

# Local Leaders | Q&A

## *Informational Webinar*

**Q:** We would like to have more than 7-12 members on our community planning team. Is that okay?

**A:** YES! The guideline of 7-12 is a minimum number of team members. This number can be larger, and will probably need to be if you are responding from a multi-county approach.

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**Q:** Any advice to the size of the community? What do you think would be the most effective approach?

**A:** This can be defined by the applicants and is not limited to geographic borders. Communities that have already established partnerships can build on those relationships to develop collaborative teams.

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**Q:** In the application, under the requirements section it states planning teams will establish regular meeting dates. As I am speaking with other community leaders about being an implementation site, I anticipate they will want to know what type of time commitment will be involved in this project. Do you advise that I tell others we would potentially meet with the state-contracted facilitator bi-monthly or monthly?

**A:** We are estimating that the needs assessment portion will take approximately four days over a four-month period. Then another 4-7 days for on-site technical assistance and interagency development work over a 6-7 month period. The community teams should plan to continue to meet monthly and establish an ongoing schedule to meet and continually re-assess barriers and action steps.

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**Q:** If a provider already has a community employment plan in place, will this new plan be an option or required?

**A:** The Local Leaders project is designed to help communities identify professional development needs and develop action plans to address barriers to employment. It is not a requirement to participate, but we hope that the needs identified at the local level will help the entire state build solid action plans to implement Employment First.

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**Q:** Where can I find the Local Leaders Powerpoint?

**A:** You can download the Local Leaders Powerpoint at [www.ohioemploymentfirst.org](http://www.ohioemploymentfirst.org). It's located in the Resources Section under Handouts and Presentations.

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**Q:** I am trying to develop a multi-county team. Any advice on creation of such a team?

**A:** That's great! We suggest you contact the other potential planning team members in your community and ask them to participate. You can start with county board superintendents, SSA directors, adult services

directors, etc., private providers, educators, state support team representatives, people with disabilities, employers and other agency representatives. Send them the Local Leaders application and fact sheet. Both can be found on the Employment First Website, in the Newsroom and Resources Sections.

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**Q:** I understand the basics of the creation of team, but has this ever been done in other states?

**A:** Community Teams are a recognized best practice for successful realization of Employment First. The following is from the APSE White Paper on Employment First:

**“Build on communities.** Think globally, but act locally. Successful initiatives work to establish “Community Action Teams” with goals of advancing an Employment First vision. This would logically include local coalitions of federal, state and local organizations as well as individuals who are willing to work together to get things done in a targeted geographic area. It is important to create Community Action Teams that can organize their work plans around the unique situations that exist in a particular community. The teams should be comprised of business leaders, job seekers, educators, family and disability advocates, employment providers, workforce development professionals, county representatives, vocational rehabilitation professionals, and other interested community members. The “ticket” to belonging to a successful Community Action Team is a commitment to action. The team’s overall performance will be gauged by the implementation of better practices and measurable increases in integrated employment for individuals with disabilities.”

<http://www.apse.org/docs/Employment%20First%20Paper%20609%5B1%5D.pdf>

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**Q:** Can you explain more on regarding sharing of resources?

**A:** Many communities may already share services or resources, for example, county boards who share a superintendent or community employment services staff. Other examples might be Workforce Development (One-Stops) who share resources with VR staff.

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**Q:** Will there be marketing materials made available that all communities can utilize to assist with education around Employment First?

**A:** Yes! Check out the Newsroom and Resources sections of our Employment First Website for continuous updates on Employment First marketing materials.

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**Q:** How will this affect already established community employment programs?

**A:** The intent of the Local Leaders is to enhance the community employment programs that already exist in communities through targeted professional development activities. Local Leaders is also an opportunity to expand partnerships with other agencies and formalize ways of working together with Interagency Agreements.

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**Q:** If your community is not selected as one of the six sites, will you still be able to attend the state and regional trainings?

**A:** Yes! The purpose of Local Leaders is to identify the statewide professional development needs for

Employment First and to develop action plans that benefit everyone.

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**Q:** Please review the available funding for Local Leaders.

**A:** With the assistance of the state-provided facilitators, each community will develop a plan of action steps, along with a proposed budget, to address their professional development needs. Many of the activities on the action plan will not require funding, but will still be an important aspect of Employment First, to enhance collective knowledge of their community resources for community employment. If needs are identified on a statewide basis, for example, evidence-based practices around transition planning, those trainings will be provided on a regional or statewide basis and will be available for everyone to participate.

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**Q:** Are there already developed guidelines for professional development that are available?

**A:** Yes, the Employment First Advisory Committee Training Workgroup has researched many professional development resources that may be utilized as part of the community action plans. The U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy Toolkit is also a good resource: <http://www.dol.gov/odep/ietoolkit/>.

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**Q:** What if an employer comes forward/is identified after June 1st?

**A:** The application deadline is June 1, but community planning teams are welcome to seek additional members to join “Local Leaders” as the process evolves. The intent is to build a sustainable team structure and to enhance collaboration.

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**Q:** When will Local Leaders teams be selected?

**A:** Teams will be selected in June, and will be notified of their selection by the first of July. Facilitators will begin to organize the teams for the needs-assessment process soon after.

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**Q:** Does the one-page response apply to the first question as well?

**A:** Yes, please limit your response to one page per question.