



CANDO Meeting JFK Partners

June 12, 2020



COLORADO OFFICE OF
EMPLOYMENT FIRST
— Work Elevated —

AGENDA

- Introduction of The Colorado Office of Employment First (COEF)
- Training, Technical Assistance & Learning Communities
 - Benefits Counseling
 - Customized Employment
 - Individual Placement & Support (IPS)
 - Youth and Families
- Evaluation & Monitoring of Employment First Initiatives in Colorado
- Coordination & Collaboration with Partners
 - Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF)
 - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
 - Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS)



Colorado Office of Employment First (COEF)



Interagency Agreement

Division of Vocational
Rehabilitation (CDLE) &
University of Colorado,
JFK Partners



Colorado Office of Employment First

Our vision...

A culture of inclusive, meaningful, and competitive employment for all people.

Our mission...

Leading Colorado toward equitable employment reaching all people with disabilities through –

- Collaboration
- Systems Innovation
- Training Excellence

Areas of Responsibility



Curriculum Development / Training

- Evidence based and / or informed training, mentoring and learning communities
- Benefits Planning for persons with disabilities and families
- Best practice values & concepts for K-12 & higher education
- Training plan for Employment Service providers

Communications

- Focal point for Employment First in Colorado
- COEF Website
- Disability Benefits 101 Website
- Communications plan targeting employers, educators, service providers, person with disabilities & families to inform on evidenced based & best practices & service delivery

Areas of Responsibility



Technical Assistance

- Technical Assistance to employers, case management agencies, employment service providers & state agencies to implement employment practices
- Pilot projects demonstrating best practice services and supports coordination

Coordination, Evaluation, Monitoring & Sustainability

- EFAP recommendations implementation
- Sustainability through state/federal funding
- Develop data sets on Targeted Data measures and COEF performance
- Funding recommendations for employment services systems capacity expansion



Colorado Office of Employment First Team

Patricia Henke, MS, CRC
Director
patricia.henke@state.co.us

Aryn Taylor, MA, CRC
Grant Writer/Analyst, Evaluator
aryn.taylor@state.co.us

Deirdre Sage, MSW, LSW
Trainer, Curriculum Developer (IPS)
deirdre.sage@state.co.us

Layla Mauldin, BS
Business Services Senior Professional
layla.mauldin@state.co.us

Jennifer Stewart, MPP
Contractor - CDE Liaison
breakingexpectationsllc@gmail.com

Melanie Honsbruch, CPWIC
Trainer/Curriculum Developer (Benefits
Counseling) melanie.honsbruch@state.co.us

Teresa Nguyen, MPH
Trainer/Curriculum Developer
(Youth/Families) teresa.nguyen@state.co.us

Brian Dean, MA, CRC
Customized Employment Program Developer
brian.dean@state.co.us

Corry Robinson-Rosenberg, PhD, RN
PI- JFK Partners



Get to Know Us

employmentfirstcolorado.org

Looking for resources or have a question?

Please contact us at

info@employmentfirstcolorado.org 303-

318-8574



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Benefits Counseling



WHAT is Benefits Counseling?

Benefits Counseling (aka Benefits Planning) is a service that helps individuals with disabilities and their families understand how employment and other life decisions will impact their benefits.

Examples of Benefits.....

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

SNAP (Food Stamps)

Medicare

Medicaid (ALL different kinds!)

And MORE.....



WHAT is Benefits Counseling?

Benefits Counseling provides a clear, personalized plan

- addresses the fears and concerns many have about a reduction or loss of benefits if they work or make other life decisions
- provides individuals and their families the opportunity to make informed choice in their pursuit of employment



WHY Benefits Counseling?

- Benefits often provide economic stability as well as mental and physical well-being
- SSI and/or SSDI provide income for basic needs and access to health insurance
- Medicaid Waivers, health coverage, and other benefits provide specialized services and benefits that promote individuals with disabilities living integrated in their communities.



WHY Benefits Counseling?

- **Because WORK!**

Work, whether paid or unpaid, is good for our health and well-being

Work contributes to:

Happiness

**Confidence
Accounts**

Self-Esteem

Bank

- **Employment is a social determinant of health**

People in work tend to enjoy happier and healthier lives than those who are not working



WHY Benefits Counseling?

Studies show job seekers who receive benefits counseling achieve employment:

- **in greater numbers**
- **more quickly**
- **with significantly greater improvements in earnings**

In turn having a positive impact on:

- **Improved employment outcomes (career vs job) (less recidivism)**
- **Reduced dependence on benefits**
- **Overall cost savings for the Social Security Administration**

Wilhelm, S., & McCormick, S (2011). The Impact of a Written Benefits Analysis by the UBPAO/WIPA on Vocational Rehabilitation Clients' Outcomes. *The Center for Public Policy & Administration*.

Kregel, J (2012). Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program: Current program results document the program's ability to improve employment outcomes, reduce dependence on benefits, and generate cost savings for SSA. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 36, pp 3-12.



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WHEN to Pursue Benefits Counseling?

ANYTIME employment is being considered!

- Prior to seeking employment or education
- While conducting a job search
- When working with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Upon obtaining employment
- If currently working and if changes occur while working
- Transition age students (ages 14-24)

ANYTIME employment is being considered!



COEF and Benefits Counseling



- Increase the **knowledge** base of Benefits Counseling statewide
- Increase **resources**
- Increase **capacity** across Colorado
- Increase **access** across Colorado

HOW COEF Is Influencing Benefits Counseling

Benefits Calculator

- 24/7/365 opportunity to explore the world of work and benefits
- Estimated public rollout March 2021
 - Statewide promotional and educational trainings!

<https://www.db101.org/>

Benefits Collaborative

- Bi-Monthly meeting of certified benefits counselors
 - Technical assistance opportunity with other providers and with SSA
 - Input on the shape of benefits counseling in Colorado
 - Service provision conversations
 - Partnering opportunities



HOW COEF Continues to Influence Benefits Counseling

Trainings in Benefits Counseling

- What, Why, When, How
- Work effect on benefits

Statewide Trainings and Webinars

- Individuals with Disabilities, Families, Service Providers and Communities
- Support opportunities for certified benefits counselors

Resource Tools and Partnerships



Benefits Counseling Guide



A Benefits Counseling Guide

"When to Obtain Benefits Counseling Services"

What are Benefits?

Benefits are government funded programs that are provided to people based on a characteristic such as disability or financial need. Examples of benefits include:

- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
- Local/Public assistance benefits (e.g. Energy Assistance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Aid to Needy Disabled (AND), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/food stamps)
- Housing assistance
- Health insurance (e.g. Medicaid/Medicare)
- Other assistance

What is Benefits Counseling?

Benefits counseling is a service that helps individuals with disabilities and their families understand how Employment and other life decisions will impact their benefits.

Benefits counseling provides a clear, personalized plan to educate individuals with disabilities and their families that, in general, you will not immediately lose your cash benefits and health insurance if you work.

Benefits counseling addresses the fears and concerns many individuals and their families have about a reduction in benefits if they start work.

Benefits counseling helps each individual understand:

- What benefits the individual receives and why
- The work incentives available when they go to work
- How earned income impacts cash benefits, public assistance, and health insurance
- Reporting requirements for each benefit and public assistance program
- How to save money and build assets for self-sufficiency (e.g. Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) accounts)

When to Seek a Qualified Benefit Counselor's Assistance?

- Prior to seeking employment/education
- While conducting a job search
- When working with a Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Counselor
- Upon obtaining employment
- Currently working and if changes occur while working
- Transition-age students (ages 14-24)
- ANYTIME employment is being considered!!

For more information, contact the Colorado Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) at coloradoapse@gmail.com

Last Revision: 04/05/19

Identifies certified benefits
counselors

in Colorado,

specific to vendors active with the
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

<https://apse.org/chapter/colorado/>



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Customized Employment



Customized Employment

How it Began

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
 - Identified Customized Employment as Service Delivery Option for Job Seekers
- Senate Bill 16-077: Employment First Legislation
 - Established Colorado as an Employment First state



Customized Employment - What is it?

- Customized Employment (CE) refers to competitive integrated employment for individuals with significant disabilities, where traditional job development and placement methods have not historically been successful.
- Customized Employment (CE) is based on individualized determination of strengths, needs, and interests of the job seeker; designed to meet specific abilities of the individual; and meet the business needs of the employer through flexible strategies.



Customized Employment



Essential Elements

- Competitive Integrated Employment Outcomes
- No Fail Process that assumes everyone can work
- Individualized in-depth Person-Centered Approach
- Focuses on tasks rather than job titles



Customized Employment

Phases of Customized Employment

- Discovery
- Customized Job Development
- Systematic Instruction- Enhanced Job Coaching

Customized Employment

What are the benefits of Customized Employment?

- Cross-Disability Focus
- Identifies employment possibilities and tasks a job seeker is motivated to do
- Customized Employment is backed by evidence-informed practice demonstrating positive employment outcomes for individuals with significant disabilities who experience barriers toward Competitive Integrated Employment

Customized Employment

Current Capacity	Future Capacity Building
10 Employment Specialists certified in Discovery Services	2020 trainings in Customized Employment through Mark Gold & Associates
6 Employment Specialists certified in in Job Development	2 training opportunities per each Customized Employment phase
8 Employment Specialists obtaining certification in Systematic Instruction	2020 target capacity goal: Certify 25 Employment Specialists per phase



Customized Employment

The future of Capacity Building & Sustainability in CE

- Develop a Customized Employment curriculum specific to Colorado
- ★ Build Colorado CE Training Team
- ★ Build Colorado CE Mentoring Network
- ★ Continue Colorado Learning Community for CE



Pacesetter: Margaret Sanderson

- Job developer in the San Luis Valley
- Trained in all aspects of Customized Employment
- Has incorporated new tools into her practice: Discovery Profile, Visual Resume, Systematic Instruction
- “Learning Partner” was placed in position that matched his interest
- After a COVID-related start date delay, he began his position on June 8th.



“Customized employment provides job opportunities for those with the greatest challenges who may not otherwise become employed.”



Individual Placement & Support (IPS)



Individual Placement & Support

- Individual Placement and Support (IPS) is an evidence-based practice that is proven to help individuals with mental illness access competitive and integrated employment. IPS is an extensively researched and highly effective vocational intervention (Bond, 2017)
- The practice is grounded in eight practice principles and is supported by a 25 item fidelity scale
- IPS integrates the expertise of job seeker, family, and professional support team to develop individualized job goals and follow along support



IPS Works



- The average rate of competitive employment for IPS programs was 56% compared to a rate of 23% for the control groups across the 27 studies
- 4 RCTs demonstrated that 3 times as many IPS participants, “achieved employment and worked more hours, and people receiving IPS services worked overall four times as many hours compared to controls.”
- Some research shows that IPS participants use less mental health services and fewer psychiatric hospitalizations (Bond, 2020)



IPS Practice Principles

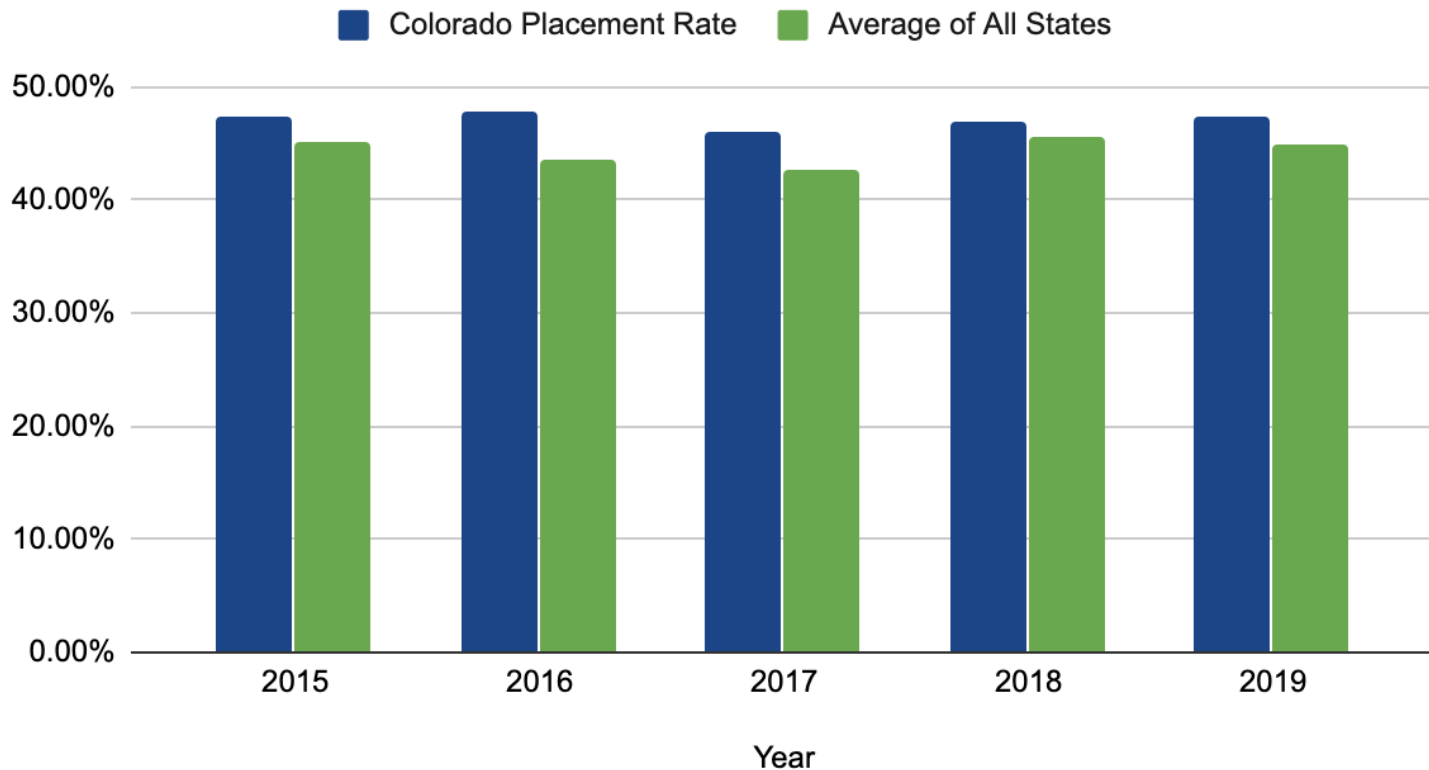
1. Focus on Competitive Employment
2. Eligibility Based on Client Choice (zero-exclusion)
3. Integration of Rehabilitation and Mental Health Services
4. Attention to Worker Preferences
5. Personalized Benefits Counseling
6. Rapid Job Search
7. Systematic Job Development
8. Time-Unlimited and Individualized Support



IPS Today

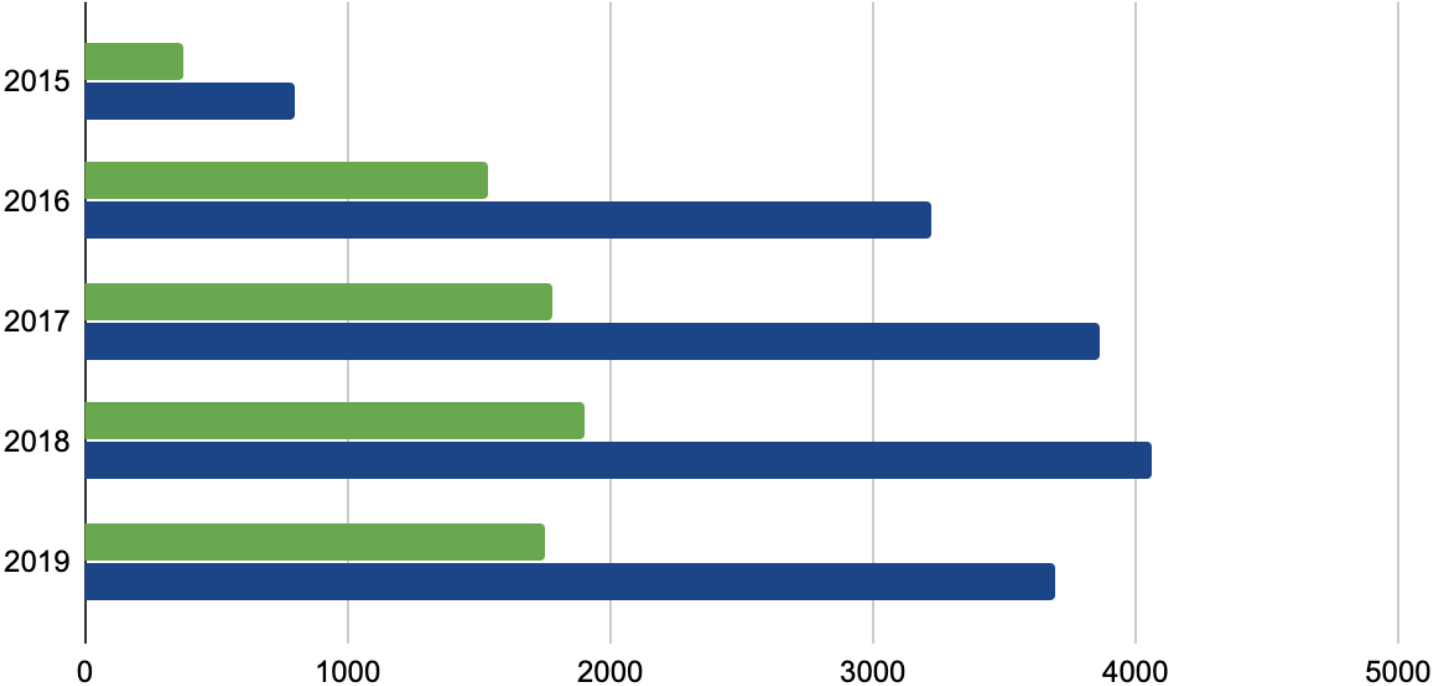


IPS Placements Colorado v. National Average



IPS Client Growth in Colorado

Working Served



IPS Service Providers

AllHealth Network
AspenPointe
Aurora Mental Health Center
Centennial Mental Health Center
Community Reach Center
Jefferson Center for Mental
Health
Mental Health Center of Denver
Mind Springs Health

North Range Behavioral Health
Solvista Health
SummitStone Health Partners
San Luis Valley Behavioral Health
Group
**Easter Seals (Denver and
Colorado Springs)**
**Jefferson County TANF
Empowerment**



IPS Expansion



- Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Substance Use Disorders
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Criminal Justice
- TANF
- Transition Age Youth



IPS Expansion Highlights

- In 9 RCTs with IPS in new populations IPS demonstrated a higher rate of competitive employment than control groups in all studies (Bond, 2019).
- An Illinois statewide study yielded a 36% competitive employment rate for youth with developmental or psychiatric disability enrolled in IPS services (Bond et al., 2019).
- An RTC conducted with veterans with PTSD showed a 76% rate of employment compared to a 28% rate of employment for the control group. The participants also reported more earnings and sustained employment longer than those in the control group (Bond et al, 2019)



Colorado Office of Employment First IPS Priorities

IPS Priorities

- IPS Employment Specialist Training
- IPS Learning and Practice Community
- IPS Expansion for populations other than mental health
- Implementation of Good Fidelity



Families, Self-Advocates & Youth



Why Transition Aged Youth and Families?

- Where and when do we talk about employment?
- Who is responsible for those conversations?
- What resources and services are available?



Why Transition Aged Youth and Families?

NATIONAL DATA
American Community Survey 2017

	Persons with Disability Ages 16+	Persons Without Disability Ages 16+
Employment - Population Ratio	18.8%	66%

COLORADO DATA
American Community Survey 2017

	Persons with Disability Ages 16+	Persons Without Disability Ages 16+
Employment - Population Ratio	30.9%	71.8%

Why Transition Aged Youth and Families?

- Must start young
- Influence expectations
- The importance of vision and person-centered planning
- Navigating systems and collaboration
- Resource and Information overload



COEF Supporting Youth and Families

- **Health: Employment contributes to the overall health and wellness of an individual.**
 - Integrate health and employment into transition planning
 - Physician Toolkit development
- **Employment: Youth and Family Engagement**
 - Colorado Youth Leadership Forum
 - Youth / Young Adult Employment Advisory in development
 - Resources and Trainings for Families



CHARTING the LifeCourse

Life Trajectory Worksheet: Family

Everyone wants a good life. The bubbles on the right will help you think about what a good life means for you or your family member, and identifying what you know you don't want. You can use the space around the arrows to think about current or needed life experiences that help point you in the direction of your good life.



VISION for a GOOD LIFE

What I DON'T Want



Business Owner-Keaunna Figgers

- Had a passion for spreading awareness about Down syndrome
- Wrote a business plan and accessed Division of Vocational Rehabilitation supports
- Sells t-shirts, baby onesies, and tumblers at conferences, community events and on-line at c-21project.com
- Featured on CBS Denver Channel 4, selected as a 2020 Small Business Development Center success story



“Having an extra chromosome doesn’t make me different, it makes me special.”



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COEF Supporting the Education System

- COEF hosted 4 Community Listening Sessions to gather feedback around gaps and hopes for what Employment First can mean for young adults in Colorado.
- Development of materials (brochures and presentations) to raise awareness for schools and families on how to prepare young adults for employment.
- Collaborating with state agencies to develop a “sequence of services” for how the system can best support young adults as they transition from school to adult services and employment.



COEF Supporting the Education System

Main themes from Listening Sessions:

- Must engage expectations of employment early on
- Need capacity for more transition and employment expertise
- Streamlining of how services can be coordinated

COEF Supporting the Education System

Action Plan with CDE and OEF:

- Young adult engagement
- Interagency Transition Team Learning Communities
- Product Development- Brochures/Trainings



Evaluation and Sustainability



Evaluation and Sustainability

- Evaluating the implementation of Employment First recommendations within state agencies
- Employment First Advisory Partnership Strategic Recommendations
- Reviewing policies and rate structures
- Monitoring data from state agencies related to Employment First in Colorado
- COEF is applying to a variety of funding opportunities for sustainability



Targeted Data Points in Budget Appropriation

1. **Increased** number of individuals working in competitive integrated employment
2. **Decreased** number of individuals working in sub-minimum wage employment
3. **Decreased** number of individuals working in non-integrated employment settings
4. **Increased** number of skilled and competent staff that are knowledgeable about Employment First principles and practices
5. **Increased** number of partners, families, and other stakeholders trained in areas supported employment and benefits planning
6. **Increased** number of new contracts implementing IPS in new disability populations, such as IDD or TBI (or co-occurring)



Rate Methodology

- EFAP Strategic Recommendations included an examination of provider rates
- COEF is working with a national leader in rate methodology and structuring
 - Will collaborate with cross-disability state agencies and providers to ensure a sustainable and sound rate methodology and structure is adopted.
- Project completion in December, 2020

State Agencies and Employment First



- Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF)
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
- Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS)
 - MINDSOURCE, Colorado's Brain Injury Network
 - Office of Behavioral Health (OBH)



Health Care Policy and Financing



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Health Care Policy and Financing



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Senate Bill 18-145

Also known for

- ▶ Professional Development
- ▶ Best Practices
- ▶ Meaningful Data Collection



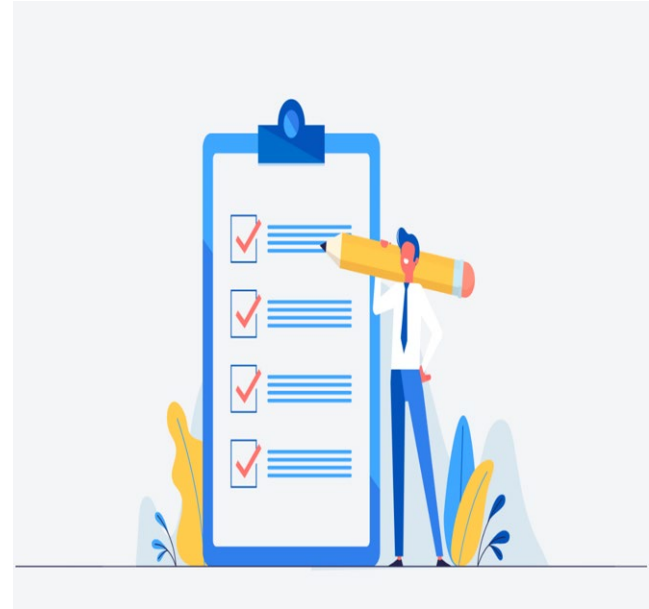
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Core Competencies

- Career and Assessment Planning
- Core Values & Principles of Supported Employment
- Employment Engagement
- Individualized Job Development
- Individualized Job Coaching
- Person-Centered Team Approach



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Professional Development



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Supported Employment Vendors with Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and/or Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Medicaid Waivers



Required to obtain Nationally Recognized Training and/or Certification for Supported Employment Professionals by 2024



Each pre-approved trainee can be reimbursed up to \$1200 for training course and up to \$300 for certification exam



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Best Practices



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Discovery services and process as an alternative assessment



Discovery services must be included on the fee schedule for
DVR and Medicaid Waivers



Training and outreach about Employment First for people
with disabilities, Family Members, Case Managers,
Educators, Employers



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Meaningful Data Requirements



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Sector of employment



Mean wage per hour earned



Mean hour worked per week



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**For more information go to
Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) Supported
Employment**

website:

www.colorado.gov/pacific/hcpf/supported-employment-program

or email:

HCPF_Supported.Employment@state.co.us

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation





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Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

DVR and Employment First Updates

Meghan Greene
Competitive Integrated Employment Manager

DVR Vision & Mission



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Our Vision: People with disabilities are essential to a working economy that elevates all of Colorado.

Our Mission: Working together to promote a thriving employment environment with opportunity for every Coloradan with a disability to live independently and prosper.

DVR Believes:



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1. All people with disabilities can choose a career path leading to meaningful employment and independent living.
2. Investing in the knowledge, experience and professional development of our staff is integral to the success of our mission.
3. We are a resource and partner that empowers people with disabilities to reach their highest potential in alignment with the needs of businesses in our communities.
4. Continuously improving our practices through active collaboration with people with disabilities, their families, businesses, and national, state and local organizations is essential to advance our mission.

New Internal Unit to DVR - Competitive Integrated Employment Unit

- Youth Services and Transition Unit
- Professional Learning and Development Unit
- Supported Employment Unit

The CIE Unit will build and reinforce a firm foundation of knowledge, support a culture of ongoing growth and learning, provide mentorship, and foster innovation to empower DVR to work together to deliver high quality services that support the DVR mission and vision with services that promote opportunity for each and every Coloradoan to prosper.



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Project Search



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- Project SEARCH is an innovative school-to-work transition program for high school students with significant disabilities. The program is dedicated to workforce development that benefits the individual, community and workplace

Colorado Project Search Sites

- Our current sites include UCHHealth Denver, Children's Hospital Denver, Columbine Health Care Systems Ft. Collins.

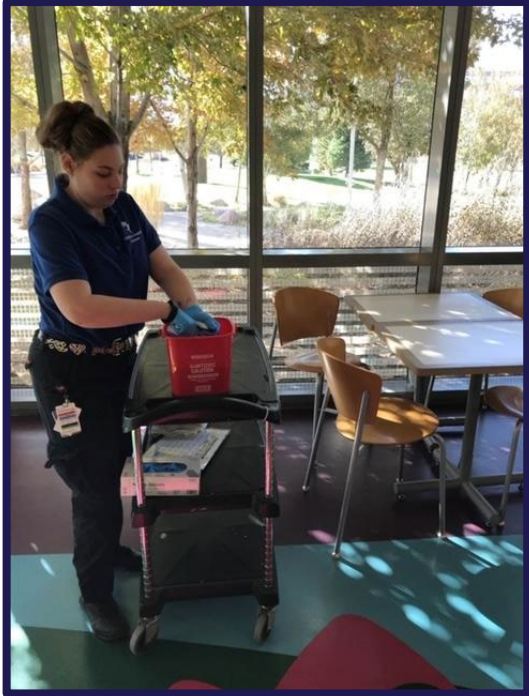
From School Year (SY) 09-10 through SY 16-17

- Total participants 109
- Employed 73 (67%)
- Average wage \$9.18
- Average hours/week 18.6



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Living her dream job: Taryn Lawhorn



- Joined the Children's Hospital PROJECT SEARCH initiative while a senior at Hinckley High School
- Cafeteria porter for last five years
- Loves being around new patients and families and enjoys her co-workers

“Going to work at Children’s makes my day!”

Maintaining Optimism during COVID-19

- The COVID-19 pandemic has temporarily interrupted Taryn's work at Children's
- Taryn and her coach, Ellen Moleski from Continuum of CO, meet weekly over the Zoom platform to plan her return to work and maintain communication practice
- When Taryn returns, she will add a new daily step of going through the hospital's health check procedures such as getting a temperature check



Employment First Internal Training



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- DVR will be partnering with the Colorado Office of Employment First and National Subject Matter expert to provide education and training to all DVR staff on Employment First, Summer 2020
- CIE Unit Cross Training
- Fostering of DVR Subject Matter Experts, including Business Outreach Specialists and the DVR Business Relations Unit
- Participation in Visionary Opportunities to Increase Competitive Employment (VOICE) projects

Future of Customized Employment



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- Partnering with Colorado Office of Employment First to complete Pilot for Customized Employment services and training
- Build consistency of Customized Employment training content across the state with trainings provided by Darby Remley, I/DD Supported Employment Trainer/Coordinator
- Increase in capacity and sustainability of Customized Employment as a service to individuals with a significant disability who have not been able to be successful with general Supported Employment services
- The ultimate goal is an increase in the number of individuals with most significant disabilities employed in a competitive integrated employment setting through the strategies, techniques and interventions of Customized Employment



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Benefits Counseling



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- DVR is partnering closely with COEF, APSE, and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive plan with primary goals of **increasing capacity** and **improving service delivery components** of benefits counseling.
- Coordinated efforts to increase awareness of benefits counseling as a vital tool for clients to make fully informed choices about work through internal and external training and technical assistance.
- DVR's Benefits Counseling Program Coordinator, Anne Christensen, provides training to internal staff on a variety of benefits topics to expand knowledge of federal, state, and local benefits and work incentive utilization.



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IPS



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- 15 Mental Health Supported Employment Contracts statewide –11 of the 15 implement IPS
- Dual Diagnosis Pilot with Easter Seals Colorado implementing IPS with individuals with I/DD as well as Behavioral Health Diagnosis
- Rachel Hoard, DVR's Behavioral Health Supported Employment Trainer Coordinator, is providing Tiered IPS Trainings for internal DVR Staff
- Rachel participates in Fidelity Reviews across the state and is also Certified by the IPS Employment Center in IPS
- From July 1st 2019-March 31st 2020 (latest data) DVR MHSE Contracts have served 950 individuals and have successfully closed 118 in jobs of their choosing

State as a Model Employer



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- **What is the purpose? Become a “Model Employer for Persons with Disabilities”**
- **How do we do it? Become fully inclusive**
- **Where do we start?**
 - In order to become a “Model Employer” for individuals with disabilities, we will **focus on six key areas**: (1) Outreach & Recruitment; (2) Application, Evaluation, Interviewing, & Hiring; (3) Retention & Promotion; (4) Accessibility, Reasonable Accommodations, & ADA Coordination; (5) Inclusive Workplace Culture; and (6) Collaboration Outside CDLE.

Colorado State Advisor on Disability Employment-Current Happenings



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OUTREACH & RECRUITMENT

The State Advisor created the "Agency Recruitment and Outreach Group" comprised of representatives from DPA, CDPHE, and DNR.

This group is currently creating a series of videos that will help individuals apply to state jobs - focused on how to apply for state jobs, and what the state hiring process is like from the human resources side of things. This group is also working on an agency-wide diversity hiring fair.

APPLICATION, EVALUATION, INTERVIEWING & HIRING

Legislation has been drafted and filed that will allow CDLE to develop and run a pilot for a Disability Employment Hiring Incentive - for individuals with disabilities in state employment.

This bill is being sponsored by Senator Jessie Danielson and Representative Mary Young and is included in the same bill as the EmploymentFirst Advisory Partnership (EFAP) reauthorization.

RETENTION & PROMOTION

CDLE is an "Early Adopter" of the Colorado Equity Alliance's new Hiring Guide and Retention Guide. Over eight months, CDLE will work with five other agencies to implement strategies around diverse hiring and retention. The State Advisor is currently working with DPA in a Employer of Choice work group focused on equity, diversity, and inclusion. The work group is tasked with developing a strategic plan based on the responses from the Employer of Choice survey, including around the self-identification question.

ACCESSIBILITY, ACCOMMODATIONS, & ADA COORDINATION

The State Advisor has developed an addendum to CDLE's reasonable accommodation policy specifically for DVR. The addendum includes requirements on monitoring, confidentiality, training, harassment, and retaliation. The addendum also includes specific procedures for a fragrance-free environment. Training around the addendum is currently being developed, which will also include disability etiquette and bias.

INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE

The State Advisor, DPA, and the Colorado Equity Alliance developed a new inclusive policy statement and reasonable accommodation language that will be included on all State materials, including job announcements moving forward.

The State Advisor, DPA, and CDPHE to created an Executive Order (EO) that focuses on equity, diversity, and inclusion and requires the State to adopt a universal policy, implement training, and adopt new standards of accessibility. The EO will be signed by the Governor, with the training and universal policy to soon follow.

COLLABORATION OUTSIDE CDLE

Mark your calendars - Over the last year, DVR, the Lt. Governor, and the Office of Film, Television, and Media worked with filmmaker Matt Getze to create a short film titled "Untapped Resources." The film highlights individuals working with disabilities in various industries all across the state.

The film will premiere on Rocky Mountain PBS on July 2, 2020 at 8:30pm.

Contact



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For more information go to Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Website

Website: <https://www.colorado.gov/dvr>

Meghan.Greene@state.co.us - CIE Manager

Darby.Remley@state.co.us - I/DD Supported Employment Trainer Coordinator

Anne.Christensen@state.co.us - Benefits Planning Program Coordinator

Rachel.Hoard@state.co.us - Behavioral Health Supported Employment Trainer Coordinator

Caitlin.e.Adams@state.co.us - State Advisor on Disability Employment

Cheryl.Carver@state.co.us - Youth Services and Transition Unit Program Manager

Department of Human Services



Employment First Updates





Brain Injury State Plan (January 2020-June 2023)

- Work with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Colorado Office of Employment First (COEF) at JFK Partners within the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) to expand opportunities to enhance employment supports for people with brain injury (BI) who want to participate in the workforce
- Provide information to people with BI about working while receiving benefits (e.g., Social Security Administration) and options for employment such as self-employment, retraining, etc.



Visionary Opportunities to Increase Competitive Employment (VOICE)

- Partnering with Mental Health Center of Denver (MHCD) and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
- MHCD Intake and Employment Specialists and DVR staff provided brain injury 101 training
- Staff screen for brain injury among applicants for Individual Placement and Support (IPS) services
- Those screened positive with a history of BI receive tailored strategies for use with their Employment Specialists during IPS services

Office of Behavioral Health





COLORADO
Department of Human Services

Office of Behavioral Health

Alia Andrews
Recovery Services Coordinator



**COLORADO OFFICE OF
EMPLOYMENT FIRST**
— Work Elevated —

A Touch of IPS Success

“When you are working, you are part of the real world. You feel connected. Having a job gives me stability. I have something to look forward to every day.” ~IPS consumer

“The employment counselor helped me understand why Tony paces. It’s okay in the security business.”
~Security business owner



Funding



- OBH contracts with Community Mental Health Centers in the state
- The Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) funds indigent services and “special programs”



Fidelity Reviews



- 25 Item Fidelity Scale
- Annual Reviews (Quality Improvement)
- Fidelity defined as: the degree to which a service model is implemented as intended
- Better implemented programs (with higher fidelity) have better outcomes



Fidelity



- OBH Provides technical assistance (TA) for IPS providers, helping increase scoring for their reviews
- We meet with providers before and after reviews



Summary



- OBH is a piece of the puzzle that funds IPS programs in the state.
- OBH is here to support the IPS providers in the state to reach and maintain high fidelity.

THANK YOU!



Colorado Office of Employment First Team

Patricia Henke, MS, CRC
Director
patricia.henke@state.co.us

Aryn Taylor, MA, CRC
Grant Writer/Analyst, Evaluator
aryn.taylor@state.co.us

Deirdre Sage, MSW, LSW
Trainer, Curriculum Developer (IPS)
deirdre.sage@state.co.us

Layla Mauldin, BS
Business Services Senior Professional
layla.mauldin@state.co.us

Jennifer Stewart, MPP
Contractor - CDE Liaison
www.breakingexpectationsllc@gmail.com

Melanie Honsbruch, CPWIC
Trainer/Curriculum Developer (Benefits
Counseling) melanie.honsbruch@state.co.us

Teresa Nguyen, MPH
Trainer/Curriculum Developer
(Youth/Families) teresa.nguyen@state.co.us

Brian Dean, MA, CRC
Customized Employment Program Developer
brian.dean@state.co.us

Corry Robinson-Rosenberg, PhD, RN
PI- JFK Partners

