

The Pickaway Fayette County

Employment First Community

Interagency Agreement

June 2014-June 2016

Statement of Need

The Pickaway- Fayette County Employment First Community, which includes representatives from the Pickaway and Fayette County Boards of Developmental Disabilities, The Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency, The Pickaway and Fayette County Ohio Means Jobs One Stop, Pickaway County ESC, Pickaway/Ross Career Technical Center, State Support Team 11, local school districts, local vendors of VR services, local Medicaid Waiver providers, state and county Mental Health representatives, Pickaway and Fayette County Community Action, and individuals served/their parents, has served as one of six Local Leaders teams through the Ohio Employment First initiative in 2013-2014.

The Pickaway and Fayette team was selected and tasked with engaging in a yearlong, multi-agency collaborative strategic planning effort, which included a needs assessment and Action Plan for improving professional development in the region. The completed Action Plan identifies sustainable strategies for building and enhancing the skills of professionals to increase community employment for people with developmental disabilities, both on a local and a statewide level. The selected Action Steps are those that the team determined would be best able to:

- Address the priorities of the local community
- Align with the statewide professional development implementation plan
- Maximize the use of existing resources
- Ensure sustainability
- Promote employment outcomes

Purpose of this Interagency Agreement

This agreement between the representatives of the Pickaway and Fayette County Employment First community members constitutes a formal commitment from all partners to ensure that the Action Steps previously identified and agreed upon are successfully completed. The Action Steps have been developed into deliverables, which are attached on page 6. The budgets for Pickaway County and Fayette County are listed separately, as each county will be responsible for its own portion of the deliverables, but both counties will work together to ensure sustainability.

The agreement also signifies an agreement to adopt the Ohio Employment First Common Guiding definitions and principles, and to provide statutory support for Employment First.

This includes the following definitions:

- **“Community Employment”** means employment which is competitive employment and takes place in an integrated setting.
- **“Competitive Employment”** means full-time or part-time work in the competitive labor market in which payment is 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 persons who are not disabled.
- **“Integrated Setting:** means a setting typically found in the community where individuals interact with persons who do not have disabilities to the same extent as non-disabled persons in comparable positions interacting with other persons. This includes employment settings where employees interact with the community via technology.

This also includes the following Common Guiding Principles:

- We shall conduct an examination of our existing funding, policies, practices and roles and responsibilities at a state and local level that support or hinder the community employment of Ohioans with developmental disabilities in order to maximize the use of existing resources and funding streams for services.
- We shall support the development or review of specific state-level Interagency Agreements between individual Taskforce agencies to ensure coordination of services, as appropriate, with the objective of increasing opportunities for community employment for Ohioans with developmental disabilities.

- We shall review information and data provided from local community planning teams (or other sources) to identify successes and address barriers to community employment.
- We shall agree to include in our technical guidance to the field, information on increasing employment opportunities for Ohioans with developmental disabilities.
- We shall agree to promote local participation in multi-agency collaborations to identify community needs, address sustainability of systems and emphasize best practices to improve community employment outcomes. Local MOUs or agreements should support Employment First principles and remove barriers to community employment whenever possible. This includes the braiding of local funds and resources.
- We shall develop and approve cross-agency tools and processes to share information as appropriate in order to prevent duplication in eligibility, enrollment, assessment and planning.
- We shall develop a consistent message around skills and competencies of service providers that must be fostered across systems, including training and technical assistance of evidence-based practices. Target outcomes will include building capacity to support effective transitions to employment in the community.
- We shall serve as members of the Employment First Taskforce and agree to actively and consistently participate, and to provide leadership and oversight of this systems change effort. Further, we agree to track and evaluate progress made towards the above goals and revise as necessary.

This includes the Statutory Support for Employment First:

- Employment First Founding Statute (ORSC 5123.022) states that employment services for individuals with developmental disabilities shall be directed at community employment.
- Increase in Supported Employment – Community Rate (ORC 5123:2-9-15), The reimbursement rate for the Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver Service, Supported Employment-Community, was increased from \$24 per hour to just over \$40 per hour.
- New Transition Planning Requirements in IEPs (ORSC 3323.011) require that the transition planning process begin at 14 years of age, and required measurable

post-secondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessment related to competitive employment in an integrated setting.

- Employment First Line Item – The state budget for FY20114-2015 created a line item to implement Employment First activities to be funded with \$3 million per year for each year of the biennium.
- Employment First Rule (5123:2-2-05) went into effect on April 1, 2014, ensuring that all individuals with developmental disabilities have opportunities to be engaged in community employment. The rule outlines a person-centered process for all working-age adults that results in the individual’s placement on the appropriate path to community employment. The rule also directs county boards of DD to implement an Employment First policy at the local level that sets measurable benchmarks for success.

2014-2016 Goals

1. The Pickaway and Fayette County Employment First Community will include interagency representation in attendance, decision making and action.
2. The team will be sustainable, with team meetings held quarterly.
3. A commitment will be made to invite and engage additional community members, as needed for special projects.
4. Team members will commit to the successful implementation of the Action Plan

Terms of Agreement

The terms of this inter agency agreement between all entities listed below shall beginning on the date of signatures and continue for two years at which time a new agreement will be written that identifies new goals/projects.

Resolution of Conflicts

For the resolution of disputes arising over issues addressed in this agreement, all parties will utilize the appropriate steps and methods as described herein. Attempts will be made to resolve the issue at the lowest level of disagreement. Informal resolution will

be the first step in dealing with any disagreements relative to this agreement. The materials presented will include: the regulation or requirement related to the dispute; the specific issue needing resolution; the prior steps taken to resolve the issue and any additional information that may be relevant to the dispute. Utilizing the information presented, a good faith effort will be made to reach a mutually satisfactory solution. Efforts must be made at each level for resolution in a timely manner.

