

EMPLOYMENT FIRST



Every Person. Every Talent. Every Opportunity.

August 2014

Dear Employment First Partners,

Many thanks for the positive feedback we received for our July *Employment First Update*. It is our goal to keep you informed about Employment First activities in Ohio. Don't forget to [contact us](#) if you need a speaker or visit the [Community Employment Resources Map](#) for local Employment First news.

If you have a story you would like for us to share, would like to give us feedback, or you need Employment First support, please contact us at employmentfirst@dodd.ohio.gov.

Community Forums Held

Nearly 600 family members, county board staff, providers, and other stakeholders attended community forums in Medina, Findlay, Urbana and Pickerington to discuss the Employment First Funding System Re-design. Allan I. Bergman and Lisa Mills, PhD, policy and Medicaid funding experts, facilitated the discussions, which included an overview of federal policies and conversation about the guiding principles of funding system re-design. The principles address concepts including presumption of employability for all, provider competencies and skills, continuous improvement and flexibility. For more information, including a report that analyzes funding models in five states, please [click here](#).

Thanks to all who attended. Your comments and feedback will be used to further refine the guiding principles as we design a system that supports community employment and integration.

Two additional community forums will be held later this month in Batavia and Circleville. [Register here](#).

Policy & Procedure Guidance



See Ohio's current plan to support the ongoing implementation of Employment First.

Access the [online archive](#) for previous issues of the *Employment First Update*.

Quick Links

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Upcoming Trainings & Events



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The Employment First Team

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In response to multiple requests, The Employment First team finalized a guidance document to support county boards and providers as they develop Employment First policies and procedures. The document addresses presumption of employability, professional development, school to work transition, interagency collaboration, and much more. To view the document, click [here](#).

Transformation Begins

Six county boards and three private providers are working with five expert systems transformation consultants to receive guidance in the development of strategies to transform from facility-based to integrated services.

Those agencies are learning fiscal transformation strategies designed to better include competitive and integrated employment options as a viable and sustainable funding stream. Look for future updates on the [Employment First Website](#).

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Signed by President Barack Obama



A bill that would significantly limit young people with disabilities from entering sheltered workshon

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programs has been signed by President Barack Obama. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) includes major changes to the path from school to work for people with disabilities. The legislation updates the Workforce Investment Act, enacted in 1998.

Highlights of the streamlined approach include:

- State vocational rehabilitation programs must allocate 15% of their Federal funding to help young people with disabilities transition from secondary school to post-secondary education programs and employment
- The measure would prohibit individuals age 24 and younger from working in jobs that pay less than the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, unless they first try vocational rehabilitation services.

[Read More](#)

Mobile Technology Webinar
August 28, 2014, 9:00am- 10:00am



Join us for our next free webinar, "Mobile Technology as Employment Supports: Opportunities and Challenges of Smartphones and Tablets."

Smartphones, tablet computers and other mobile technology are readily available and have great potential to support employment. Technology can help individuals learn a new skill, interact with a customer, or remind them which bus to catch to get to work. But these technologies can also be a distraction and there are situations when technology can cause more harm than good. Practical uses and best practices in mobile technology to support employment will be shared. [Register Here.](#)

WORKING Together: Changing Employment

**Experiences for People with Disabilities
Conference, September 15-16, Great Wolf
Lodge, Mason**



The Southwestern Ohio Council of Governments, in partnership with the University of Cincinnati's University Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, will host their first WORKING Together employment conference. This conference will bring families, providers, county board staff, and people with disabilities together to learn from national and state leaders in expanding employment options for people with disabilities. A limited number of scholarships are available on a first come/first served basis for people with disabilities and their families/caregivers. To request a scholarship, please contact [Emily Beltz](#). Registration is \$200 and the deadline is September 1, 2014.

[Register Here](#)

Defying the Label



Above: Carol strikes a pose.

Carol McDonald grew up in an institution but has lived in the community since the 1970s. Her caseworker from that era noted in her file that Carol was "not capable of meaningful work." After working in the community for more than 20 years, Carol has defied that label and is a role model for people with developmental disabilities everywhere. Carol has been working independently at Goodwill since January 2014. Previously, she worked for Five River Metro Parks 2nd Street Public Market, a farmer's market in Montgomery County, for over 12 years and before that she held a janitorial position with an enclave for over 10 years. In the mid-2000s Carol was inducted into the Developmental Disabilities Hall of Fame. Every year, Carol is extremely proud to attend this event where she is recognized in front of hundreds of people for her accomplishments.

Sincerely,

**EMPLOYMENT
FIRST** 

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