

Employment First Maryland Setting Sail

The What

This plan has seven key strategic components, each of which has a strategic outcome and goals. Each key component has a committee focused on the work to be completed in that specific area. Annually, for the next five years, there will be a work plan that defines the steps necessary to achieve the outcomes. Some outcomes will be accomplished sooner than others. The intertwining of these goals will lead Maryland to becoming a successful Employment First state where people with I/DD can achieve their personal community, integrated employment (CIE) goals.

Commitment Outcome

Marylanders with I/DD and their families understand Employment First values and practices as DDA demonstrates the commitment to Employment First in policies, communications practices, and funding paradigms.

Commitment Goals

- A. DDA collaborates to create, monitor, and implement an annual work plan based on the strategic plan for Employment First including directives from the 2016 Equal Employment Act.
- B. DDA communicates the principles of Employment First in all public forums.
- C. DDA policies represent a commitment to supporting people in competitive, integrated employment by collaborating to remove policy barriers.
- D. Stakeholders are engaged in and provide input on Employment First activities.
- E. DDA tracks, analyzes and reports annually on the progress of the Employment First strategic outcomes including those required by the Equal Employment Act.

Collaboration Outcome

Marylanders with I/DD and their families are supported to live and work in their communities through collaborative efforts among state and local government agencies, service providers and their communities.

Collaboration Goals

- A. Interagency agreements will exist between State agencies to support competitive, integrated employment outcomes for people with significant needs.
- B. DDA collaborates with the Governor's Workforce Investment Board and America's Job Centers throughout Maryland.
- C. DDA collaborates with the Maryland Department of Transportation and public transportation entities throughout the state.

D. State agencies collaborate to ensure transitioning age youth are prepared for competitive integrated employment upon exiting high school.

E. DDA participates in the Inter Agency Transition Council (IATC) and other collaborations for transitioning youth.

F. State agencies collaborate to develop post high school education and training opportunities for students with I/DD.

Policies Outcome

Competitive, integrated employment is the first option for all people of working age adults receiving support from DDA.

Policies Goals

A. DDA and stakeholders will create a planning tool that allows for documenting a person's barriers to competitive, integrated employment.

B. After March 2019, all youth who transition into DDA funded services will be supported in integrated settings with appropriate levels of supports.

C. DDA collaborates with the State Leadership Team and MDOD to develop and implement a plan to phase out supports that utilize subminimum wages for people with I/DD.

D. DDA develops and implements a comprehensive targeted case management system ensuring Employment First practices are discussed for each person receiving supports through DDA.

Funding Outcome

Marylanders with I/DD, regardless of the level of support they need, have the services and supports to have a meaningful life, including competitive, integrated employment.

Funding Goals

A. DDA's funding model incentivizes competitive, integrated employment.

B. DDA's funding model supports the employment needs of all people with I/DD, including transportation.

C. DDA's funding model meets all stages of supported and customized employment.

D. DDA collaborates with other State and Federal agencies to make information available to stakeholders on how to access multiple funding resources to pay for employment supports.

E. DDA creates a funding model that can meet the varied support levels of each person.

F. DDA creates a funding model that provides flexible supports and is responsive to an employee's changing needs on a job.

G. DDA will create a service model that includes supports for people with I/DD who are not working full time to do things that are meaningful to them.

Services Outcome

People with I/DD are supported to live and work in their communities through person-centered supports.

Services Goals

- A. The DDA system supports all phases of employment and wrap-around services with competitive, integrated employment as the primary service.
- B. Models of excellence are recognized and shared with all stakeholders.
- C. DDA funded supports utilize Customized Employment as promising and best practices.
- D. Clear definitions for services are created and communicated to all stakeholders.
- E. Employment goal are included in the person-centered plan for every person of working age receiving DDA supports.

Training Outcome

Marylanders with I/DD receive employment supports from knowledgeable and skilled direct support professionals and providers of employment services. Training and technical assistance are available for all stakeholders.

- A. Staff providing supports receive competency-based trainings and certifications.
- B. Comprehensive training and technical assistance is offered for school personnel working with transitioning youth and targeted case management regarding competitive, integrated employment.
- C. Comprehensive trainings for people with I/DD and their families are developed and include peer-to-peer mentoring techniques.
- D. Develop a guidebook for provider agencies wanting to transform into an Employment First agency.
- E. DDA has a system to provide training and technical assistance to providers who have identified needs through provider self-assessment and planning.

Evaluation Outcome

Policy changes and funding decisions are data-informed.

Evaluation Goals

- A. DDA sets annual employment outcome benchmarks using data to direct and measure the benchmarks.
- B. DDA publicizes individual provider and aggregate employment outcome data.
- C. DDA collaborates with other State partners to share data.

