



**PROVIDER REPORT  
FOR**

**NEW ENGLAND BUSINESS  
ASSOCIATES  
66 Industry Avenue, Suite 11  
Springfield, MA 01104**

**April 01, 2025**

**Version**

**Public Provider Report**

**Prepared by the Department of Developmental Services  
OFFICE OF QUALITY ENHANCEMENT**

# **SUMMARY OF OVERALL FINDINGS**

<b>Provider</b>	NEW ENGLAND BUSINESS ASSOCIATES.
<b>Review Dates</b>	2/26/2025 - 3/4/2025
<b>Service Enhancement Meeting Date</b>	3/18/2025
<b>Survey Team</b>	Janina Millet Elsa Adorno (TL)
<b>Citizen Volunteers</b>	

<b><u>Survey scope and findings for Employment and Day Supports</u></b>					
<b>Service Group Type</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Licensure Scope</b>	<b>Licensure Level</b>	<b>Certification Scope</b>	<b>Certification Level</b>
<b>Employment and Day Supports</b>	1 location(s) 14 audit (s)	Targeted Review	DDS 5/5 Provider 46 / 46  51 / 51 2 Year License 03/18/2025-03/18/2027		DDS 0 / 0 Provider 42 / 42  42 / 42 Certified 03/18/2025 - 03/18/2027
Community Based Day Services	1 location(s) 5 audit (s)			DDS Targeted Review	15 / 15
Planning and Quality Management				DDS Targeted Review	6 / 6

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY :**

New England Business Associates (NEBA) is a nonprofit agency, headquartered in Springfield MA; NEBA provides a range of employment and community-based day support services to individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, including Autism, through its contracts with the Department of Developmental Disabilities, Mass Ability, and local school systems. NEBA's array of employment-related offerings ranged from securing individualized employment for people, to supporting them to become small business owners, as well as assisting people to improve their education, including through earning a GED or pursuing post-secondary opportunities.

The agency was eligible for and elected to complete a self-assessment on all licensure and certification indicators for the current licensing cycle. The Department of Developmental Services

(DDS) Central West Office of Quality Enhancement conducted a targeted review of the eight critical licensing indicators in the agency's employment/day service. This final survey report reflects a combination of ratings from the self-assessment process conducted by NEBA and the targeted review conducted by DDS, with ratings from DDS prevailing where indicators were rated by both entities.

The DDS targeted review results showed that New England Business Associates had effective organizational systems; this includes an effective policies for abuse and neglect reporting.

The survey showed that NEBA provided effective supports in all the areas that were reviewed by OQE across all services. The sites visited were clean; had current annual inspections; and safeguards were evident in personal and environmental safety measures aimed at keeping individuals safe.

As a result of the agency's self-assessment findings and the targeted review conducted by OQE, New England Business Associates will receive a Two-Year License for the day/employment service grouping, with a service group score of 100% of licensing indicators met. The employment/day service grouping is also Certified with an overall certification score of 100%.

See below: New England Business Associate's self-assessment report describing the agency's ongoing quality assurance systems and the current evaluation of compliance with DDS licensing standards.

### **Description of Self Assessment Process:**

NEBA takes a personalized and strategic approach to working with individuals on DDS contracts, ensuring that each person is fully supported in their journey toward meaningful employment. Through a person-centered approach to job development, we focus on understanding everyone's strengths, skills, preferences, and support needs to identify the best job match that aligns with their career interests and long-term goals. This past year, MA DDS achieved 28 job placements, and neba continues to track employment status, hours worked per week, wages, employers, job positions, and any employment status changes through our Division Scoreboards. The average time to become employed varies based on previous experience, person-centered goals, and the skill-building needed to reach those goals.

The process begins with intake and assessment, where we work to understand each person's preferences, contributions, conditions, and support needs through conversation and various assessments. Tools such as Pathful Explorer, the Reading Free Interest Inventory, and Work Readiness Inventory help guide job seekers in discovering their strengths and career interests. We also assess barriers to employment, financial literacy, life skills, and workplace readiness to ensure a comprehensive support plan. Community mapping is used to identify local resources that can provide skill-building and employment opportunities. Goal setting is a collaborative effort between the participant, job developer, and other team members, helping to define clear objectives for securing meaningful employment.

Our employment consultants provide hands-on guidance in researching job opportunities, preparing applications, and developing interview skills. Using structured approaches like task analysis and fade plans, we support individuals in building the skills necessary for long-term success in the workplace. Through encouragement, social skills modeling, and confidence-building, neba ensures that each individual feels empowered to take the next step in their career. We believe that when everyone has the opportunity to participate in meaningful employment, our communities grow stronger.

Process for Self-Assessment: Sample Selection - neba followed DDS guidance to determine an appropriate sample size for the self-assessment. A random name generator was used to ensure an unbiased selection process of all individuals on both CBDS and Employment 3168. The final sample

included five individuals receiving Community-Based Day Services (CBDS) and nine individuals receiving Employment Services.

**Assessment Tool** - neba utilized the DDS Day/Employment Services - Survey Worksheet as the primary tool to guide the self-assessment process. This worksheet provided structured indicators to evaluate service quality and compliance.

**Indicator Review** - The team carefully examined all applicable indicators outlined in the worksheet. Each indicator was assessed based on evidence gathered from documentation (SetWorks), observations, and discussions with staff and individuals receiving services.

SetWorks is a comprehensive case management and data tracking system designed specifically for agencies providing disability and human services. It streamlines operations by integrating client records, service documentation, scheduling, billing, and reporting into one centralized platform. SetWorks helps organizations improve efficiency, ensure compliance with regulatory requirements, and enhance service delivery by providing real-time data access and customizable reporting tools. By utilizing SetWorks, neba can effectively track individual progress, manage staff assignments, and maintain accurate records, ultimately improving outcomes for the individuals they support.

**Determination of Criteria** - For each indicator, neba reviewed the collected evidence to determine whether the criteria were Met or Not Met. Decisions were made based on factual data and alignment with DDS standards.

**Findings and Next Steps** - Upon completing the assessment, results were compiled to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. neba will use this information to enhance service delivery and ensure continued alignment with DDS expectations.

This structured process ensures that neba conducts a thorough and objective self-assessment, ultimately supporting the continuous improvement of services for individuals.

**Improvements and Changes:** We have continued to work through our strategic plan 2020-2024. Areas of focus for the past few years are Increase of Efficiency and Effectiveness, Improve Staff Retention and Diversify Recruitment Strategies, Increase Internal and External Communication, Diversify Income Streams, and Expansion of neba programs. Neba has begun the pre-work to create our new strategic plan which includes surveying our stakeholders and our staff. We met with our board of directors on January 25, 2025, to present the survey results and gather the board's input on areas of focus that they felt were important to include.

**Technological Advances:** neba has proactively enhanced its expertise in supporting individuals' needs related to assistive technology. Enabling Technology has been part of neba for approximately two years, beginning with Jake Hammond obtaining Enabling Technology Integration Specialist (ETIS) and Enabling Technology Navigator (ETN) certifications. This allowed the organization to conduct ET Assessments for clients and navigate available waivers and grants for assistive devices.

Following this, neba worked to certify its staff with basic ET certifications to ensure a foundational understanding of the ET Program. Additionally, Jeannine Pavlak is pursuing certification as an Enabling Technology Leader.

To date, neba has conducted 15 ET Assessments, which involve detailed questionnaires that help determine appropriate devices and their optimal implementation for each consumer and their support network.

This newly formed group's core objective is to foster a deeper understanding and implementation of Enabling Technology within our organization. This includes not just VR headsets but any innovative technology that can empower our individuals to be as independent as possible. The group will be at the forefront of creating plans and discussing ideas to enhance our tech capabilities.

Each member completed a self-paced training course offered by Tech First Shift, which took approximately five hours and covered the fundamentals of Enabling Technology, distinguishing it from Assistive Technology. Upon completion, staff members earned their ET Certificates. The group was responsible for developing strategies to enhance practices related to Enabling Technology by identifying areas for improvement and ensuring alignment with organizational goals and the needs of individuals. Additionally, members will continuously explore and discuss new Enabling Technologies, staying informed on advancements and assessing their potential benefits for individuals.

**Staff Growth and Development:** neba continues to invest in staff growth and development by providing training which is relevant to their essential job functions and furthering their knowledge in the field of employment and best practices. During our annual MLK day retreat, staff received training on social capital and community mapping which equips them with the knowledge and tools to help individuals build meaningful connections that support their employment and independence. Social capital refers to the relationships, networks, and connections individuals have within their communities, which can provide valuable opportunities, resources, and support. Community mapping is the process of identifying and leveraging these networks by exploring local businesses, organizations, and key community members who can serve as potential employment partners or sources of support. Through this training, staff learn how to assess and utilize both their own networks and those of their team to connect individuals with job opportunities that align with their skills, interests, and long-term goals. By understanding the power of social capital, staff can proactively foster relationships that create inclusive employment opportunities, ensuring individuals have access to workplaces where they can grow, thrive, and gain greater independence.

Additionally, neba currently has two staff members in Massachusetts who are ACRE certified and three who are currently enrolled in ACRE training. ACRE (Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators) certification is a nationally recognized training program that equips employment specialists with best practices in customized employment, job development, and person-centered planning. This certification enhances staff expertise in supporting individuals with disabilities by teaching effective strategies to match job seekers with meaningful employment opportunities. ACRE-trained staff are better equipped to engage employers, build sustainable employment partnerships, and use innovative approaches to job placement and retention. By investing in ACRE training, NEBA strengthens its commitment to delivering high-quality employment services and ensuring individuals receive the support they need to succeed in the workforce.

**New Programing:** neba has successfully expanded its Project SEARCH initiative by adding a new host site at Cooley Dickinson Hospital. Project SEARCH is a national business-led internship program designed to provide young adults with disabilities with hands-on work experience, training, and career development opportunities in real-world job settings. This expansion was driven by the identified need for additional training and employment opportunities in the Franklin/Hampshire area, as recognized by the area office. By launching this new host site, neba continues to enhance workforce development efforts, create meaningful employment pathways, and empower individuals to achieve greater independence through skill-building and career readiness.

The Project SEARCH program at Springfield College provides comprehensive support to individuals through daily morning and afternoon classes, as well as at their internship sites. Consistent support is delivered by the Program Coordinator, Division Supervisor, and college student interns until a fade plan is implemented as participants become more independent. The program includes three 10-12 week internship rotations, enabling individuals to gain skills and experience necessary for competitive paid employment, make meaningful connections with co-workers and peers, and explore various career paths. Additionally, participants have access to Pathful Explorer, which helps them learn about different career options.

Participants in the Project SEARCH program are considered staff on campus, receive a college email, and are included in all campus activities and events. neba staff has established a partnership with the Best Buddies program on campus and organizes chess events to promote socialization. The

curriculum includes a Social/Communication component to support social integration. Interns also participate in various campus events, including employee appreciation lunches, the Thanksgiving food drive, the OT winter camp, and the Hoop Hall Classic event. Health & Wellness is an integral part of the curriculum, offering access to the campus gym and discussions on healthy eating and exercise. The program emphasizes obtaining and maintaining employment throughout its duration. Several graduates have successfully secured full-time and part-time employment, including positions at Springfield College and other organizations. neba continues to support employed graduates and actively explores career opportunities for those still seeking employment.

Organizational Challenges: Staff turnover and Recruitment. Transportation: People served in rural areas with little to no access to public transportation

Designated training coordinator position eliminated: Neba has formed a Training Committee that meets bi-weekly to review and enhance current training and discuss new training opportunities for employees. Participant Input (only in context of hiring new employees): Our interview process had changed significantly to incorporate participant feedback into the process and ensure participants had a voice in who was hired to work on the DDS teams. Neba piloted a new process that allowed for more flexibility. We inquired with our participants if they would be interested in joining neba's Candidate Screening Committee. This process did not work due to participant's schedules clashing with interviewees availability. Neba will be piloting another process to incorporate participant feedback into the recruitment and hiring process. For employment program hiring needs neba will ensure to solicit feedback post hiring and shadowing process. This process will look to gather input from participants to see if the newly hired employees are a good fit for their individualized services. For our CBDS or CBDS Without Walls Program, we will have a group interview process including all current participants. BENE Planning: A challenge that neba continues to face is helping participants and families understand their benefits and how work impacts those benefits. Neba invested in the training and certification of an Employment Consultant who finished January 31, 2023. In December of 2024, this employee was no longer employed with neba. Neba has set a goal to have two more staff go through this certification and for all staff to continue going through basic training on SSA benefits.

## **LICENSURE FINDINGS**


	<b>Met / Rated</b>	<b>Not Met / Rated</b>	<b>% Met</b>
<b>Organizational</b>	<b>7/7</b>	<b>0/7</b>	
<b>Employment and Day Supports</b>	<b>44/44</b>	<b>0/44</b>	
Community Based Day Services Employment Support Services			
<b>Critical Indicators</b>	<b>5/5</b>	<b>0/5</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>51/51</b>	<b>0/51</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>2 Year License</b>			
<b># indicators for 60 Day Follow-up</b>		<b>0</b>	

## **CERTIFICATION FINDINGS**


	Reviewed By	Met / Rated	Not Met / Rated	% Met
<b>Certification - Planning and Quality Management</b>	<b>DDS 0/0 Provider 6/6</b>	<b>6/6</b>	<b>0/6</b>	
<b>Employment and Day Supports</b>	<b>DDS 0/0 Provider 15/15</b>	<b>15/15</b>	<b>0/15</b>	
Community Based Day Services	DDS 0/0 Provider 15/15	15/15	0/15	
<b>Total</b>		<b>42/42</b>	<b>0/42</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Certified</b>				

## **MASTER SCORE SHEET LICENSURE**

**Organizational: NEW ENGLAND BUSINESS ASSOCIATES.**

Indicator #	Indicator	Reviewed by	Met/Rated	Rating(Met,Not Met,NotRated)
 L2	Abuse/neglect reporting	<b>DDS</b>	<b>1/1</b>	<b>Met</b>
L48	HRC	<b>Provider</b>	-	<b>Met</b>
L74	Screen employees	<b>Provider</b>	-	<b>Met</b>
L75	Qualified staff	<b>Provider</b>	-	<b>Met</b>
L76	Track trainings	<b>Provider</b>	-	<b>Met</b>
L83	HR training	<b>Provider</b>	-	<b>Met</b>
L92 (07/21)	Licensed Sub-locations (e/d).	<b>Provider</b>	-	<b>Met</b>

### **Employment and Day Supports:**

Ind. #	Ind.	Loc. or Individ.	Reviewed by	Emp. Sup.	Cent. Based Work	Com. Based Day	Total Met / Rated	Rating
L1	Abuse/neglect training	I	<b>Provider</b>		-	-	-	<b>Met</b>
L5	Safety Plan	L	<b>Provider</b>		-	-	-	<b>Met</b>
 L6	Evacuation	L	<b>DDS</b>			1/1	<b>1/1</b>	<b>Met</b>

L7	Fire Drills	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L8	Emergency Fact Sheets	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L9 (07/21)	Safe use of equipment	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
Ⓟ L11	Required inspections	L	DDS			1/1	1/1	Met
Ⓟ L12	Smoke detectors	L	DDS			1/1	1/1	Met
Ⓟ L13	Clean location	L	DDS			1/1	1/1	Met
L14	Site in good repair	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L15	Hot water	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L16	Accessibility	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L17	Egress at grade	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L20	Exit doors	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L21	Safe electrical equipment	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L22	Well-maintained appliances	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L25	Dangerous substances	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L26	Walkway safety	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L28	Flammables	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L29	Rubbish/combustibles	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L30	Protective railings	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L31	Communication method	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L32	Verbal & written	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L37	Prompt treatment	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
Ⓟ L38	Physician's orders	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L39	Dietary requirements	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L44	MAP registration	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L45	Medication storage	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
Ⓟ L46	Med. Administration	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L49	Informed of human rights	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L50 (07/21)	Respectful Comm.	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L51	Possessions	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L52	Phone calls	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met



L54 (07/21)	Privacy	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L55	Informed consent	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L77	Unique needs training	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L80	Symptoms of illness	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L81	Medical emergency	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L85	Supervision	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L86	Required assessments	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L87	Support strategies	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L88	Strategies implemented	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L91	Incident management	L	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L93 (05/22)	Emergency back-up plans	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L94 (05/22)	Assistive technology	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
L96 (05/22)	Staff training in devices and applications	I	Provider		-	-	-	Met
<b>#Std. Met/# 44 Indicator</b>							<b>44/44</b>	
<b>Total Score</b>							<b>51/51</b>	
							<b>100%</b>	

## MASTER SCORE SHEET CERTIFICATION

### Certification - Planning and Quality Management

	Indicator #	Indicator	Reviewed By	Met/Rated	Rating
	C1	Provider data collection	Provider	-	Met
	C2	Data analysis	Provider	-	Met
	C3	Service satisfaction	Provider	-	Met
	C4	Utilizes input from stakeholders	Provider	-	Met
	C5	Measure progress	Provider	-	Met
	C6	Future directions planning	Provider	-	Met

### Community Based Day Services

Indicator #	Indicator	Reviewed By	Met/Rated	Rating
C7	Feedback on staff / care provider performance	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C8	Family/guardian communication	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C13	Skills to maximize independence	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C37	Interpersonal skills for work	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C38 (07/21)	Habilitative & behavioral goals	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C39 (07/21)	Support needs for employment	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C40	Community involvement interest	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C41	Activities participation	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C42	Connection to others	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C43	Maintain & enhance relationship	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C44	Job exploration	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C45	Revisit decisions	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C46	Use of generic resources	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C47	Transportation to/ from community	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C51	Ongoing satisfaction with services/ supports	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>

### Employment Support Services

Indicator #	Indicator	Reviewed By	Met/Rated	Rating
C7	Feedback on staff / care provider performance	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C8	Family/guardian communication	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C22	Explore job interests	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C23	Assess skills & training needs	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C24	Job goals & support needs plan	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C25	Skill development	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C26	Benefits analysis	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C27	Job benefit education	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>

C28	Relationships w/businesses	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C29	Support to obtain employment	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C30	Work in integrated settings	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C31	Job accommodations	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C32	At least minimum wages earned	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C33	Employee benefits explained	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C34	Support to promote success	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C35	Feedback on job performance	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C36	Supports to enhance retention	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C37	Interpersonal skills for work	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C47	Transportation to/ from community	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C50	Involvement/ part of the Workplace culture	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>
C51	Ongoing satisfaction with services/ supports	Provider	-	<b>Met</b>