

**Ohio DODD Employment First Funding Redesign Forums:
Initial Summary of Recommendations and Feedback on Key Principles
September 2014**

1. The funding redesign effort related to DODD's Employment First Initiative must be part of a larger systems change initiative that addresses:
 - The institutional bias in the current system
 - The need to ensure informed choice for individuals served by DODD and counties, with public entities consistently and effectively promoting the benefits of receiving services in integrated settings
 - Increasing funding available through maximum leveraging of federal dollars available to Ohio for home and community-based services
 - Ensuring accountability for outcomes and quality of service in provider network which is increasingly being privatized to address cost-effectiveness and conflict-free case management requirements
 - The need to engage legal guardians as supportive partners in enabling individuals with developmental disabilities to experience the benefits of full community integration and integrated employment.
2. A reasonable plan for phasing in changes must be part of the funding redesign model.
3. Alignment and collaboration on Supported Employment policy, process, practice and funding strategies is needed between DODD and OOD (Vocational Rehabilitation)
4. Transportation options and funding must be addressed as part of DODD's Employment First initiative. Collaboration and partnership with other public and private entities financing or providing.
5. Public schools must be full partners for the success of Ohio's Employment First initiative, transportation is essential. Establishing expectation of integrated employment after high school from very early age, developing natural age-appropriate pathways to integrated employment for students with disabilities, and embracing the values and principles of seamless transition.
6. Continuity in Transition to Integrated Employment and Day Services: Commitment to no less service for each individual unless there is a documented change in need. Employment First is not employment-only: wraparound supports will be available.
7. Easy, affordable and timely access to benefits information and assistance, including a range of flexible services to meet individual needs at various points in an individual's employment lifecycle.
8. Certifications or other types of qualifications for service delivery professionals should be portable.
9. Program Integrity must be ensured through:
 - Incentive payments made based on valid outcomes
 - An adequate service provider network in all areas of the state

- Accountability for employment outcomes shared by all providers of HCB services
10. Alignment between Self-Determination and Employment First policy is necessary and must ensure that self-directed support options offered by DODD also advance Employment First goals.
 11. Rate adjustments over time are essential for long-term viability and effectiveness of funding redesign.
 12. Local and regional unemployment rates should be taken into account in determining geographic differences in service costs as part of the funding redesign model.
 13. Support for paid internships as best practice path to securing integrated employment should be addressed in the funding redesign model.
 14. Business and industry engagement and involvement is critical part of Employment First effort. In addition to a comprehensive statewide strategy that needs to be developed and implemented by Ohio state government, with leadership from the Governor, it is important that DODD's funding redesign account for general business outreach and relationship building in job development and encourage/reward coordinated job development networks in local areas.
 15. Ensure people with developmental disabilities not enrolled on an HCBS waiver have support and source of public funding to obtain and maintain integrated community employment.