

Employment Workgroup Summary

Barriers & Constraints – The Gaps

- The bureaucratic process
- Coordination of systems and all the moving pieces
- Data – everyone has different definitions and populations are measured differently; data doesn't always give quality and accurate information to help with goals and outcomes
- Benefits management – it's fragmented and hard to get advice
- Lack of exemptions and flexibility
- Health and medical issues/health care
- Transportation
- Preparation for work starting early, ideally before an individual reaches age 18
- Money/funding
- Need funding specific to job development, CA Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) doesn't fund
- Need better compensation than sub-minimum wage
- Licensing regulations and redundant requirements
- Non-profit statutes and certification requirements (like the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities - CARF)
- Basic information and resources including where to go with questions, risk of benefits if an individual loses a job, reasonable accommodations, etc.
- Filling the gap because the Developmental Centers (DCs) are closing – develop programs and policy recommendations to take the place of the DCs successful work programs
- Geographic and wage discrepancies
- Diversity/cultural integration
- Losing momentum after graduating from school
- Community engagement and education
- Lack of communication with employers
- Bridge the gap from the segregated world to the community
- High failure rate for micro-enterprise and how to measure success
- Structure of integrated employment – what is it exactly?
- Rebuilding and/or building capacity with limited resources
- Competitive wages and adequate training for staff
- Accountability, honesty and relationships when dealing with quality assurance
- Defining outcomes/goals for the medically fragile, aging populations and those who cannot or do not want to work
- Advancement funding challenges – no opportunity right now to help people move up or out in groups for employment
- Blanket elimination of limited-term sub-minimum wage
- Limited employment opportunities of those who live in group homes due to time constraints

Goals & Pillars – The General Guidelines

- Person-centered approach, no “one-size-fits-all”
- Ease of navigation for individuals and families throughout the system
- Streamlined system and a seamless process
- Transitions supported to the new system as rules and regulations change
- Good communication of risk and benefits and understanding how the system flows using a roadmap
- Early outreach, culture change with all systems involved in the process
- Define quality outcomes and how to measure
- Culturally diverse services that reach underserved communities
- Clarification and streamlined definitions across systems
- Community supports that get people and keep people employed
- Flexibility in funding models – fewer rates and more flexible and allowing for exceptions/exceptional supports
- Employer outreach and engagement, including to enhance diversity
- Education and increasing understanding of the workforce for individuals
- Stability, supports over time
- Development of resources and services for people who chose not to or cannot work – medically fragile and aging population
- Quality outcomes for community served – volunteer or community engagement instead of employment
- Ensuring healthcare and home environment are in line and supporting an individual to be successful in pursuing employment

Policy Recommendations:

- The overall goal of the state should be to maximize participation in Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE).
- The DS Task Force supports the efforts contained in the CIE Blueprint and recommends that the three departments continue to work to align their policies through the Blueprint processes, as well as utilize the Blueprint structure to implement these policy recommendations as appropriate.
- There must be a focus on transitioning consumers from sheltered workshops with coordinated plans between departments and funding for helping this transition
- There should be the ability for local pilot projects centered around employment
- The department should also work toward developing integrated options for those who working is not a good option
- There should be improved communication to consumers and families about the options for employment, including how employment might interact with other benefits a consumer may have

- The department should review existing laws and regulations to ensure they are supportive of employment and allow for flexibility where appropriate
- The department should develop measures for quality assurance and improvement for employment services
- The department should develop strategies for employer outreach and education
- The department should also consider pilot programs focused on underserved communities