

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

One Department, One Vision, One Mission and One Core Set of Values

Increasing Integrated Employment Outcomes *for*

**Individuals with Disabilities and DSHS Clients
(Inclusion in DSHS Employment Opportunities)**

*Presented by
Integrated Employment Project Team
Solomon Uwadiae, Ph.D.
Project Coordinator*

**Final Report
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Executive Summary

This Integrated Employment Report marks the completion of an effort begun at DSHS in 2010 by a group of employees charged with developing a Model Employment Plan. The intent of the original plan was to address the Department's desire to hire more persons with disabilities. At the time, our employee pool included only 4.7% of people with disabilities, while the agency served more than over 217,000 of clients who identified themselves as having some form of a disability (Source: DSHS RDA Client Services Database).

This Integrated Employment Plan addresses a Priority of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), which is to create new job opportunities within the Department. Specifically, it targets not just the potential hiring of people with disabilities, but also of clients who are on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) young adults who will transition out of the Juvenile Justice system into society, and Children's Administration foster youth and alums who seek employment.

This Jobs Priority / Integrated Employment Initiative comes at a time of harsh unemployment across Washington State. The initiative is intended to promote competitive employment opportunities for people with disabilities within the Department by proposing a way to overcome employment barriers, employment discrimination and related biases. It is important to note that the Department is already working in conjunction with community case resource managers on supported employment opportunities for working age adults with development disabilities.

The information in this plan addresses the human resource value-driven case of enriching our employee base by making hiring more inclusive. It proposes recruitment strategies and addresses issues of reasonable accommodation for a large state government agency; it tackles issues of career development and proposes ways to measure these; and it deals with the critical issues of readiness and resources.

As the lead for this initiative, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion wishes to thank the tireless efforts of the members of the Integrated Employment Workgroup and its Project Coordinator, Sol Uwadiae, for their fine work. The hope is that this plan will provide a framework for continuing work in human resources as the administrative transition (HR consolidation) gets underway at DSHS to meet the challenges of the upcoming biennium.

Thank you.

Victor Chacón, DMA
Senior Director of Diversity
Office of Diversity and Inclusion
Department of Social and Health Services

I. Introduction:

The challenge of increasing competitive integrated employment outcomes for working adults with disabilities is getting attention across the United States. This attention is partially due to the facts and shared values of long-standing advocacy organizations such as the American Association of People with Disabilities, Life without Limits, Access and Ability, and many more entities that are representing the disability population.

What is Disability? First we need to understand what disability means under this context. A **disability** may be physical, cognitive, mental, sensory, emotional, and developmental or some combination of these.



Richard Roberts, Auditor and Consultant, Department of Social and Health Services, Olympia

Disabilities include impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. Impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an *activity limitation* is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a *participation restriction* is a problem experienced by an individual involvement in life situations. Thus disability is a complex phenomenon, reflecting an interaction between features of a person's body and features of the society in which he or she lives.

The definition of "disability" under the American with Disability Act (ADA) reflects the intent of Congress to prohibit the discrimination of persons with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities may experience the types of discrimination that confront other groups, they also may encounter unique forms of discrimination because of the nature of their disabilities and the effect that their present, past, or perceived conditions have on other persons.

The purpose of the ADA is to eliminate discrimination that individuals with disabilities face. *Reference: Section 902 of the Americans with Disability Act Amendments Act of 2008)*



Elizabeth Kendal, Office Support, Department of Social and Health Services, Olympia

A majority of people with a disability are unemployed. This is especially true for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities according to an Arc USA (2004) article.

President Barak Obama recently said "Across the country, millions of people with disabilities are working or want to work, and they should have access to support and services they need to succeed" *October, 2009 – Investing In America Public Vocational Rehabilitation 2011/2011 Brochure.*

The data below reflects the national trend of employment for people with disabilities.

Fig 1: Employed – 16 years and over (Numbers in thousands)

Year	People with a Disability	People with no Disability
2009	5,174	134,703
2010	4,939	134,125

Source: US Labor Statistics Data from Current Population Survey

Fig 2: Unemployment Rate – 16 years and over (Percent)

Year	People with a Disability	People with no Disability
2009	14.5%	9.0%
2010	14.8%	9.4%

Source: US Labor Statistics Data from Current Population Survey

The disparity in employment opportunities for people with disabilities as compared to people without disabilities is great according to U.S. Census Bureau (2009). In 2009 the unemployment rate among persons with disabilities ages 16 to 64 was 14.5%, whereas persons without disabilities are 9.0%. Leadership commitment is necessary to provide qualified people with disabilities access to employment opportunities similar to that of people without disabilities.

State Developmental Disabilities agencies in many states such as the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) have provided leadership in ensuring that the disparity gaps in employment opportunities for people with disabilities are closed.

Strategies include the adoption of state initiatives such as supported employment, policies, training and technical assistance. One of the policies established guidelines for State County Case Resource Managers and Counties to follow when authorizing services for working age adults. (Ref: DDD Policy 4.11)

**Number of Workers with Disability Who are Employed, Civilian
Population Age 16 and Over**

Year	Oregon State		Washington State	
	Numbers	Percent	Number	Percent
2008	123,192	26.5%	200,435	27.4%
2009	108,625	23.8%	188,366	25.3%
2010	108,893	22.2%	175,223	25.3%
Average	113,570	24.2%	188,008	26.0%

Fig 3: Washington and Oregon States Comparison of Working Age Employed

Source: U.S. Bureau, American Survey

As the trend above indicates, the rate at which people with disabilities enter the workforce in the state of Washington can be greatly enhanced through awareness, collaboration, and commitment from stakeholders.

As a result, the Department of Social and Health Services (a social services organization tasked to take care of vulnerable people in the state of Washington) established the **“Integrated Employment Workgroup”** to recommend to the agency’s Executive Leadership Team a practical, cost-effective approach to increase representation of people with disabilities employed by the Department.

Integrated employment for the purpose of this project means: to promote inclusiveness and enhance the Department’s aspiration of building a diverse workforce within all levels of employment including people with disabilities.

II. Purpose

- To increase Department of Social and Health Services employment of:
People with disabilities, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Clients, Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) youth transitioning from the juvenile justice system, and Children Administration (CA) Foster Youth.

- To promote competitive and fair access to employment opportunities within the Department for people with disabilities, TANF Clients, JRA youth leaving the juvenile system and CA Foster Youth.
- To design strategies to eliminate the Department's unintended barriers such as pre-employment discrimination or personal biases related to employment, retention, and advancement of qualified individuals with disabilities, TANF Clients, and JRA youth transitioning from the juvenile system.
- To provide opportunity for the Department to learn from recommended integrated employment best practices and continue compliance with the ADA.

III. Scope:

The strategies and best practices developed and approved by the Secretary and Leadership Team will apply to all the Department of Social and Health Services programs to increase integrated employment outcomes for the organization. This pace of implementation will be dependent on the available resources.

IV. Value Proposition/Benefits :

Most employers seek to hire the best qualified person, including people with disabilities who are eager to succeed in the workplace. Hiring People with disabilities has advantages when best practices are applied properly. Examples: establish tracking, reporting and goal setting mechanisms for increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities; establish organizational policy and top management support for increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

In July 2005, a national study conducted by American's Strength Foundation in conjunction with the University of Massachusetts concluded that 90% of Americans view employing people with disabilities favorably, and 88% of people prefer to give their business to companies that employ people with disabilities. The study further cited that companies such as Walgreen, Home Depot, Marriott and Pizza Hut reported absenteeism rates for people with disabilities were lower than those for people with no disabilities. In addition, Marriott experienced a 6% turnover rate among people with disabilities compared to their overall turnover rate of 52%. In July 1999, the Educational Services Program of Florida State University conducted a cost-benefit analysis of employment for individuals with disabilities in Florida

State. The analysis concluded that the benefits to public sector include reduced public assistance use and increased tax contributions, as well as increased consumer spending and economic stimulation resulting from increased earnings of participants.

V. Deliverables:

- An integrated Employment draft Plan for people with disabilities seeking competitive employment with the Department.
- A list of best practices and actionable recommended strategies for Integrated Employment to enhance the Department's goal of increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
- An assessment of the Department's readiness to implement the set of strategies outlined in this plan.
- A communication plan and implementation strategy to include milestones and consistent feedback to stakeholders.

VI. Methodology:

The Department appointed a workgroup to:

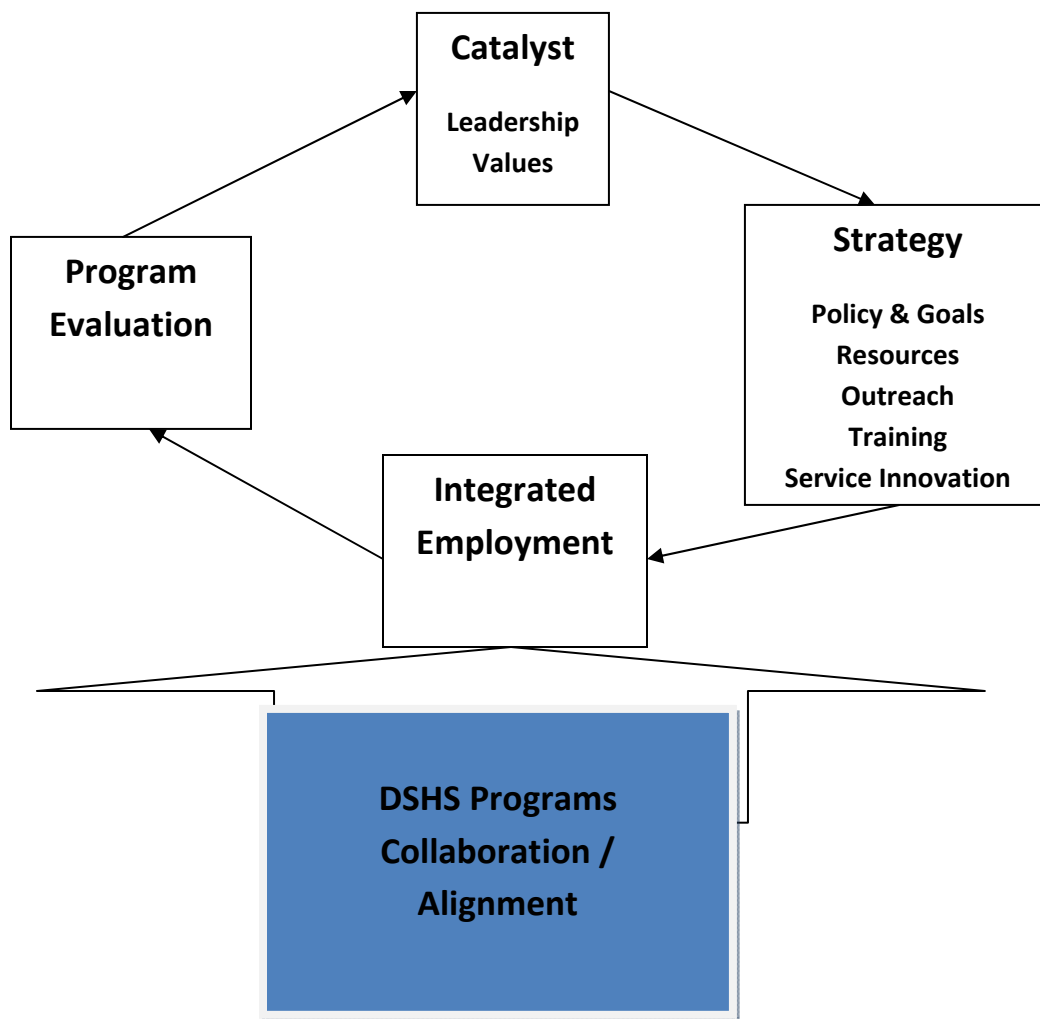
- Research strategies to address the disparities in employment opportunities and the benefits of retention, reasonable accommodations, and advancement for people with disabilities in state jobs.
- Enhance present practices of recruiting and hiring of people with disabilities for state competitive jobs.
- Consult with other governmental entities such as City of Seattle Human Services, King County, Snohomish County Human Services, Employment Security Department (ESD), and Department of Personnel (DOP) regarding employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.
- Interview individual DSHS staffs with disabilities to better understand their experiences and concerns on the job.
- Review thoroughly the latest relevant literature on integrated employment.

- Review state job application forms, job announcements and position descriptions, the department's cultural competency draft policy, and current department employment data on employees with disabilities.

VII. Initiative Overview:

There are over 400 possible job titles in the Department of Social and Health Services, from entry-level to executive positions. Hiring people with disabilities can be enhanced by developing strategies to increase the recruitment and hiring of qualified people with disabilities for DSHS jobs through the commitment and efforts of hiring authorities (supervisors and managers).

Fig 5: DSHS Integrated Employment Process Model



Currently, DSHS does not have a robust data tracking system to capture and analyze employment opportunities for self-identified people with disabilities. However, the DSHS/Human Resources Division does provide valuable insights into the current situation through the state's Human Resources Management System (HRMS) Data Reporting and Processing system.

Although the DSHS/Human Resources Division has not specifically designed a data tracking system for integrated employment, there has been some level of leadership support to explore the possibilities of finding reasonable resources for integrated employment within the Department's available vacancies. This is evidenced through the Office of the Secretary's initiation and sponsorship of this "Integrated Employment for People with Disabilities" Project as part of the Department of Social and Health Services 2012 Priorities.

Fig 4: State Agency Employment Profile: Persons & Veteran w/Disabilities Report

Agency	2008	2009	2010
Labor & Industries (L/I)	3%	3%	N/A
Dept. of Health (DOH)	6%	5%	5%
Dept. of Social & Health Services (DSHS)	6%	6%	5% (4% in 2011)
Dept. of Correction (DOC)	9%	8%	6%
Employment Security (ESD)	10%	9%	6%

Source: DOP Workforce Data/Workforce Diversity

Better integrated employment outcomes can be achieved in DSHS when all the programs are working together in alignment with agency framework, despite the challenges of resources and current budget constraints and the Secretary's mandate to hiring authorities setting the expectation to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities in DSHS. However, it will require systems change and an effective cultural competency policy to support a long-term integrated employment outcome for the Department. The model below demonstrates how this can be accomplished through leadership, sound strategies of recruitment, hiring, retention and programs collaboration.

VIII. Recommended Strategies for the Department:

In February 2001, President George W. Bush, proposed a comprehensive initiative and strategy for full integration of people with disabilities into all aspects of American social and economic life. This was known as the New Freedom Initiative. It was intended to promote increased access to technology, training and education in the workplace and their community life.

It is in that spirit that the DSHS committed to the effort of not only decreasing poverty in Washington State, but also increasing educational and employment success, and supporting people and communities in reaching their potential. Integrated employment offers individuals with or without disabilities the opportunity to get out of poverty, reduce dependence on public funded social services, and develop self-esteem and self-worth. The Department believes increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities, TANF Clients and JRA youth transitioning out of the criminal justice system is not only the right thing to do but the best thing to do.

Current DSHS employment profile for persons/veterans with disabilities according to a Department of Personnel report shows a declining trend of 6% employment in 2009, 5% in 2010, and 4% in 2011 (Ref: Fig 4 Agency Employment Profile). Therefore, it is recommended to prioritize the employment initiative into three implementation phases to accommodate the three populations (People with Disabilities, TANF Clients, and JRA and Children's Youth), with a proposal of a 12 month interval between each implementation phase. The Department supports the hiring of people with disabilities as well as TANF Clients and JRA Youth but the Economic Services Administration (ESA), JRA and CA will be responsible for determining their own strategies and resources to complement the Integrated Employment Initiative.

Implementation Phase 1:

People with Disabilities: Recommended for the Department to increase DSHS employment opportunities of people with disabilities by 1%. (Baseline: 4%)

Implementation Phase 2:

TANF Clients: Increase employment opportunities for TANF Clients.

Implementation Phase 3:

JRA Youth and CA Foster Youth: Increase employment opportunities for JRA Youth in the juvenile justice system and CA Foster Youth.

IX. Recruitment and Hiring:

Managers and supervisors should hire the best candidate for available positions while being open to the strengths and abilities of every applicant regardless of disabilities. To increase integrated employment outcomes, the Department should apply best practices related to recruitment and hiring of qualified individuals with disabilities using the following steps:

Step 1: Targeted Recruitment and Outreach:

One of the ways for DSHS to increase representation of qualified individuals with disabilities in its hiring pool is to establish a robust outreach and employment program headed by the Office of Diversity & Inclusion with existing resources. This will allow the Executive Outreach Manager within the Diversity & Inclusion unit to collaborate with Human Resources personnel along with local employment agencies and community-based organizations such as Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Employment Counselors, the Veteran Administration (VA), Work Source, Association of Higher Education, University of Washington and many more organizations in increasing the number of applicants with disabilities applying for available DSHS vacancies. The Department is in a unique position as a social services organization with more than 400 possible job titles. **Note:** *Job titles are contingent on position vacancies, approvals and needs of the hiring authorities.*

Some recommended outreach strategies for the Office of Diversity & Inclusion working in collaboration with Human Resources Division should include the following:

- Develop an ongoing public awareness campaign about employment possibilities with the Department of Social and Health Services.
- Educate appointing authorities, managers and supervisors on the benefits of hiring people with disabilities, TANF clients, and JRA youth transitioning from the juvenile justice system and Foster adults in Children Administration.
- Assign Human Resources Division representatives to assist, coach and prepare target population on how to complete and apply for DSHS available positions through the use of Washington's Career.WA.GOV portal.

- In collaboration with stakeholders, eliminate recruitment barriers (pre-employment discrimination and personal biases) for people with disabilities who are interested in seeking employment with the Department.

Step 2: Job Announcements and Job Application:

One of the best practices to encourage individuals with disabilities to apply for employment with DSHS is to ensure that the job announcements clearly specify the essential functions of the position to this end:

- The Department should implement processes that do not inadvertently exclude qualified individuals with disabilities from the application pool.
- Supervisor and manager should ensure that those job functions considered “essentials” are in the job description before placement of a job announcement with NEOGov (an essential instrument in distributing online state job information).
- Job description should be reviewed by the Human Resources Consultant to ensure compliance with state and federal laws before posting on NEOGov.
- Allow at least two weeks closing period of the job announcements to provide more opportunity for dissemination of the information to various community-based organizations.
- The Department should ensure that potential applicants with disabilities are aware of the Department’s reasonable accommodation policies and procedures in the application process. This can be done through the use of promotional materials and relevant information.
- Note: It is important that the Department ensure that prospective applicants with disabilities do not experience any type of unreasonable difficulties in applying for employment within DSHS.

Step 3: Interviews and Selection Process:

The interview process should provide potential applicants with disabilities the opportunity to demonstrate to hiring authorities their qualification and capability to

perform essential functions of the position applied for. The following recommendations would be useful for hiring supervisors and managers interviewing and selection process:

- Each hiring supervisor/manager is responsible to adhere to Human Resources job recruitment and selection guidelines to include interview panel composition and ADA training on how to conduct job interviews of applicants with disabilities. It is recommended to contact HRD for ADA for training requirements.
- When possible, the interview panels should include at least one person of ethnic minority and one person with a disability at a minimum.
- Reasonable accommodation must be provided to the candidate such as wheel chair accessibility and language interpreter when requested.

Step 4: Employment Opportunities for DSHS TANF Clients:

DSHS client's participation in employment opportunities is the right thing to do for a number of reasons. Not only does it compliment ESA's philosophy that it pays to work, it also reduces client dependence on public assistance at a time when the 60 month TANF time limit is being enforced and when clients must find a way to provide for their family once they cross the time limit threshold. Additionally, it helps the state earn incentive payments for having clients participate in countable activities subject to Maintenance of Effort and leads clients to self sufficiency when benefits run out. Participation in countable activities and client movement to self sufficiency are ESA performance dashboard measures. Lastly, ESA recognizes that DSHS cannot well ask private employers to hire its clients if it isn't something the agency would be willing to do first with its own clients. However, more work is required in this area in collaboration with HRD.



ESA TANF Client with ESA Case worker in a Community Services Office

The following steps are recommended:

- ESA will assume the lead to coordinate the initiative in providing employment opportunities for DSHS TANF clients with the goal of providing clients financial stability and self sufficiency through employment. In addition, seeks employers with entry level opportunities who will pay livable wages and who are willing to provide medical benefits.

- DSHS/ESA is currently working internally to identify and recruit clients on public assistance to become future members of the agency workforce. The primary objective is to create a training program at local Community Colleges for clients to learn about a variety of positions available within DSHS/ESA and to build in a certificated program that recognizes clients who have been trained in positions such as Financial Workers and Support Enforcement Collectors so that they can be selected from official state hiring registers.
- This Internal ESA hiring goal has dependencies with the HRD Recruitment Section to recognize the creation of a certificated program for various positions available within ESA. HRD and ESA staffs are working to match the certificated program to a “select certification” criteria built into job announcements so that eligible clients can be placed onto, and referred from, official state certified hiring lists.
- This is a DSHS internal employment opportunity initiative. However, the agency is also seeking to work with external employers to hire DSHS clients by emphasizing multiple hiring incentives such as social supports that include:
 - Child Care
 - Transportation Assistance
 - WorkForce Opportunity Tax Credit (maximum \$2,400)
 - Community College or Vocational/Technical courses
 - Obtaining of GED
 - Tools/Uniforms/Shoe Purchases
- DSHS/ESA is working with Volunteers of America (AmeriCorps) to identify opportunities for DSHS clients to become members of AmeriCorps and expand AmeriCorps apprentice programs in the trades industries where wages tend to be higher (starting at \$15 p/h to \$25 p/hr).
- DSHS will emphasize the hiring of “high risk” clients (people with disabilities, youth ages 18-25, clients who have a history of juvenile crimes, youth aging out of foster care system, veterans and disabled veterans, families and individual clients who are at risk of homelessness, all of whom are over-represented among the unemployment ranks with some whose unemployment rates range from 25-40%) who are eligible for hiring incentive programs that attempt to level the competitive hiring playing field for them.
- DSHS will emphasize the hiring of Non-Custodial absent parents whose unemployed status prevents them from paying child support.

- DSHS to seek federal grant from Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) to provide employment readiness services and social supports to non-custodial parent's (NCP's) and realize cost avoidance advantages once NCP's become employed and can provide for their families instead of having those families on the public assistance rolls.
- Community Services Offices (CSOs) supervisors and managers should be required (if appropriate for clients) to create individual responsibility plans (IRPs) for potential TANF clients that lead to job opportunities within ESA, where appropriate.
- Provide training, coaching and necessary assistance to TANF clients on how to apply and interview for jobs with DSHS or other state agencies.
- DSHS to collaborate with partner agencies (such as WorkForce Development Councils, Employment Security Department, and Department of Commerce where community jobs are created and managed) in order to provide employment opportunities for TANF clients.

Step 5: Employment Opportunity for JRA Youth:

As a result of a declining economy and its effect on entry-level job opportunities, JRA youth are now further challenged with obtaining a sustainable living wage job when released from confinement. As illustrated in the DSHS Employment Performance Measures Outcome, the number of JRA youth who transition to employment has been on a steady decline beginning in 2007 dropping to a low of 32.4 % in 2010.



JRA Youth at work in the Columbia Basin Job Corps Center

JRA has prioritized the responsibility of improving employment opportunities for young adults with a criminal history leaving the juvenile justice system.

Recommended practices include:

- Explore youth-based marketing opportunities (youth website)
- Explore and enhance apprenticeship based opportunities with JRA programs
- Provide pre-employment counseling to JRA youth to include life skills, challenges and recommendations on securing and maintaining employment.

- JRA staff to work diligently with Community Employment Programs serving youth such as Youth-Source, Goodwill Industries, Multi Service Centers, Workforce Development Council, New Market Programs, Workforce Board, Education Service Districts, and OSPI – Institutional Education programs to assess and prepare youth to gain sustainable employment within/outside DSHS.
- Develop youth vocational training and certification
- Expand Microsoft Information Technology (IT) Academy designed to assist students in learning IT skills.

Step 6: Employment Opportunity for Children Administration Foster

Youth:

It is recommended that Children Administration (CA) provide ancillary services and coordinate the provision of employment resources for dependent and/or case active foster youth and foster youth alumni involved with Children Administration.

Recommended practices include:

- Provide consistent referrals for all dependent youth age 15 and older to local Independent Living programs who work with youth on GED/high school diploma attainment, post-secondary education planning, housing, life skills, and employment.
- When appropriate and warranted, provide community referrals for non-dependent, income eligible youth to employment training programs.
- When appropriate and warranted, provide community referrals and resources for unemployed CA Foster adult clients to do job training, vocational training and take advantage of employment resources.
- When appropriate and warranted, provide referrals to DVR programs for dependent foster youth and foster alumni who face barriers to employment.
- As allowed, explore and enhance apprenticeship/internship based opportunities youth in the extended foster care programs.
- Through independent living, collaborate with Community Youth Employment Programs such as Youth-Source, Goodwill Industries, Multi Service Centers, Workforce Development Council, Workforce Board, Education Service Districts, and Office of Superintendent and Public Instructions (OSPI) – Institutional Education programs to assess and prepare youth to gain sustainable employment within/outside DSHS.
- In case planning, work to collaborate with DSHS/CSO on shared clients in WorkSource to combine efforts to remedy identified barriers to employment.
- When appropriate and warranted, inform CA Foster adult clients about training, coaching and necessary assistance afforded to TANF clients that are qualified for TANF programs and eligible for work.

- As allowed by time and resources, create WorkFirst/Community Job descriptions to benefit, train and employ Foster/TANF clients.

X. Reasonable Accommodation:

Covered employers (i.e. employers with 15 or more employees) are required by The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities. One way to ensure compliance with this requirement is for DSHS to clearly define the responsibilities of all staff who are involved in the reasonable accommodation process to include tracking and prompt resolution of reasonable accommodation requests. (Reference DSHS Reasonable Accommodation Policy/Procedures – Administrative Policy No. 18.26) This policy does address some of the critical elements of reasonable accommodation as follows:

- Ensuring prompt processing of reasonable accommodation requests.
- Making available written policy and procedures outlining reasonable request and appeal procedures.
- Ensuring documentation and tracking of requests for reasonable accommodations to include denials, reasons for denials, and investigation of the problem and action plans necessary to correct the problem.
- Adhering to DSHS Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPA) policy – ensuring the confidentiality of medical information.

XI. Career Development and Advancement for People with Disabilities:

The lack of career development and advancement opportunities is a concern expressed by a few current DSHS employed individuals with disabilities during one-on-one interviews. The Department can create a more conducive environment and provide the right tools for individuals with disabilities to be as successful as any other employee. In addition, the Department can enhance career development by aligning with the current Talent Management Initiative, which will include the following:

- Specifically promote the retention and advancement of employees with disabilities.

- Provide hiring supervisors and managers with career development training to nurture and foster employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Require Human Resources personnel to work with Office of Diversity & Inclusion to prevent discrimination against employees with disabilities through policies, training, and coaching.
- At the discretion of each hiring authority, provide acting assignment opportunities to qualified employees with disabilities.
- Provide one-on-one coaching opportunities for employees with disabilities.
- Establish sustainable mentoring program for TANF clients, JRA Juvenile youth, and people with disabilities.

XII. Training Program:

The Department should allocate adequate resources for the Human Resources Division to provide training (through Talent Management) to hiring supervisors and managers on key elements of Integrated Employment for People with Disabilities. The training should address the following topics:

- Policy – post user-friendly website information about the Department Administrative Policy on Reasonable Accommodation and ADA requirements and pre-employment discrimination topics.
- Recruitment and Hiring Process – support the preparation of Job Announcements to include Job Description and Application process – identifying job essential functions.
- Interviewing Process – provide interviewing skills and techniques for hiring people with disabilities.
- Cultural Competency – provide special training as per the Department Cultural Competency policy.
- Internship – establish internship programs for people with disabilities.

- Coaching and Mentoring – provide coaching and mentoring to enhance retention and advancement of employees with disabilities. This should include taking personal responsibility for development and career expectations; evaluating employee’s interest, talents, skills, career goals and aspirations.

XIII. Program Evaluation:

Leadership support and guidance is paramount to the success of Integrated Employment implementation in the Department of Social and Health Services. To evaluate the effectiveness of this program, it is highly recommended to conduct reviews and receive input regarding program success from the employees, supervisors, managers, and external stakeholders including, but not limited to, The Council for Independent Living (CIL), ESD, DOP, Regional Services Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and the Department of Services for the Blind. The reviews should identify successes, and/or any new challenges that need to be addressed.

Best practices suggest that periodic evaluations are needed to ensure a successful employment outcome. By conducting these evaluations, concerned supervisors and managers will know whether an employee with disabilities can do the job effectively or if additional supports are needed. It is recommended that these evaluations occur regularly. The evaluations should be strictly confidential. The reviews should occur quarterly with an emphasis on integration/inclusion and job performance progress. Also, the evaluation of employees with disabilities should remain focused on performance of essential job functions with emphasis placed on time, quality, quantity and process required to get the job done. Furthermore, the team will continue to work with PPA and HR in developing reasonable performance measures and evaluation criteria.

Subsequently, the Integrated Employment Workgroup team recommended the following key activities for an effective program evaluation:

- Design a survey instrument (with the assistance of Planning, Performance & Accountability [PPA] or use/enhance the existing Employee Survey [Diversity, Cultural Competency and Inclusion portion]) to obtain feedback from employees with disabilities and hiring supervisors and managers.

- Design an evaluation that focuses on exploring the achievement of employment and training outcomes, the employees' perspective on the support they received and how the support helped them in career advancement and job satisfaction.
- Focus the hiring supervisor's and manager's role on their understanding of the Department's shared value and the purpose of Integrated Employment shared systems and processes, and shared learning.
- Assist supervisors and managers in identifying barriers, obstacles and action plans to address the barriers as well as disseminate lessons learned and best practices.

Expected Outcomes from Program Evaluation Reviews:

Supervisor/Manager:

- Employee successfully achieves his/her assignments.
- Identifies barriers (real or perceived) that appear to be keeping the employee or his/her co-workers from being productive, especially within a team.

Individual Employee with Disability:

- Have strategies for providing supportive workplace environment for employees.
- Employee succeeds in the performance of his/her assigned duties.
- Develops strategies to support employee's inclusion into the workplace environment.
- Is enabled in other ways of job modifications, assistive technology or other accommodations that would enhance the employee's job performance.

Note: Given the Department's limited resources, it is recommended to incorporate the Integrated Employment survey into the existing "Employee Survey" as a way to avoid or eliminate unnecessary employee survey fatigue. PPA and HRD will convene to establish baseline data for purposes of the survey.

XIV. Suggested Goals and Measures:

1. Employment Opportunity for People with Disabilities:

After reviewing employment data of people with disability in DSHS, the workgroup recommended the following stated goals and measurements for Integrated Employment Plan as follows:

- DSHS should embrace Integrated Employment of people with disabilities.
- It is recommended to add a goal statement on the position description forms (PDFs) of hiring authorities to emphasize DSHS' commitment to the employment initiative. An example of this would be a statement in the position's specific competencies that refer to hiring: "Defines position requirements and necessary skills, recruits large applicant pool, prepares for and conducts good interviews, values both experience and potential, selects appropriate candidates, builds teams with complementary skills, and **promotes diversity in hiring.**"

Goal: Increase employment of people with disabilities in the Department/HRMS to at least 5% in 2013.

Measure: Total number of applicants who responded/applied to a recruitment announcement; number of people with disabilities that applied and got invited for interview; and how many were actually hired for the vacant positions with the department.

(Note: The goal above would require coding by HRD and the Department of Enterprise Services/HRMS to track self-identified people of disabilities)

2. Public Assistance/TANF Clients:

Goal: Increase participation of individuals from the existing or past TANF caseload to enter into the NEOGov application pool.

Measure: Number of TANF clients assisted to be in the NEOGov application pool; number of TANF clients who applied to a recruitment announcement; number of clients who got invited for interviews and how many were actually hired.

3. JRA Clients/Youth:

Goal: Increase JRA adult youth leaving the juvenile justice system designated for employment opportunities (Job Corps, vocational programs in JRA Group Homes).

Measure: The number of youth leaving the system actually hired after training.

Measure: The number of youth completing apprenticeships.

4. Outreach Program:

Goal: Promote awareness of the Department's employment opportunities with people with disabilities. Conduct meetings with stakeholders (community-based/employment organizations, high schools and university campuses) to promote competitive employment opportunities within the Department.

Measure: The number of outreach activities conducted to include community meetings / presentations; and number of people reached with outreach efforts.

5. Staff Training:

Goal: The Department will allocate appropriate resources in providing training awareness on Integrated Employment.

Measure: The number of employee trainings conducted by HR and the number in attendance.

Measure: The number of recruitment and hiring trainings conducted specifically for hiring authorities and the number in attendance.

6. Employee Development:

Goal: Provide adequate assistance to existing employees with disabilities seeking career development (through training, coaching and mentorship), promotion opportunities and retention.

Measure: The number of existing employees with disabilities who requested and received training, coaching and mentorship; numbers who received promotions, and numbers that stayed on with the Department relative to job satisfaction.

Potential TANF Employee Development:

Goal: Provide assistance to TANF clients to achieve self-sufficiency and reduction in utilization of public funds, by making them aware of employment opportunities within the Department and other state agencies.

Measure: The number of TANF clients that were employed by the Department.

7. Recommended Quantifiable Measures:

- Number of current employees identified in HRMS as people with disabilities.
- Number/percentage of individuals with disabilities who achieved employment in DSHS.
- Number/percentage of individuals with disabilities in the NEOGov application pool, applied for competitive available positions, were invited for interview and hired by the Department.
- Number/percentage of TANF clients in the NEOGov application pool, applied for competitive available positions, were invited for interview and hired by the Department.
- Number of JRA youth in vocational training.
- Number of JRA youth that received High School Diplomas.
- Number of outreach meetings and presentations conducted in the community.
- Number of people reached through our outreach efforts.
- Number of staff training/development hours conducted by HR.
- Number/percentage of individuals with disabilities completing staff development training related to retention and career growth.

XV. Communication Strategy:

Introduction:

The objective of this communication strategy is to improve information sharing with all Department of Social Health Services employees. It will allow the Department to improve the effectiveness of its workforce through the forum provided.

Purpose:

The purpose of this strategy is to enhance the successful employment opportunities for “People with Disabilities” within the Department of Social and Health Services Integrated Employment Program.

Objective:

- Provide information to enable management to promote integration and inclusion of people with disabilities in competitive state jobs within the Department of Social and Health Services.
- Provide career opportunities through integrated employment of people with disabilities.
- Build sustainable collaboration among the Department's programs and create awareness of Integrated Employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Generate employee, hiring supervisors and manager's interest and buy-in to the Department's strategies to increase Integrated Employment for people with disabilities.
- Affirm the importance of Human Resources Division working collaboratively with Office of Diversity & Inclusion in making the Department's Integrated Employment of people with disability program effective and successful.

Target Audience:

- **Internal Audience:**

DSHS Executive Leadership Team members
Regional Administrators and Program Directors
Economic Services Administration
Aging and Disabilities Services Administration
Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration
Human Resources Division
Office of Diversity & Inclusion
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Children's Administration
DSHS employees and staff

- **External Audience:**

Department stakeholders, non-profits, community-based organizations
Employment services for people with disabilities
Department of Services for the Blind
Washington State Governor's Committee on Disability and Employment

Agency partners and private funders
Washington State Legislators
Labor Partners
Federally Recognized Tribes of Washington State and Recognized
American Native American Organizations
Governor's Office

Key Deliverables of the Communication Strategy:

- Hold regularly scheduled meeting with the following: Integrated Employment Workgroup, Executive Leadership Team, and Regional Administrators and Directors.
- Human Resources Division and Office of Diversity & Inclusion schedule monthly meetings to monitor program effectiveness through employee feedback and scheduled surveys.
- Human Resources prepare quarterly report on program progress and challenges for improvement to include current employee disability data in HRMS.
- Enhance current tracking system of people with disability in the Department
- The Office of Diversity & Inclusion develops a quarterly newsletter or publication by to be circulated to management team, employees, stakeholders, and the Human Resources communities within the state.
- The Office of Diversity & Inclusion issues a yearly report on the Integrated Employment initiative successes and challenges using "INSIDE DSHS" media.

Communication Media:

- Memos/E-Mails
- Workshops
- Inside DSHS
- Presentations by Diversity Affairs Office and Human Resources Division
- Teleconference media
- Word of mouth
- Designated Program Support Leaders – Executives, Administrators, Directors, Managers, Supervisors, Integrated Employment Work group, NEOGov, List Serve system, ESD and DOP websites.
- Ethnic minority media – radio, newspapers, and magazines.

Communication Message:

- The Department of Social and Health Services embraces integrated employment of people with disabilities through its values, commitment and strategies.
- The Department is determined and committed to increase employment for people with disabilities in state competitive jobs.
- The Department will provide support and assistance to people with disabilities to achieve self-sufficiency, dignity and self respect.

XVI. Readiness Assessment:

Question: Is DSHS ready at this time to implement the Integrated Employment Initiative? The answer is no. Implementation readiness for the Integrated Employment Initiative is dependent on HRD's ability to provide recommended training to appointing authorities; recruitment outreach to people with disabilities; assistance to people with disabilities to navigate CAREER.WA.GOV; and, most importantly, creation of a pool of qualified candidates with disabilities.

XVII. Resources:

Resource allocation for DSHS implementation of the Integrated Employment Initiative is dependent on ELT's approval and initiative support, available resources and funding.

XVIII. Commitment/Sustainability:

It is highly recommended that ELT of the Department of Social and Health Services emphasize to hiring authorities the importance of hiring people with disabilities in all DSHS available positions.

XIX. Best Practices in Integrated Employment

In addition to the extensive work already done, we will dedicate more time to research and incorporate best practices from different systems, including but not limited to Division of Developmental Disability, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Economic Services Administration, Aging and Disability Services Administration, Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration, Mental Health Division, Veteran Administration, Higher Education, etc. We believe each system will have its own perspective on what best practices are to their population.

XX. Workgroup Team Acknowledgement:

1. Victor Chacón, Senior Director, Office of Diversity & Inclusion (ODI)
Project Co-Sponsor
2. Glen Christopher, Senior Director, DSHS/HRD
Project Co-Sponsor
3. Solomon Uwadiale, Executive Outreach Manager, ODI
Project Coordinator
4. Linda Rolfe, Director, ADSA/DDD
5. Andres Aguirre, Director, Exec./DVR
6. Don Mercer, Employer Relation Manager, ESA
7. Eddie Rodriguez, Statewide Community Engagement Manager, ESA
8. Jose Dominguez, Career Recruitment Services Manager, HRD
9. Margaret Maddox, Office Chief, HRD
10. Davis Garabato, Organizational Leadership Manager, HRD
11. Becky Smith, Director, Field Operations, CA
12. Bernice Morehead, Special Assistant, Provider Relations, CA
13. Dana Phelps, Special Assistant to Assistant Secretary , JRA
14. Kathleen Harvey, Transition Reentry & Education Program Administrator, JRA

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Contact:

Please contact Solomon Uwadiale at 360.902.7970 or Solomon.Uwadiale@DSHS.WA.GOV if you have any questions regarding this Integrated Employment for People with Disabilities and DSHS Clients project.

Thanks!

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