

Fast Facts about Employment for People with Disabilities in Florida

FLORIDA EMPLOYMENT SNAPSHOT Impact of COVID-19 on Employment Status



Employment First FLORIDA

ISSUE NO. 11, 2021

Introduction

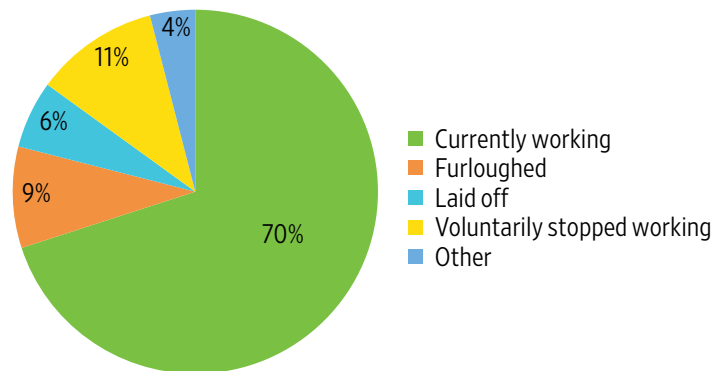
This document is about the different ways that the COVID-19 virus has impacted the number of people with ID/DD who work. A survey was done to count the number of adults with ID/DD in Florida who were working before the virus and during the virus. This report will tell you the results of the survey and describe ways to improve employment for people with ID/DD.

Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) asked their employment services providers to complete a survey on employment for people with ID/DD. The survey was completed during November and December of 2020. Respondents were asked to provide: 1) the number of people with ID/DD they were supporting who had an individual competitive job or group integrated job on March 1, 2020, and 2) for their employment status at the time of the survey. Ninety-eight providers responded to the survey.

How many people who had been working on March 1, 2020 continued working?

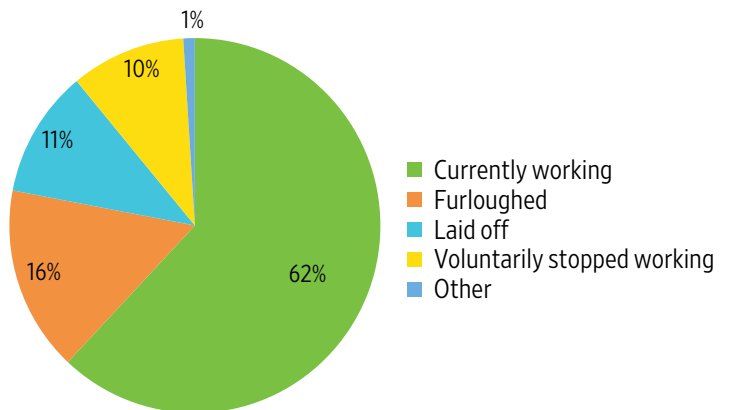
Based on responses to this survey, 1,244 individuals were employed in individual competitive jobs as of March 1, 2020 (Figure 1). Of reporting providers, 70% of individuals (865) were still working in an individual integrated job. The most common reason for not working in an individual integrated job was having voluntarily stopped working due to health or safety concerns (11%) followed by furloughed (9%), defined as temporary layoff with an expectation for returning to work. As of March 1, 2020, 243 individuals were employed in group supported employment, and 62% (150) were still working in group supported employment in November and December 2020 (Figure 2). People in group supported employment were more likely to have been furloughed (16%) or laid off (11%).

Figure 1: Work status of individuals who had been employed in an individual job in November/December 2020 (post-COVID)



Individual Integrated Job n=1,244

Figure 2: Work status of individuals who had been employed in a group supported job in November/December 2020 (post-COVID)



Group Supported Employment n=243

Among the 98 providers who contributed data for this survey, 5 providers indicated that individuals had started a new individual integrated job after March 1, 2020 and 3 providers indicated that individuals had started a new group supported job. After March 1, 2020 a total of 50 individuals started a new individual integrated job, and a total of 12 individuals started a new group supported job.

“Employment First” means that working in the community should be a choice for everyone, with or without a disability.



Sponsored by United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Developmental Disabilities and the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc. The EmployMe1st project is a joint project of the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston, and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services.

How does Florida compare to other states?

Workers supported by Florida APD were somewhat more likely to continue working than their peers based on surveys conducted by seven other states who are members of the national State Employment Leadership Network¹ (Figure 3).

Points for consideration

While the COVID-19 virus has had a broad negative impact, there are still a large number of people with ID/DD who made the decision to continue working and successfully maintain their job. A few points stand out:

- While a significant number of people with ID/DD did maintain their jobs, people in group supported employment were less likely to continue working (62%) compared to people in individual competitive jobs (70%).
- Employment providers were successful in supporting 865 people to maintain individual competitive jobs and 150 people to continue working in group supported jobs.
- Despite the impact of COVID-19, 50 people with ID/DD entered a new individual competitive job and 12 people with ID/DD started work in a new group supported job between March 2020 and December 2020. These new jobs reflect success in continuing the job search process through this period.
- A significant number of people with ID/DD stopped working primarily for personal reasons. An ongoing challenge is helping them to assess their options and preferences.

This data was collected by staff at the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston as part of the EmployMe1st project. The EmployMe1st project is a joint project of the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston, and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services.

For more information about Employment First Florida, please visit the website www.EmploymentFirstFL.org/

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¹ Data were collected between May and July 2020 from employment providers in Alabama, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Missouri, Rhode Island, and Virginia.

Figure 3: Work status of individuals how had been working in individual integrated jobs

