



Master Plan for Developmental Services
Workgroup 3 Meeting #4 - Summary
Friday, October 25, 2024
2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. PT
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attendance

Workgroup Members in Attendance

- Bernadette Madrid
- Joyce McNair
- Kathleen Barajas
- Lauren Loza
- Norma Ramos
- Renu Moon
- Sara Speck
- Shannon Cogan
- Suad Bisogno
- Teresa Anderson
- Tiffany Whiten

Facilitators and Workgroup Chairs/Leads in Attendance

- Kelly Kulzer-Reyes (Co-Chair)
- Sascha Bittner (Co-Chair)
- Marty Omoto (Equity Lead)
- Victor Duron (Facilitator)

Public in Attendance.

Over 110 public attendees attended the meeting via Zoom video conference.

Welcome & Introductions

Victor Duron, the facilitator for Workgroup 3, opened the meeting and welcomed workgroup members and the public. Co-chair Sascha Bittner reviewed the agenda and discussion topics. Victor took attendance to confirm who was present.

Review our Revised Priority 1 Recommendations (slides 5-6)

The workgroup discussed updates to the Priority 1 recommendations. These recommendations focus on expanding opportunities for individuals with IDD to pursue careers in the disability services sector. Victor, Sascha, and Kelly clarified

that these recommendations specifically target a provider workforce that supports people with developmental disabilities and is actively comprised of individuals with IDD. This includes opportunities for individuals with IDD to work at regional centers and/or become service coordinators. Members shared suggestions and concerns about each current recommendation.

Draft Recommendations:

- A. **Create Partnerships:** The first recommendation is about forming partnerships between state and local agencies, schools, and businesses. Members highlighted how working together could provide more paid internships and mentorship programs. This could help individuals with IDD start their careers in disability services.
- B. **Statewide Marketing Campaigns:** The group agreed that there should be targeted marketing efforts to raise awareness about careers in disability services. They emphasized the importance of reaching out to minority and underserved communities to encourage more individuals to consider these valuable jobs. They also emphasized developing marketing messages to reduce stigma and making message upbeat.
- C. **Update Occupation Codes:** The recommendation to review the Standard Federal Occupation Code sparked conversation about the need to better recognize disability-related jobs and identify gaps. Members noted that having accurate codes and modernized titles could help attract more talent to these roles. Workgroup members also cautioned that updating these codes incorrectly could impact the wage levels that these careers are associated with and could have unintended consequences on efforts to increase wages.
- D. **Create a Career Support Organization:** Members were excited about the idea of establishing a dedicated organization to connect job seekers with employers in the disability field. They discussed how this could simplify the hiring process and make it easier for individuals to find suitable jobs.
- E. **Fund Grants for Entrepreneurs:** The recommendation to provide grants for entrepreneurs and service providers received strong support. Members agreed this funding could help create more job opportunities and support innovative businesses in disability services. Members also advised more clarity on the intent of these grants to ensure it goes to entrepreneurs, including business owners with developmental disabilities, that will prioritize competitive integrated employment with upward mobility opportunities.

Throughout the discussion, workgroup members emphasized the importance of clarifying the recommendations further. Some members also shared their personal experiences about how education can support career growth in disability services. The workgroup agreed to move forward with these recommendations, updating them based on feedback from the discussion.

Discuss Problem Statement for Priority 2 (slide 7)

The workgroup reviewed the draft problem statement for Priority 2, which addresses low compensation and inadequate benefits in the disability services sector. Kelly introduced the universal goal and the problem statement and asked the workgroup if anything was missing. Workgroup members showed strong support for the problem statement and shared their personal experiences. The workgroup agreed that all working-age adults with IDD should have opportunities to work and should be motivated early in their career journey. Some members suggested adding language that sets expectations for every working-age adult with IDD to be able to work and have choice in their career path. Other members emphasized the need for training and cultural competency for families.

Break

Brainstorm Recommendations for Priority 2 (slides 9-10)

Workgroup members had a robust discussion about potential recommendations to include for Priority 2. The workgroup agreed with the existing set of recommendations and discussed others to explore.

Additional Priority 2 Recommendations:

- **State Study on Wage Differences:** Sponsor a study to understand wage differences between regional centers and vendors, identify who offers the highest wages, examine current outcomes, and gather best practices to advance career needs of students with IDD.
- **Improved Benefits for Recruitment:** Provide comprehensive benefits to attract and keep all skilled workers in disability services, including those with developmental Disabilities.
- **Improved Healthcare Benefits:** Ensure workers with disabilities have access to quality healthcare services and lasting benefits.
- **Budget Training:** Offer programs to help workers manage their finances, benefits, and build financial skills and plan for the future.

Victor, Sascha, and Kelly also supported a recommendation to have more self-advocates with IDD in executive positions, state government, or as elected officials to better serve the IDD community.

Discuss service coordinator focus group (slide 11)

Kelly introduced an upcoming focus group for service coordinators organized by DDS and invited members to suggest questions. Members shared personal experiences related to priorities 1, 2, and 3. The workgroup highlighted several

key themes to explore, including workforce retention, service coordinator role clarity and expectations, and training gaps. Some members also suggested asking about service coordinators' educational backgrounds to evaluate its relevance to their job responsibilities. Members were encouraged to continue thinking about additional questions for the focus group.

Review Upcoming Meetings (slides 12 - 13)

Victor outlined the next steps for the workgroup. They will refine the revised recommendations based on this meeting's discussion. He encouraged members to continue sharing their ideas through email. Victor also highlighted that the workgroup will start brainstorming possible recommendations for Priority 3.

Public Comment

At the end of the meeting, Victor supported a 30-minute public comment period. A summary of public comments is included in the Public Comment summary document which is available with other meeting documents [here](#).

Meeting Materials:

- Discussion PowerPoint and other meeting documents on the [Master Plan web page](#).