



Employment First

Update

New Employment Data System

Later this month, the Employment First Outcome Tracking System is set to launch for county boards and providers to record employment service and outcome data for individuals served. For the past several months, Dr. Robert Cimera, associate professor at Kent State University and Director of the Institute on Outcome Analysis, has worked with DODD information technology and policy staff to develop the system. Dr. Cimera is recognized as the nation's leading expert in the monetary costs and benefits of vocational employment programs for people with disabilities, and has published over forty studies relating to the cost-efficiency of supported employment programs.

The Employment First Taskforce and Advisory Committee recommended that a statewide data collection system be built to capture employment outcome data for all people in employment services. The Advisory Committee Data workgroup identified areas they would like the system to address, including employment services that lead to community employment, wages earned and hours worked by people with developmental disabilities, and other factors that lead to success.

The outcome tracking system is secure, web-based and easy to use. In order to reduce duplication of data entry and to save time, the system will be

populated with existing information from the Individual Data System (IDS). Providers and county boards will be asked to report on individual-specific employment services utilized, cost of locally-funded services, employer and occupational information, hours worked and wages earned by individuals. Reporting will take place as individuals apply for services and then annually, or as status changes occur. Inputting data should take less than two minutes per participant.

This is a longitudinal tracking system that will allow outcomes to be measured for each participant throughout their entire vocational career. According to Dr. Cimera, "With the completion of this database, Ohio will become a national leader in the developmental disabilities community. No other state in the country collects such valuable data." Once data reporting has begun, Dr. Cimera will use the information collected to identify policies and practices that lead to successful employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities. In other words, policymakers and practitioners will be able to quantitatively identify what works and what doesn't.

The system will be piloted by a small number of county boards and private providers before statewide launch. More information about registration and training opportunities for using the system will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.

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Upcoming Events, Page 2

Check out our upcoming events.

www.ohioemploymentfirst.org





Above: New Employment First team member, Joe Kowalski.

Joe Kowalski Joins Employment First Team

The Department recently welcomed Joe Kowalski to the Employment First team. As a project manager in the Division of Policy and Strategic Direction, Joe will be leading the Employment First Partnership with Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency (OOD). This project, which is well underway, is a partnership between the two state agencies and expands community employment services for people with developmental disabilities. (See September issue of *Employment First Update*.) Joe's primary responsibilities will be providing support to providers, county boards and vocational rehabilitation counselors, facilitating supported employment training for providers and counselors, project evaluation and the dual certification process for providers. Joe joins the Department from EchoingU, an adult day support agency in Dayton, where he was Executive Director. He brings to the position nearly nine years of experience in the developmental disability field.

"I am excited to get to work on this partnership. Employment First is such an ambitious and worthwhile movement, and I am looking forward to the hard work it will require to achieve success with Employment First in Ohio."

-Joe Kowalski

Supported Employment Web Course Update

Ohio's free online supported employment course continues to see significant traffic. The training site launched statewide on November 19, and since that time, more than 700 employment support professionals throughout the state have successfully completed the course, with more than 150 currently enrolled. This training is a requirement to provide services as part of the Employment First Partnership with OOD.

To register, please follow this link: <https://trn-store.com/oh-courses/entry/course-auth-registry.php>.

Employment First Promotion

Do you write local newsletters, have success stories or other Employment First marketing materials? Send them to us! As the initiative gains momentum, we would like to share the great efforts taking place throughout the state to improve employment outcomes for people with developmental disabilities and host them on the Employment First Website.

Please send your success stories, resources or links to EmploymentFirst@dodd.ohio.gov.

Upcoming Events

DD Awareness and Advocacy Day
Ohio Statehouse, March 4th 2014

People First Ohio Conference
Wilmington, Ohio, March 13th-15th 2014

For more details on these events, visit www.ohioemploymentfirst.org

Employment First Taskforce

and Advisory Committee Members.



Advisory Committee

Advocacy & Protective Services Inc.
Arc of Ohio
Association of People Supporting Employment First
Disability Rights Ohio
Governor Kasich's Office
Griffin-Hammis Associates, LLC
Kent State University
Ohio Association of Adult Services
Ohio Association of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities
Ohio Center for Autism & Low Incidence
Ohio Department of Education
Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
Ohio Department of Job & Family Services

Ohio Department of Medicaid
Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services
Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council
Ohio Disability Employment Alliance
Ohio Provider Resource Association and other service providers
Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency
Ohio Self Determination Association
Ohio SIBS
Ohio Superintendents of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities
People First of Ohio
The Ohio State University Nisonger Center
University of Cincinnati University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities