

Notes from the Employment First Collaborative Team Meeting/Conference Call

October 16, 2014
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc.
124 Marriott Drive, Suite 203
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Conference Number – 1-888-670-3525

Conference Code – 7876850281#

Minutes

Attendees:

Beth Romans-Corsi, Florida Developmental Disabilities Council
David Darm, Governor's Commission on Jobs for Floridians with Disabilities
Dehryl McCall, CareerSource Florida
Diane Vacca, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
Jean Winsor, Institute for Community Inclusion, UMASS Boston
Jeff Michels, Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Kathleen Roberts, Florida Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Kirk Hall, Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Kristin Panella, Florida Department of Education, Division of Blind Services
LeeAnn Herman, Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Lucy Mohs, Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Nancy Boutot, Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Sheila Gritz-Swift, Florida Developmental Disabilities Council
Shila Salem, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
Suzanne Sewell, Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities

1:00 – 1:15 Welcome and Introductions

The meeting began shortly after 1:00 p. m. Shelia welcomed everyone and quick introductions were made around the table.

Sheila Gritz-Swift shared the blog: Employment, Anyone?

Blog address: <https://nampwd.wordpress.com/2014/10/01/employment-anyone/> The Blog post discusses concerns about automatic screening of people with disabilities in the application process. Specific examples are discussed by the blog's writer. This blog post addresses a concern that has been shared by Florida Self-Advocates about searching for employment.

Jean Winsor also shared the new Best Buddies Report, “I’m into Hire”. The report is designed to myth bust some concerns employers have about employing people with disabilities. The report can be accessed at: <http://www.imintohire.org/>

The question was raised “Is there an unintended consequence to disclosure of disability that the Employment First Collaborative group should consider addressing in the future?” The group decided to return to this issue in the future as needed.

1:15 – 1:30 Update on Employment First Florida Year Three Project with ICI

Jean Winsor from the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) described the activities of the new FDCC contract. Continued activities from last year: Quarterly Grassroots Group Webinars, Self-Advocate Advisory Board, and Technical Assistance to the Employment First Collaborative Team
New activities for FY 2015: Community of Practice for Collaborative Team, pilot two regional employment collaboratives, website: Employmentfirstflorida.org, and peer-to-peer knowledge translation for individuals and families.

The Collaborative Team will be asked to help identify of Community of Practice Topics, identify pilot communities, identify individual, provider, and state agency level employment success stories, and identify of self-advocates and families to participate in the peer-to-peer knowledge translation

In the next quarter the ICI will provide the collaborative team: A brief survey to help identify and prioritize community of practice topics, draft logo and website to provide feedback on, a request to join a small work group to identify and select pilot communities, a request to identify employment success stories for individuals, providers, and state agencies, and a request to nominate self-advocates and families to participate in the peer-to-peer knowledge translation

1:30 – 1:45 Update on Employment First Communications Plan

The draft Communication Plan is nearly final. Sheila Gritz-Swift has incorporated each agencies edits. The revised Communications Plan will be posted on the employment website. It supports the goals on the Governor’s Commission as well. The Employment First Collaborative Team will work with the Communications sub-committee and the Employment sub-committee to share the Communications Plan at the regional and local levels. The intent of the Communications Plan it to be a touch point to make sure that employment is addressed as a priority in all Florida initiatives.

Plan activities are in part focused on generating awareness in the employer community about the Abilities Work Web Portal and the Help Desk as resources to facilitate employment, solicit information about employers’ immediate information needs about disability and employment, and the development of tools to information about employer job openings.

Sheila Gritz-Swift proposed that the plan also include the development of a product communicating to everyone involved with employment, (from program directors to job developers), information about state-level activities around improving employment and strategies for finding employment. This could be done through a collaborative memo or a series of memos. The development of these reports online

would also include links to the Governor’s Commission on Employment, the Florida Grassroots Group and other involved parties.

Additional Communication Plan items:

- Question: “Is there anything in the Communications Plan that we should do to publicize the Abilities Work Help desk?” Answer: “We will likely have additional information about what to do in November 2014 meeting.”
- Consider adding information to the Communications Plan about the importance of addressing employment and publically acknowledging the employers that are engaged in hiring individuals with disabilities.

1:45 – 2:15 Update on “Abilities Work” Help Desk and Web Portal and Employer Pilot

Diane Vacca shared that the Abilities Work Help Desk staff continue to receive feedback on the employer pilot. Lucy Mohs noted that the Legislature is excited to learn about how the Abilities Web Portal will interact with Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act 2014. There will be a big formal rollout and announcement of the Abilities Work Web Portal when it formally launches in November. Abilities Work staff is also looking at the variables they will be tracking to measure success of the Web Portal in meeting employers’ needs. Abilities Work staff will be providing the Collaborative Team further updates during the November meeting.

2:15 – 2:30 Break

2:30 - 3:30 Collaborative Memorandum from Partners to Field (Draft Memorandum for October Release)

Sheila Gritz-Swift drafted the document “Collaborative Memorandum to the Field” as a way for the Collaborative Team to collectively announce the work that the Employment First Collaborative Team is doing and what local communities can expect from the state. Sheila would like to have each of the Collaborative Team members agree on the content and then each agency will disseminate the document to their constituencies by email and “CC” other agencies’ directors.

The draft memorandum focuses on the key elements of the Executive Order, Interagency Agreement, and the Collaborative Team’s work. It will include relevant links to the different agencies and initiatives.

General feedback on what the memorandum should include:

- Highlight how the Executive Order spawned all of the interagency work, that in order for the state level work to be brought to scale the local level should be working together in ways similar to the Employment First Collaborative team, include a timeline of activities and the Collaborative Team’s mission for employment
- Would also like to have the January Grassroots webinar topic by ICI be the development of local relationships. Jean Winsor will connect with Sheila Gritz-Swift and Beth Romans-Corsi about FL presenters.

Next Steps: Sheila Gritz-Swift will prepare a new draft of the Memorandum to share with the Collaborative Team early in the week of October 20. Sheila would like comments on the Memorandum by October 22nd and will provide a second draft to the group on October 24. There will be 1 more internal review by Collaborative Team agencies before it is finalized. Sheila would like to have this document finalized by the end of October/beginning of November. The goal will be to have all Collaborative Team agencies able to share the Memorandum at a simlartime, and Sheila Gritz-Swift will coordinate this.

3:30 – 4:00 Collaborative Partner Updates on Related Work and Initiatives

- Respect Florida is interested in expanding micro-enterprise opportunities. The goal is self-employment.
- October 28th is the next Grassroots group webinar and the topic is Transportation
- FDDC transportation voucher pilot program in conjunction with the Department of Transportation is now in the RFP development process. Will have 1 rural area and 1 urban area.
- FDDC Employment 1st marketing video RFP has been released and there have been many responses.
- November 3, 2014 8am-4pm; University of North Florida Hiring Abilities Symposium & Career Fair and <http://respectabilityusa.com/>

4:00 Wrap-up and Adjourn