



Sunset Review Committee

Employment First Task force
Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

July 30, 2024

Chairman Wilkin, Vice Chair Hillyer and members of the Sunset Review Committee, my name is Kyle Moore, and I am the Legislative Liaison for the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the Employment First Task Force.

The Employment First Initiative was established in 2012 by executive order under Governor John Kasich and is codified in the ORC in section 5123.023. The executive order created the Employment First task force and made community employment the preferred outcome for people with developmental disabilities. Employment First is a philosophy that presumes that all Ohioans, including people with significant disabilities, can and should have opportunities to work in the community.

Community employment brings many benefits such as greater independence, wealth building, improved self-esteem, and personal satisfaction. Additionally, both employers and co-workers benefit from having a more diverse range of capable employees. Likewise, the broader community benefits when all citizens can participate in and contribute to their community.

The Employment First Taskforce is comprised of various state agency partners including:

- Department of Developmental Disabilities
- Department of Education and Workforce
- Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
- Developmental Disabilities Council
- Department of Medicaid
- Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
- Department of Jobs and Family Services
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Health



The taskforce agencies agree that Ohio needs a coordinated state effort that examines existing practices in our system to identify and address barriers to employment for people with developmental disabilities. DODD convenes an annual group of stakeholders to outline recommendations for the Employment First Taskforce. The Taskforce then meets monthly to implement the recommendations.

DODD is supportive of the Employment First Taskforce and the important role it plays in creating opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to obtain employment in a person's chosen career path. Therefore, DODD respectfully recommends the continuation of the Employment First Taskforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a brief overview of the Employment First Taskforce. I would be happy to answer any question you may have.