

**What is *Employment First*?**

**Employment First** is:

- A **philosophy of service** that embraces high expectations for all youth and adults with disabilities to live and work in their communities.
- A state and national policy for **Community employment** to be the *first and preferred option* for people with developmental disabilities.
- A systematic and strategic **Systems Change** effort to prioritize resources, supports, training and education across all state level human services agencies.

**Is *Employment First* an initiative that will end or fade out after a few years?**

**No.** There are state and federal **Legislative Actions** in place that provide the foundation for *Employment First* to continue into the future:

- Ohio Governor Kasich’s **Executive Order** in March 2012 directs multiple state agencies to *collaboratively* implement *the changes needed* to support people with developmental disabilities in achieving meaningful community employment.
- The **Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities *Employment First Rule*** directs County Boards of DD to collaborate with school districts in working with transition youth toward the outcome of community employment.
- The **Ohio Department of Education** requires IEP’s for transition youth include post secondary goals related to integrated employment in a competitive environment
- The **Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities** Agency procedures require that Vocational Rehabilitation counselors/contractors work with educators and other agencies to ensure a coordinated set of activities is in place for transition youth.

**What is the *Ohio Employment First Transition Framework*?**

The Ohio EF Framework is a guiding structure to prepare youth with developmental disabilities and their families to **successfully navigate the path** from school to community employment. The Framework is designed to address current barriers to youth with developmental disabilities achieving community employment by:

- Providing multi-agency teams with training and strategies for **transition planning**
- Developing tools for **multi-agency teams** to document the results of planning.
- Promoting changes in practices used by agencies serving transition youth to **reduce duplication** of activities such as assessment.
- Supporting multi-agency teams to **build capacity** at the county/regional level
- Advancing the use of **Evidence Based Practices** and **Predictors** that research proves are associated with higher rates of post school success for youth

**How does the Ohio  
Employment First Framework  
work?**

The *Employment First Transition Framework* is reliant on multi-agency teams coming together for the purposes of **collaboratively planning and implementing** individualized transition assessment and services for a youth.

The concepts of the *Employment First Transition Framework* guide multi-agency teams to approach planning for each transition youth in ways that are:

- **Person-Centered** – focused entirely on the preferences, interests, needs and strengths of the individual youth
- **Outcome-Focused** – centered on providing activities and services for the youth to achieve the adult life of his/her choosing
- **Agency-Neutral** – professionals contribute based on what will assist the youth to achieve outcomes and not based on what their specific agency is able to provide

When multi-agency teams come together for transition planning they:

- Become a **'team'** whose members have mutual trust and respect
- Actively participate in **planning** for transition assessment and services that are tailored for youth to achieve his/her desired adult outcomes
- Determine how to **coordinate** the implementation of plans, for which each team member agency will have some responsibility.

**Who can participate in the  
Employment First Transition  
Framework?**

Anyone!

No matter your interest or role in working with transition youth, the tools of the *Employment First Transition Framework* are easy to use.

Learn more about them at the *Employment First* website, [www.ohioemploymentfirst.org](http://www.ohioemploymentfirst.org).

Click on the 'Transition Planning' button on the home page.

**Who can I contact for more  
information?**

Please contact

Project Director, Chris Filler, [chris\\_filler@ocali.org](mailto:chris_filler@ocali.org) or

Project Coordinator, Sue Beck at [sue\\_beck@ocali.org](mailto:sue_beck@ocali.org)