Ideas to Advance Employment First

Employment First Conference

Have a community employment strategy, resource or idea you would like to share with the developmental disabilities field? During the Employment First Conference, space will be allocated for groups or individuals who wish to share innovative concepts that support and advance Employment First. Please note: this is NOT a vendor option. This area is designated for registered conference attendees who wish to informally share with colleagues to offer support and resources. This opportunity supports the networking function of the conference. This is not a formal presentation or session, therefore, participants may leave resources for other attendees to review. However, those who wish to dialogue with other participants are invited to plan a time between sessions to be in the “Idea” area to discuss and share information.

If you would like to participate, and provide information for the “Advancing Employment First Ideas” area, please access the application form at www.ohioemploymentfirst.org in the Newsroom and email to Chris Filler at chris_filler@ocali.org. Your request will be reviewed and you will be contacted to confirm acceptance of your participation. The conference will be held June 4-5 at Embassy Suites, Dublin.

Employment First Taskforce Developing an Interagency Agreement

A Coordinated State Effort

The Employment First Taskforce is developing an interagency agreement that will establish the foundation for a coordinated state effort, examining existing practices in our system to identify and address barriers to employment for people with developmental disabilities. Taskforce members, representing the Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Mental Health, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, Rehabilitation Services Commission and Ohio DD Council, are responsible for developing a collaborative strategy to increase employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

The State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) met with the group in March and facilitated a productive meeting, helping the group to identify a common set of goals. SELN also shared resources from across the nation, including those from other states that are already addressing Employment First from a collaborative approach.

The agreement will set an expectation for the state, establishing the direction for Employment First, including the declaration that all people with
developmental disabilities have the right to make informed decisions about where they work, and to have opportunities to obtain community jobs that may result in greater earnings, better benefits, improved health and increased quality of life.

Local Leaders
Apply Now

There's still time to apply to be selected as an Employment First Local Leaders Professional Development Planning Team. Communities are invited to develop a team of leaders who are interested in enhancing local resources and improving employment outcomes for people with developmental disabilities.

Six implementation sites will be selected to participate in an in-depth self-analysis of their training and technical assistance needs with the support of an expert facilitator. The teams will submit an action plan which contains a list of professional development and technical assistance activities to be implemented in each community. For these six teams, the self-assessment process will take place July through October, with implementation of the plan to follow.

Webinars were held in April to explain the Local Leaders process. A PowerPoint and Q&A document about Local Leaders can be found at www.ohioemploymentfirst.org in the Resources section.

Applications can be found at http://www.ohioemploymentfirst.org in the Newsroom. The deadline for this application is June 1.

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 Mental Health
Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council
Ohio Disability Employment Alliance
Ohio Provider Resource Association and other service providers

Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (ODD)
Ohio Department of Education (ODE)
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS)
Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH)
Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission (ORS)
Ohio Self Determination Association
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
Ohio SIBS

Upcoming Events

OACB Spring Conference
Columbus, May 23-24

Employment First Conference
Embassy Suites, Dublin
June 4,5, Register online at www.ohioemploymentfirst.org

24th Annual APSE National Conference, Indianapolis, June 25-27

OAAS and APSE Conference
Columbus, November 6-7

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