

Employment First

The Clinton County Board of Developmental Disabilities supports the Employment First Initiative instituted by Executive Order 2012-05K. The Executive Order established statewide collaboration and coordination by creating the Employment First Taskforce and Advisory Committee and made community employment the preferred outcome for individuals with developmental disabilities.

The purpose of the Employment First Policy is to:

- A. Expand community employment opportunities by reducing barriers and aligning state policy.
- B. Enhance lives by creating greater opportunities for all people to advance their careers.
- C. Provide diversity and enrichment to the community, promote equal opportunity within the community, and decrease dependency on public funding.
- D. Provide employers and their businesses with more value because of access to dependable and qualified employees.
- E. Encourage, provide, create, and reward integrated employment in the workforce as the first and preferred option of all students and adults with disabilities who are served by the Board.
- F. For students, Board staff will work with school district personnel, students, families, and other applicable entities to draft Individualized Education Programs (IEP's) and Transition Plans that consider the ultimate outcome of integrated employment as the preferred option and shall work cooperatively to attain career goals. In support of this, the Board shall develop and maintain a "Local Interagency Agreement for Transition of Students with Disabilities to the Workforce". Any decision by the student and/or family to not pursue career planning activities as part of a Transition Plan OR to not consider employment in the community upon graduation from a school program shall be documented, with reasons and rationale provided.
- G. For adults, Individual Service Plans (ISP's) shall consider integrated employment as the preferred option for each person served and the team shall work cooperatively with persons served to attain that career goal. Any decision to not consider employment in the community for specific individuals is to be re-evaluated on a regular basis, with the reasons and rationale for these decisions fully documented and addressed in service plans.

For purposes of the policy, the Board shall:

- A. Engage in the person-centered planning process. The purpose of a person-centered planning process is to identify an individual's unique strengths, interests, abilities, preferences, resources, and desired outcomes as they relate to community employment.
- B. Incorporate Employment First principles in its strategic plan.
- C. Collect data and submit it to the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities regarding individuals who received employment services, as well as individuals who do not receive employment services but who are engaged in competitive or community employment.
- D. Develop and monitor on-going benchmarks for increasing the number of individuals of working-age who are engaged in community employment services.
- E. Work collaboratively with local school districts in the county to ensure a framework exists for individuals approaching completion of a school program that supports community employment and reduces or eliminates duplication of efforts.
- F. Disseminate information to individuals served, families, and community partners that promotes and facilitates community employment.
- G. Adopt procedures that align with this policy that outline appropriate roles, tasks, and coordination activities.