



Ohio APSE Statement on Employment First

“Community Employment shall be the priority and the preferred outcome for working-age Ohioans with disabilities.”

Ohio APSE is committed to:

- ✓ Increasing the number of citizens with disabilities who participate in individual integrated employment by examining the underlying policies, practices and funding structures within the state of Ohio and how they support or impede community employment outcomes.
- ✓ Working to ensure that all citizens, regardless of disability, have the right to pursue the full range of available employment opportunities, and to earn a living wage in a job of their choosing, based on their talents, skills, and interests in order to avoid lives of poverty, dependence and isolation.
- ✓ Promoting the expectation that all working age adults and youths with disabilities who are provided with appropriate supports, can work in jobs fully integrated within the general workforce, alongside co-workers without disabilities, earning minimum wage or higher.
- ✓ Collaborating with local, regional and state leaders to embed Employment First principles which are based on clear public policies and practices with the overall objective of employment of citizens with disabilities in **individual integrated employment as a priority over other publicly-funded facility-based and non-work day services.**

Characteristics of Successful Implementation of Employment First

- ✓ Employment is the first and preferred option when exploring goals and a life path for citizens with disabilities.
- ✓ There are measurable increases in employment of citizens with disabilities within the general workforce, earning minimum or prevailing wage with benefits.
- ✓ Employers universally value individuals with disabilities as an integral part of their workforce, and include them within general recruitment and hiring efforts as standard practice.
- ✓ Funding is sufficient so that quality services and supports are available as needed for long-term employment **success**.

All individuals receiving publicly financed supports have an opportunity to enter the workforce and become contributing members of society.

People with disabilities are viewed as capable of performing work in typical, integrated employment settings.

- ✓ Young people with disabilities have work experiences that are typical of other teenagers and young adults.