

Transforming Laws: States that Have Employment First Laws

The image features six black silhouettes of business professionals standing in a line against a background of a world map. From left to right: a man in a suit with arms crossed, a woman in a dress, a woman in a suit, a man in a suit, a woman in a suit holding a tablet, and a man in a suit with hands on hips. The background is a purple and blue gradient with a faint world map and a grid pattern.

Employment First: Transforming
Expectations
Des Moines, Iowa
October 25, 2011

EMPLOYMENT



- Where do we begin?
 - Introduce the concept & set the stage
 - CDDO contract negotiations
 - State appointed task force
 - Initial report and recommendations
 - Marketing materials
 - Clear and consistent message
 - Frame the argument
 - Include all disability groups

EMPLOYMENT



- How do we create an agenda?
 - Get the word out & expand stakeholder support
 - Leadership
 - Buddy group/Big tent
 - Presentations/meetings
 - Family Employment Awareness Training
 - Legislative reception
 - Employment First Summit (Conversation with the Governor's Cabinet Secretaries and Directors)

What HB 2336 says-

Establishes that competitive integrated employment is the first option

Sect. 1 (b) It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state of Kansas that competitive and integrated employment shall be considered its first option when serving persons with disabilities who are of working age to obtain employment. This policy applies to programs and services that provide services and support to help obtain employment for persons with disabilities. All state agencies shall follow this policy and ensure that it is effectively implemented in their programs and services. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require any employer to give preference to hiring people with a disability.



Messaging for Policymakers

- The Employment First Initiative took many turns as it wound its way toward passage
- Learning the House and Senate rules helped us stay ahead
- Providing testimony and attending committee hearings was very important to understand how different legislators were inclined to view the bill

Messaging for Policymakers

- Face-to-face meetings with committee chairs to provide information about the bill and ask them to ‘work’ the bill in committee after hearings
- Ask for feedback to help educate policymakers about potential misconceptions
- Memos and flyers were constantly being developed and redeveloped

EMPLOYMENT



- Worked with the Revisor's office to develop a bill
- Introduced in 'blessed committees' and obtained a hearing
- Testimony from university researchers, self-advocates, and providers
- Amendments addressed every possible 'misinterpretation'
- Every amendment required a new memo
- The bill passed the House sans the Oversight Commission
- It was referred to the Senate
- The Senate replaced the Commission
- Referred back to the House and after considerable wrangling, passed on a Motion to Concur

EMPLOYMENT



- How do we move beyond policy?
 - On-going work group
 - Address issues
 - Oversight commission
 - Self Advocates Coalition of Kansas
 - Families Together
 - Let others know – get the message out
 - Acknowledge and respond
 - Employment First website
 - Second Employment Summit
 - Build on energy & excitement

EMPLOYMENT



- To implementation...
 - Great Expectations Employment Initiative
 - VR funded
 - Training, technical assistance, & evaluation
 - What does it take?
 - What are the issues?
 - What are the solutions?
 - How much does it cost?
 - Data-based decision-making
 - Changes: Person centered planning
 - Expedited referral
 - Revised pay for performance

EMPLOYMENT



- To implementation...(cont.)
 - Others are initiating on their own
 - Talking to each other
 - Asking for help
 - Requesting employment
 - Including on agendas
 - Telling others

EMPLOYMENT



- Role of KS APSE
 - Leadership
 - Liaison to national activities
 - Information/resource sharing
 - Testimony
 - Active involvement
 - Event co-sponsor
 - Membership support
 - Website

- For more information, contact:

Wendy Parent-Johnson

Kansas University Center on Developmental Disabilities

wparent@ku.edu

(785) 864-1062

Nick Wood

Disability Rights Center

Nickw@drckansas.org

(785)273-9661