

Charles D. Baker  
Governor

Karyn Polito  
Lieutenant Governor



Marylou Sudders  
Secretary

Elin M. Howe  
Commissioner

# Employment First Policy Report

September 2015



September 23, 2015

The Honorable Karen E. Spilka, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
State House, Room 212  
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Brian S. Dempsey, Chair  
House Committee on Ways and Means  
State House, Room 243  
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Jennifer L. Flanagan, Chair  
Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities  
State House, Room 312D  
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Kay Khan, Chair  
Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities  
State House, Room 146  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairs:

Section 234 of the Acts of 2015 required the Department of Developmental services (DDS) to report to the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities and the House and Senate Committee on Ways and Means on an annual basis on the implementation of the Employment First Initiative.

Legislative language required that the report include, but not be limited to: (A) the total number of participants in sheltered workshop, community-based day support, group supported employment programs and individual supported employment programs and the full-time or part-time status of the participants; (B) the total number of participants who have transitioned from sheltered workshop programs, and the new programs that are currently serving the participants; (i) the total number of participants in new job placements within the previous fiscal year; (ii) the total number of staff at sheltered workshops, community-based day support programs, group supported employment programs, and individual supported employment programs; and (iii) the development of performance measurement tools to collect data and assess the success of community-based day support programs, including direct input from participants of the programs and their families.

Per the reporting mandate, the information requested is provided below for your review.

A. *The total number of participants in sheltered workshop, community-based day support, group supported employment programs, and individual supported employment programs*

- As of August 2015, there were a total of 747 individuals participating in sheltered workshop programs. In August 2014, there were 1,913 individuals participating in sheltered workshops, which means 1,166 individuals transitioned to different employment or community-based day support programs during the past fiscal year.
  - 259 participate on a full-time basis. In 2014, there were 757 individuals participating on a full-time basis, a reduction of 498 individuals over the past fiscal year.
  - 489 individuals participate on a part-time basis and receive other employment or day program services. In 2014, there were 1,156 individuals participating on a part-time basis, a reduction of 667 individuals over the past fiscal year.

<b>Program Service</b>	<b>Total Number of Participants- August 2015</b>	<b>Total Number of Participants- August 2014</b>
Community-Based Day Support Programs (3163)	5,275	4,159
Group Supported Employment Programs (3181)	3,144	2,998
Individual Supported Employment Programs (3168, 3180, 4168, 5168)	2,991	2,800
Sheltered Workshop/Center-based Work Programs (3169)	747	1,913

NOTE: These counts contain duplicated totals since individuals may be enrolled in multiple services.

B. *The total number of participants who have transitioned from sheltered workshop programs and the new programs that are currently serving the participants;*

Individuals who transitioned from Sheltered Workshops (3169) and entered other employment or day program within 30 days, during the period January 2014 - August 2015

<b>Program</b>	<b>Number of Individuals</b>
Community-Based Day Support Programs (3163)	973
Group Supported Employment Programs (3181)	266
Individual Supported Employment Programs (3168 & 3180)	87

Note: 1) As outlined in the goals in the 4-year plan "Blueprint for Success" it was expected that most individuals would initially transition from sheltered workshops to community-based day

support programs designed to serve as a pathway to a job by providing opportunities to explore job interests, get exposure to different types of volunteer experiences and job trials, and develop skills needed for success on a job. 2) Since about two thirds of the individuals participating in sheltered workshops were attending on a part-time basis, they were already enrolled in another employment or day program, therefore they will not show up as newly enrolled in one of these program services. 3) These counts may contain duplicated totals since individuals can be enrolled in in multiple services.

*B (i) The total number of participants in new job placements within the previous fiscal year.*

During the past fiscal year 445 individuals obtained new integrated job placements at businesses in the community through the assistance of DDS funded employment providers.

*B (ii) The total number of staff at sheltered workshops, community-based day support programs, group supported employment programs, and individual supported employment programs;*

<b>Program</b>	<b>Number of Staff in August 2015</b>	<b>Number of Staff in August 2014</b>
Community-Based Day Support Programs (3163)	1,259 FTE	915 FTE
Group Supported Employment Programs (3181)	643 FTE	469 FTE
Individual Supported Employment Programs (3168 & 3180)	461 FTE	310 FTE
Center-Based Work/Sheltered Workshops (3169)	139 FTE	261 FTE

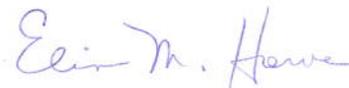
*B (iii) The development of performance measurement tools to collect data and assess the success of community-based day support programs, including direct input from participants of the programs and their families.*

The Department has a variety of existing approaches to assess performance and evaluates success of outcomes, and will continue to further develop additional ways to get direct input from individuals and families to assess effectiveness and satisfaction with services.

- An individual's annual Individual Service Planning (ISP) process and the ongoing review with their team of their experiences and progress is the most important vehicle for getting input from individuals and their families about satisfaction with Community-Based Day Support Services and other employment services.
- All providers of employment and day program services are contractually required to seek feedback from individuals and families about their satisfaction with services provided.

- The Department collects information from providers of employment services about all new individual job placements that have occurred within the fiscal year, including the nature of the job, employer, number of hours, and wages.
- Annually the Department collects employment outcome information for all individuals in any of our employment and sheltered workshop services, using a four-week period in April, to identify number of people working, hours worked, and wages earned during this 4 week period.
- Through DDS's Employment First Initiative, providers of community-based day support services have been offered access to training and consultation on program design and development, and the delivery of quality, inclusive community based services tailored to address the needs, interests, and goals of individual participants. This training and consultation, which has included use of national experts, has been provided through a partnership with the Institute for Community Inclusion/University of Massachusetts Boston, in order to enhance the quality of services provided through these programs.
- DDS has been working collaboratively with MassHealth and other stakeholders to seek input on how to best meet the HCBS Community Rule issued by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services, in order to assure that all individuals have access to and integration in the community, have choice and control, and are assured dignity and respect. A survey was disseminated to all CBDS providers to gather information regarding the services provided, the measures that should be used to measure quality, the status of compliance with the Rule, and challenges that CBDS providers are facing. The results of the survey are currently being analyzed and will be utilized by the Employment Workgroup to look at systemic changes that may need to occur and to develop quality standards and performance measures.
- DDS has a well-established licensing and Survey and Certification process that all employment and CBDS providers must go through at least every two years which reviews performance along many quality and performance indicators. A collaborative workgroup that consists of self-advocates, family members, providers and DDS staff has been meeting to work on strengthening the existing licensure and certification tool to assure it addresses well all important indicators of quality and responds to the new requirements of the HCBS Community Rule.

Sincerely,



Elin M. Howe  
Commissioner