. The State agreed to settle in all three cases and consent decrees were entered into for each. Each consent decree recognizes the integral role that employment can play in making an individual with a disability fully included in their community.

- *Ligas v Hamos*: Brought in 2005 on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities living in Intermediate Care Facilities for the Developmentally Disabled (ICF-DD).
- *Williams v. Quinn*: Brought in 2005 on behalf of individuals with severe mental illness living in Institutions for Mental Diseases (IMDs).
- *Colbert v. Quinn*: Brought in 2007 on behalf of people with physical disabilities or mental illness who reside in nursing homes in Cook County.

## STRATEGIC PLAN

### OVERALL SYSTEMS CHANGE:

**State Interagency Collaboration:** In order to make Employment First a reality statewide, policies and procedures must be aligned and rewritten where necessary to create flexibility across state agencies.

<b>Activity 1</b>	<b>Create a Matrix of Current Employment Services across State Agencies</b>
Long Range Goal	Build cross-agency buy-in and support of the systems change required to make Employment First a reality in Illinois. Adopt a cross-system clear PRESUMPTION FOR EMPLOYABILITY for every Illinois citizen of working age with a disability.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Differences in funding rates, lack of communication and coordination between state agencies, sustainability of pilot programs.
Short-term Objectives	-Develop specific policies within agencies to reinforce and actualize the principles of Employment First. Ask each agency to include the definitions, timelines and other restrictions that are used. -Create common measures for the evaluation of the pilot programs that are included on the matrix of services.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Department of Higher Education (IBHE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), Department of Veteran’s Affairs (DVA).
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	-An accessible and fluid matrix of employment services that is clear to the consumers and is connected through an interface that multiple agencies can access.

	-Suggested elements for a service matrix: Agency Name, Eligibility Criteria, Employment and Day Support Services Provided, Amount of funding provided for employment and other day supports, Number of individuals served, Funding sources, Mechanism for accessing services, Availability of Long-term post-placement supports.
--	---

<b>Activity 2</b>	<b>Creation of staff competency standards for staff across agencies providing employment services and supports</b>
Long Range Goal	Provide resources for ongoing staff training and development to ensure that the training received by staff is linked to best practices and competency standards and actual demonstrated performance that is included in job descriptions and staff performance evaluations.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Varying rates and levels of training for staff within individuals agencies as well as variance between agencies
Short-term Objectives	Ensure organizational capacity and competency through a development of standards for employment programs that are in line with Employment First principles as well as in line with applicable Federal Grants.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Central Management Services (CMS)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Incorporate staff competency standards within contracting, program monitoring and quality assurance mechanisms within divisions.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, providers, family members, advocacy organizations.

<b>Activity 3</b>	<b>Align licensing, certification, accreditation and other standards to facilitate and measure employment outcomes</b>
Long Range Goal	Transform service models to individualized, person-centered community integrated wraparound supports with employment as the driving force.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Current organizational focus and infrastructure of the provider community and myths about safety in facilities and vulnerability in the community.
Short-term Objectives	Survey the landscape for the current licensing, certification and accreditation standards, models utilized, provide support and technical assistance to community providers to shift their focus.
Agencies Involved	The Governor's Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Develop consistent licensing, certification and accreditation standards to facilitate integrated community employment outcomes. Create provider networks within disciplines for the exchange of ideas and sharing of information.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, providers, family members, advocacy organizations.

**Funding, Contracting and Oversight Methodology:** Remove and minimize barriers in the current rate-setting and contracting policies, practices and oversight. Funding, billing and oversight practices must be aimed at creating stronger incentives to provide integrated employment supports and oversight should be focused on outcomes not process compliance.

<b>Activity 1</b>	<b>Develop Braided Funding Procedures and Develop a System that Funds Employment Development and Continuation Activities</b>
Long Range Goal	Funding rates based on real costs and achieving outcomes; Funding rates that support individuals through job development activities.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Current rate structure varies between divisions, currently job development activities are often not billable.
Short-term Objectives	Incentives for maximizing the income and the number of hours an individual works, a funding system that encourages and maximizes the use of natural and community supports.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Central Management Services (CMS), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Department of Health and Family Services (HFS), Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	A funding system that ensures a balance between quantity and quality of outcomes with cross-system consistency in rates. Funding rates that support individuals with the most significant disabilities.

<b>Activity 2</b>	<b>Make changes in Medicaid funding through Major revisions to Current HCBS Waiver Service Definitions to be Consistent with the CMS Guidance from December 2014 and to Establish Rates with Incentives for Integrated Employment and Reimbursement for Job Development and Job Stabilization Activities.</b>
Long Range Goal	Improve transition between funding sources through the development of guidelines and procedures so there is clarity at the time of a transfer of responsibility from one agency to another that is formalized through MOUs. Secure funding for employment development activities and job stabilization activities.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Lack of shared data and lack of appropriate communication between agencies.
Short-term Objectives	Look at the funding sources (education, DRS, DDD, etc) to determine how funding can be better utilized to support employment experiences from transition-age thru to adulthood.
Agencies Involved	The Governor's Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Department of Health and Family Services (HFS), Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Create mechanisms for stronger coordination among funding streams.

<b>Activity 3</b>	<b>Further Develop Medicaid funding streams for individuals with behavioral health diagnoses and Expand Programs with Proven Results</b>
Long Range Goal	Work in coordination with the procedures required by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Systems Transformation Grant to explore additional funding streams and expand use of the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model. Explore the possibility of a 1915(i) State Plan Amendment or a similar structure within the proposed 1115 waiver.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Currently there is no Mental Health Medicaid Waiver for Services in Illinois and there are time limitations to certain funding streams
Short-term Objectives	Coordinate the efforts of the SAMHSA grant with the Employment First implementation efforts
Agencies Involved	The Governor's Office, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Department of Health and Family Services (HFS)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	A Medicaid waiver for mental health services and cross-agency support for DMH's SAMHSA grant.

<b>Activity 4</b>	<b>Work Incentive and Benefits Training for Field Staff, Individuals, Families and Service Providers across Disabilities and Systems</b>
Long Range Goal	Increased understanding and use of work incentive programs, including the Ticket to Work program, and reduce fears for individuals around losing benefits
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Lack of understanding by individuals, families and field staff about the availability of benefits assistance and work

	incentives.
Short-term Objectives	Create clear, accurate and consistent guidance and trainings with real examples for individuals, families, provider staff, case management staff, special educators and agency staff about benefits
Agencies Involved	The Governor's Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Division of Family and Community Services (DFCS), Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	A model of accurate information on how benefits can assist in employment and not act as a barrier.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, providers, WIPPA counselors, family members, local education agencies, advocacy organizations.

**Training and Technical Assistance:** It is imperative to educate state employees, stakeholders, families and individuals about best practices and models for community based, non-segregated employment. The state intends to increase awareness and training opportunities for community providers, state employees, families and individuals on employment.

<b>Activity 1</b>	Regional Employment First Summits
Long Range Goal	Changing all Stakeholder's awareness and expectations regarding employment. Easy access to steps individuals can take to seek employment. Clear path interaction with agencies.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Building consensus and understanding of Employment First goals
	Get a baseline of current level of understanding and where

Short-term Objectives	the gaps in understanding are. Identify locations that will cover the geography of the state.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB); Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), Department of Health and Family Services (HFS), Central Management Services (CMS) and Department of Veteran’s Affairs (DVA), Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	1/1/16
Product/Results Expected	Outreach to individuals, families and providers that provides a better understanding of the current landscape and the plans for Employment First
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, providers, family members, advocacy organizations.

<b>Activity 2</b>	Set up dedicated website for Employment First
Long Range Goal	Set up dedicated website for Employment First
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Coordination between agencies to build the website
Short-term Objectives	Set up dedicated website for Employment First
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security

	(IDES), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB); Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), Department of Health and Family Services (HFS), Central Management Services (CMS) and Department of Veteran’s Affairs (DVA), Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Functional website
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, providers, family members, advocacy organizations.

**Service Delivery Model Innovations:** The service delivery model in many agencies will need to be adjusted and made more flexible to support a community-based employment system.

<b>Activity 1</b>	<b>Review and revise statutory, regulatory and waiver language for day and employment services to shift the focus to employment</b>
Long Range Goal	Create a cross-agency presumption of employment and change policies that differ from that presumption.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Current policies have the presumption for day services which are underfunded and often not individualized.
Short-term Objectives	Update policies across agencies.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Health and Family Services (HFS)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Increased employment opportunities

Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, family members, advocacy organizations.
-----------------------	---

**Outcomes:**

<b>Activity 1</b>	Develop 1-5 year Employment Outcome Targets and System rebalancing goals from segregated services to integrated services and supports for All Populations
Long Range Goal	Measurable statewide employment outcome goals across disabilities and across agencies including targets for rebalancing resources for employment systems.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Lack of data collection currently, developing a baseline will be difficult
Short-term Objectives	Ask agencies for their best estimate for current outcomes based on disability and placement
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB); Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), Central Management Services (CMS), Department of Health and Family Services (HFS), Department of Veteran’s Affairs, Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Expected employment outcomes for five years across disabilities and across agencies.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, providers, family members, advocacy organizations.

**DATA WORKGROUP**

- I. **Performance Measurement:** To accurately measure the effectiveness of any employment first strategy the state must be able to measure outcome data for the individuals served. Baseline data will need to be collected across populations served and outcome goals must be created.

<b>Activity 1</b>	<b>Establish Baseline Data Collection across Populations with built in transparency for consumers.</b>
Long Range Goal	Create an improved data collection system to better track short-term and long-term outcomes and processes.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Not all agencies work with the same technology systems. There is not cross-agency access to data that may assist in agency-agency transfers.
Short-term Objectives	Do a cross-agency survey for employment data and to better determine the type of systems used within each agency and how they can “speak” to each other.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Central Management System (CMS), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB); Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), Central Management Services (CMS), Department of Health and Family Services (HFS), Department of Veteran’s Affairs.
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Baseline data for current employment services and outcomes and a plan to improve infrastructure and cross-system communication.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, family members, providers, advocacy organizations.

<b>Activity 2</b>	<b>Share data and determine employment service and outcome projections with annual reporting.</b>
Long Range Goal	In accordance with the Employment First executive order, ensure that Memorandums of Understanding are created between agencies to share employment data and outcomes.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Currently there is no clear conduit for data between agencies and no way for data transfers. There is not consistent communication between agencies.
Short-term Objectives	Using the National expert provided by the Employment First Leadership State Mentoring Program Grant map an individual's movement through the system and how the data should flow. Create MOUs.
Agencies Involved	The Governor's Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	MOUs between agencies. Clear path through the system with corresponding data sources.

<b>Activity 3</b>	<b>Develop universal employment data measures, definitions and integrity standards for use across systems</b>
Long Range Goal	Universal expectation for employment using an array of employment models supported by data.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Currently data is not consistently collected and the integrity is not clear across populations and therefore unreliable.
Short-term Objectives	Analyze current data measures and methodology. Analyze the integrity of existing data and identify areas for improvement.

Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), Central Management Services (CMS) , Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Transparent and consistent methodology, measurement and integrity of employment data.

<b>Activity 4</b>	<b>Provide access for Provider Networks to Cross-Systems Data to better serve existing and future</b>
Long Range Goal	Uniform access to reliable outcome and data. Ability to provide data on all models offered.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Currently different agencies and divisions use different systems, some are very out of date and they do not communicate with one another.
Short-term Objectives	Cross-systems survey of existing data systems.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB); Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), Central Management Services (CMS), Department of Health and Family Services (HFS), Department of Veteran’s Affairs.
Projected Start Date	1/1/15

Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	A cross-system data network that can be accessed across agencies and by providers to better support the individuals that they support.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, providers, family members, advocacy organizations.

**PROVIDER WORKGROUP:**

<b>Activity 1</b>	<b>Identify long-term policy changes required to support systems change to align with the principles of Employment First</b>
Long Range Goal	Identify rule and policy changes required to update employment services and infrastructure
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	It will be imperative to have a robust stakeholder process, clear consensus on recommendations may be difficult to achieve
Short-term Objectives	Review existing recommendations from the Employment First Summit Report, Blueprint and Best Practices in other states
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Health and Family Services (HFS) , Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Clear directives from the provider community on needed policy and rule changes to promote competitive, integrated employment and wrap around community integrated supports based upon person-centered planning and practices based on informed choice.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, providers, case management agencies, family members, advocacy organizations.

<b>Activity 2</b>	<b>Identify current Employment Strategies that Providers have used successfully</b>
Long Range Goal	Across populations, identify successful employment models
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Getting information from a wide variety of providers who serve different populations, differences in models and language.
Short-term Objectives	Survey providers statewide on current employment services offered. Identify strategies to expand and duplicate programs that have had successful outcomes.
Agencies Involved	The Governor's Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Health and Family Services (HFS) , Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	List of programs that have been successful and where they are working so that there can be provider-to-provider support
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, providers, case management agencies, family members, advocacy organizations.

<b>Activity 3</b>	<b>Support community providers to convert existing infrastructure to support competitive integrated employment.</b>
Long Range Goal	Align employment services with the new Federal Home and Community Based Services Rule that will take into account community involvement and opportunities for interactions with non-disabled peers.

Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Funding, required culture shifts, safety concerns and community and family acceptance.
Short-term Objectives	-Connecting providers who want to convert their systems with those who have done so successfully -Evaluate current structure and identify the true cost of innovative employment models.
Agencies Involved	The Governor's Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Health and Family Services (HFS) , Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	A strategic five year plan to shift employment and day services to align with new Federal HCBS rules and Title II of the ADA.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, providers, case management agencies, family members, advocacy organizations.

<b>Activity 4</b>	<b>Create a rate structure that incentivizes providers who utilize employment first models and employment outcomes and assure that it applies equally to Individuals with the Most Complex and Challenging Disabilities.</b>
Long Range Goal	Updated rate structure
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Outdated rate structure, lack of consistent funding across agencies and lack of funds.
Short-term Objectives	-Mapping where dollars are spent currently. -Utilizing the resources from the Employment First Leadership State Mentoring Program Grant analyze how other states have updated their rate structure.
	The Governor's Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities

Agencies Involved	(DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Health and Family Services (HFS) , Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Outcomes based rate system for employment and day services.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, family members, case management agencies, providers, advocacy organizations.

<b>Activity 5</b>	<b>Rebalancing current service structure to transition to wraparound day services that support employment outcomes</b>
Long Range Goal	Shift day services from a “traditional” day so that individuals can be appropriately supported for employment with appropriate wraparound supports.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Staffing patterns, funding, transportation and provider infrastructure,
Short-term Objectives	Look at other states who have shifted away from facility-based day services and how they changed their day services.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Health and Family Services (HFS) , Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	A five year plan for providers to restructure and realign days services with Employment First principles.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, family members, providers, case management agencies, advocacy organizations.

**TRANSITION WORKGROUP:**

<b>Activity 1</b>	<b>Develop practices that require school districts to develop transition plans and services based on the presumption that all individuals can work in the community after the appropriate academic outcomes, on an individual basis</b>
Long Range Goal	Review existing transition rules and regulations to ensure that planning requirements are leading to appropriate transition services that align with the principles of Employment First.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Transition plans and services are inconsistent across districts, lack of communication between districts and between ISBE and other state agencies. Lack of appropriate staff development and knowledge base on transition services.
Short-term Objectives	Look at what other states have done to ensure that employment and academics are the thrust of the transition process. Survey current strategies used across the state.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) , Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Statewide plan that is driven by employment and post-secondary outcomes for transition with annual reporting.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, local education agencies, family members, advocacy organizations.

<b>Activity 2</b>	<b>Revise and expand tracking system for students through transition into adult services, in order to properly monitor services and outcomes</b>
-------------------	--

Long Range Goal	Core set of outcomes for transition identified and tracked through adult services
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Currently data is collected but the data collection and reporting must continue into adult services so that districts can track the employment outcomes. Lack of communication between ISBE and adult service agencies.
Short-term Objectives	Review of current data that is being collected. Analyze need for additional data and data sources. Revitalize the Interagency Coordinating Council and its duty to annually review, analyze and publicly report on transition data and provide specific recommendations for improving transition.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Central Management Services (CMS) , Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Clear data system with outcomes tracked from entry into transition through 5 years post graduation.

<b>Activity 3</b>	<b>Ensure that students who have been part of the Juvenile Justice system or DCFS or in the eligibility categories of ED and/or BD are appropriately placed, supported and that those students retain the services required under the IDEA and that Employment and Academics remain the desired outcome of their Transition.</b>
Long Range Goal	Tracking and outcome reporting for these populations.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Lack of current services once an individual is incarcerated or ages out of DCFS, lack of appropriate communication for

	continued support.
Short-term Objectives	Analyze current trends to set baseline information about the frequency of this problem. Access how other states have handled these issues.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Department of Corrections, Department of Juvenile Justice, Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Tracking mechanism to ensure placement, support and transition outcomes. Specific training tools for needed state agency and school personnel and individuals to ensure that the appropriate services are provided.

<b>Activity 4</b>	<b>Require Individualization of Transition Plans and ensure that they align with the Person-Centered Requirements of the new Federal Home and Community Based Services Waiver Rules.</b>
Long Range Goal	Create consistency with the transition process and the requirements for person-centered planning included in the new Federal Home and Community Based Waiver rules.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Currently the Individual Education Plan (IEP) processes are inconsistent, lack of communication between ISBE and adult service agencies.
Short-term Objectives	Review the person-centered planning requirements in the new HCBS rules. Analyze IEP requirements and align where possible.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE),

	Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	A consistent process that can be utilized for transition and can be easily translated for adult services.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, family members, providers, advocacy organizations.

<b>Activity 5</b>	<b>Establish Post-Secondary Education Services and Supports in line with the protections provided by IDEA</b>
Long Range Goal	Develop protections for individuals with disabilities who attend publicly funded community college, trade schools or 4-year programs, that are consistent and clear throughout the state across disabilities.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Currently the protections offered to individuals once they age out of the education system are limited and there is a lack of understanding of the supports required.
Short-term Objectives	Analyze how other states have tackled this issue. Identify programs where individuals with disabilities have had successful post secondary experiences.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), Community College Board (CCB), Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICCD)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Strategies to better support individuals with disabilities in state-funded post-secondary settings.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, family

	members, advocacy organizations.
--	----------------------------------

**EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT WORKGROUP:**

<b>Activity 1</b>	<b>Develop opportunities for ongoing dialogue between the business community, the state and community providers within identified sectors</b>
Long Range Goal	-To encourage working with multiple businesses build sector strategies to engage more employers. -Identify incentives for employers when they hire individuals with disabilities.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Currently the commitment to the implementation of Employment First in the private sector is inconsistent. Culture shift towards competitive employment is required.
Short-term Objectives	Analyze how other states have successfully used sector strategies. Identify sectors to participate in trainings and collaboration (financial, health care, manufacturing, etc.)
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Department of Human Services (DHS)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Sector strategies and consistent understanding of the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities in identified sectors.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, family members, providers, advocacy organizations.

<b>Activity 2</b>	<b>Create a System for Coordinated sharing of Leads and Outcomes for Employers</b>
Long Range Goal	Restructure current service systems so that individuals with disabilities in Illinois are a better prepared workforce
	Currently not all agencies have specific ways to engage

Perceived Barriers/Challenges	employers, lack of communication between state agencies and the private sector
Short-term Objectives	Evaluate current advisory boards and other modes of employer engagement across agencies. Tap into existing employer organizations to improve communication and strategies.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Ongoing communication and support between private employers, associations, unions and State agencies.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, family members, providers, advocacy organizations.

<b>Activity 3</b>	<b>Engage Small Businesses in Employment First Activities</b>
Long Range Goal	Build on ODEP’s “Add Us In” Initiative targeting the small business community.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Currently the focus is on larger corporations, small businesses require a unique strategy. Culture change is required.
Short-term Objectives	Analyze the 8 states that participated in ODEPs programs. Identify small businesses that would be willing to pilot Employment First programs.
Agencies Involved	Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15

Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Strategic plan to bring Small Businesses into the practice of hiring individuals with disabilities.

<b>Activity 4</b>	<b>Based on the Recent Changes to Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act Assist Employers to Reach their Hiring Goals</b>
Long Range Goal	Identify needs of employer and skills of individuals with disabilities to assist employers in hiring and individuals in matching their skills to available jobs.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Lack of communication between state agencies, the provider community and employers to identify those needs.
Short-term Objectives	Analyze successful strategies in other states.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Strategies for employers to reach their goals for hiring qualified individuals with disabilities.
Stakeholders Involved	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, providers, family members, advocacy organizations.

<b>Activity 5</b>	<b>Develop Public and Private Partnerships to Solve Common Problems such as Housing, Transportation and Assistive Technology</b>
Long Range Goal	Utilize business resources to create consistent housing, transportation and assistive technology programs
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Creating something new with inconsistent rates and practices from state agencies.

Short-term Objectives	Evaluate strategies of other states (i.e. Maryland's Assistive Technology Loan Program, Connecticut's transportation Program)
Agencies Involved	The Governor's Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES)
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Proposals for Housing, Transportation and Assistive Technology funding mechanisms
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, family members, providers, advocacy organizations.

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT (Internal) WORKGROUP:**

<b>Activity 1</b>	<b>Align current Workforce Development System with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)</b>
Long Range Goal	Align VR with current Workforce System with one joint State plan and Outcome Measures as required by WIOA.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Lack of communication and knowledge gaps for staff depending on agencies.
Short-term Objectives	Evaluate how other states and the Federal government have successfully aligned VR and Workforce. Develop a strategy for braided funding and shared data and information. Co-locate and co-train workforce and VR staff. Training for all staff who will interface with the Workforce System.
Agencies Involved	The Governor's Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)

Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	In accordance with the timeline laid out in WIOA, align the systems.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, providers, members, advocacy organizations.

<b>Activity 2</b>	<b>Develop strategies to make the State a Model Employer</b>
Long Range Goal	Increase employment outcomes within state government for individuals with disabilities.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	The internal processes for the state, no preference for hiring. Lack of information sharing to individuals on the programs that already exist.
Short-term Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Evaluate current programs in place to support individuals with disabilities and state employees.</li> <li>-Analyze what other states and the Federal government have done (fast-track hiring systems, hiring goals, etc.)</li> <li>-Evaluate the Federal schedule for hiring individuals with disabilities and the impact of President Obama's executive order to increase the employment of individuals with disabilities by Federal Agencies.</li> </ul>
Agencies Involved	The Governor's Office, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Central Management Services (CMS).
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Established hiring goals with plan for implementation and tracking modalities across agencies.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, family

	members, providers, advocacy organizations.
--	---

<b>Activity 3</b>	<b>Evaluate the Business Enterprise Program and the State Use Program in relationship to Employment First Principles</b>
Long Range Goal	Evaluate the structure and effectiveness of the BEP and State Use Program and how they align with Employment First principles.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	These programs foster the pipeline to segregated, facility-based employment Provider organizations rely upon these programs as a source of income.
Short-term Objectives	Evaluate similar programs in other states and how such programs have been modernized or eliminated, including but not limited to, the state of Maryland that has decided to terminate its State Use Program directly with Sheltered Workshops.
Agencies Involved	The Governor’s Office, Central Management Services (CMS), Department of Health and Family Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Department of Human Services (DHS) and other large agencies who utilize the programs.
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Updated versions (if applicable) of the existing programs that align with Employment First principals
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, family members, providers, advocacy organizations.

<b>Activity 4</b>	<b>Ensure that state agency web-based information and tools are readily accessible and usable by persons with disabilities</b>
Long Range Goal	Ensure that individuals that utilize a variety of techniques for accessing information are readily able to utilize information

	and tools provided by state agencies.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Currently information is not consistently accessible and difficult to navigate
Short-term Objectives	Evaluate current information and tools available and related policies associated with creating such information and tools to identify needed changes
Agencies Involved	The Governor's Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Department of Higher Education (IBHE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA), Central Management Services (CMS).
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Compliance of information and tools with the Illinois Information Technology Accessibility Act.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, family members, providers, advocacy organizations.

<b>Activity 5</b>	<b>Establish a Training Protocol on Employment First for new and existing state employees</b>
Long Range Goal	All employees will be knowledgeable about employment first and the necessary mechanisms to provide the appropriate employment services and supports across disabilities and across agencies.
Perceived Barriers/Challenges	Lack of awareness and commitment to existing employment first initiatives. Staff reliance on outdated employment models.
Short-term Objectives	Evaluate what other states have done, examine current training protocols.
	The Governor's Office, Division of Developmental Disabilities

Agencies Involved	(DDD), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Division of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Department of Employment Security (IDES), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Department of Higher Education (IBHE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), Department of Veteran’s Affairs (DVA).
Projected Start Date	1/1/15
Projected Plan Completion Date	6/30/15
Product/Results Expected	Established training protocol that incorporates Employment First principles consistent across agencies.
Stakeholders Required	A cross-section of individuals with disabilities, family members, providers, advocacy organizations.

## References

### ***Sources Reviewed and Incorporated:***

*Executive Order Implementing Employment First in Illinois (6/3/14)*  
[https://www.illinois.gov/Government/ExecOrders/Pages/2014\\_8.aspx](https://www.illinois.gov/Government/ExecOrders/Pages/2014_8.aspx)

*Illinois Employment First Act: HB 2591 (7/16/14)*  
[www.ilga.gov/legislation/BillStatus.asp?DocNum=2591&GAID=12&DocTypeID=HB&SessionID=85&GA=98](http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/BillStatus.asp?DocNum=2591&GAID=12&DocTypeID=HB&SessionID=85&GA=98)

*Report from Employment First Summit (1/31/12),*  
[www.state.il.us/agency/icdd/pdf/Illinois%20Employment%20First%20Summit%20Report%205-11-12.pdf](http://www.state.il.us/agency/icdd/pdf/Illinois%20Employment%20First%20Summit%20Report%205-11-12.pdf)

*Illinois Employment First Blueprint from Equip for Equality (October 2014),*  
<http://www.equipforequality.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Equip-for-Equality-Employment-First-Blueprint.pdf>.

*The National Governor's Association "A Better Bottom Line: Employing People with Disabilities Blueprint for Governors." (2013),*  
[http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/2013/NGA\\_2013BetterBottomLineWeb.pdf](http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/2013/NGA_2013BetterBottomLineWeb.pdf).

*Illinois Supported Employment Transformation Grant, Funded by the Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, October 1, 2014- September 30, 2019.*

*Illinois Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program Grant, Funded by the US Department of Labor, January 1, 2015- September 30, 2015.*

## Appendix A:

### Definitions

**Balancing Incentive Program (BIP):** The Balancing Incentive Program (BIP) authorizes enhanced Federal Medicaid matching funds to States to increase access to non-institutional long-term services and supports (LTSS) as of October 1, 2011. Illinois' BIP application was approved June 12, 2013. Per the Federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services the Balancing Incentive Program will help States transform their long-term care systems in the following ways: lowering costs through improved systems performance & efficiency, creating tools to help consumers with care planning & assessment, and improving quality measurement & oversight. The Balancing Incentive Program also provides new ways to serve more people in home and community-based settings and is closely tied with current Long Term Care Rebalancing initiatives.

**Business Enterprise Program:** A program to promote and encourage the continuous economic development of businesses owned by persons with disabilities.

**Competitive Integrated Employment:** Competitive Employment means work in the competitive labor market that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis in an integrated setting and or which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled. WIOA definition: full or part-time work at minimum wage or higher, with wages and benefits similar to those without disabilities performing the same work, and fully integrated with co-workers without disabilities.

**Customized Employment:** Customized employment is a flexible process designed to personalize the employment relationship between a job candidate and an employer in a way that meets the needs of both. WIOA definition: competitive integrated employment, for an individual with a significant disability, that is based on an individualized determination of the strengths, needs, and interests of the individual with a significant disability, designed to meet the specific abilities of the individual with a significant disability and the business needs of the employer, carried out through flexible strategies.

**Day Training/Programs:** A day habilitation program for individuals with developmental disabilities that focuses on daily living skills and economic self-sufficiency. Day programs are offered to individuals who live in residential settings as well as by themselves or with family. These programs include purposeful and meaningful activities and are designed to foster the acquisition of skills, appropriate behavior, greater independence and personal choice. Programs may include daily living skills instruction, community outings, vocational training, employment opportunities and recreation.

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

**Individual Placement & Support (IPS):** IPS Supported Employment is an approach to supported employment for people who have a severe mental illness. IPS stands for Individual Placement and Support. Evidenced Based Individual Placement Services Supported Employment (IPS) is an evidence-based practice that supports individuals with severe mental illnesses in the vocational exploration and job finding process. IPS improves long-term well-being. Once a person obtains a job, job supports are highly individualized and fully integrated with their mental health treatment.

**Integrated Setting:** An integrated setting, with respect to an employment outcome, is a setting typically found in the community in which applicants or eligible individuals interact with non-disabled individuals, other than non-disabled individuals who are providing services to those applicants or eligible individuals, to the same extent that non-disabled individuals in comparable positions interact with other persons.

**Prevocational Services:** Prevocational Services provide opportunities for individuals with limited work-related skills to learn job skills and other related social skills to enhance their ability to obtain employment in the future. Individuals learn skills such as following directions, accepting feedback and criticism from a supervisor and increasing their self-confidence. Individuals are able to have paid work experiences and learn about the world of work as a result of this program. Clarification of employment goals and resources to assist individuals in reaching his/her objectives is the primary focus.

**Segregated Settings:** Segregated settings are congregate settings populated exclusively or primarily with individuals with disabilities and are characterized by regimentation in daily activities, lack of privacy or autonomy, policies limiting visitors, or limits on individuals' ability to engage freely in community activities and to manage their own activities or daily living. Segregated settings also include provisions for daytime activities primarily with other individuals with disabilities.

**Sheltered Workshops (Facility-based Employment):** The term sheltered workshop refers to an organization or environment that employs people with disabilities separately from others. The term is used to refer to entities that are authorized to employ workers with disabilities at sub-minimum wages. The term has generally been used to describe facilities that employ people with disabilities exclusively or primarily.

**State Use Program:** The Program provides long-term employment opportunities for people working in qualified not-for-profit agencies by encouraging all State of Illinois Agencies to purchase products and services produced and provided by persons with significant disabilities.

**Supported Employment:** From WIOA: Supported employment is integrated competitive employment, or an individual working on a short-term basis in an integrated employment setting towards integrated competitive employment. In addition, customized employment is now included within the definition of supported employment.

**Transition Services:** The term 'transition services' means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that-

(A) is designed to be a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;

(B) is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests;

(C) includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

**Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA):** WIOA makes several significant changes to help individuals with disabilities access services and improve employment outcomes.