



The Honorable Suzanne Crouch  
Lieutenant Governor  
State House  
200 West Washington Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

September 30, 2020

Dear Lieutenant Governor:

The Employment Array Workgroup is pleased to provide this report as charged in recommendation 4.3 of the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Task Force final recommendation report.

The Employment Array Workgroup was comprised of 25 members, including five representatives of provider agencies, two representatives from state agencies, five representatives from advocacy groups, and six self-advocates. Self-Advocates of Indiana was honored to lead this work and appreciates the opportunity to do so.

As the workgroup discussed employment opportunities that should continue and opportunities that should be made available for people with I/DD, it became clear that there are many barriers preventing people with I/DD from obtaining competitive employment in Indiana, and we cannot accept a one-size-fits-all approach. We had a series of 13 meetings and provided several groups the opportunity to present to the Workgroup. We spent much time discussing two barriers that cannot be ignored: transportation and the benefit cliff. Recommendations addressing these barriers are included in this report, as overcoming them will be necessary to successfully expand employment options for people with I/DD.

Our most difficult conversation took place in regard to the use of 14c certificates, which allow for people with disabilities to be paid sub-minimum wage. The Workgroup agrees that people with I/DD deserve to be valued and respected, and that expanded opportunities to earn a living wage in competitive, integrated, community employment should be our goal. The state of Indiana does not have jurisdiction over 14c certificates, but it is our hope that the state will embrace being an Employment First state and will support the growth of work opportunities for people with I/DD. We also hope providers in Indiana will look to transition away from their current use of 14c certificates and subminimum wage and refuse to seek out additional 14c certificates in our state, while ensuring that transitions occur in a planned manner so that individuals are able to continue to be employed and engaged in meaningful daytime activities. These outcomes should be our goal. We want to truly make Indiana “A State That Works for All”.



The Workgroup is glad to offer the following recommendations to set Indiana on the right path to create an array of employment options for people with IDD:

### Benefits

- Increase state-provided benefits training for case managers and strongly encourage case management companies to have a trained benefits specialist on staff.
- Create and distribute resources to educate individuals, families, and employers on benefits and work incentives counseling.
- During transition case conferences, students are informed about the programs they are eligible for, including pre-ETS training, counseling on benefits, and work incentives.
- A benefits specialist will review a person's benefits analysis whenever an individual changes jobs or increases pay.

### Transportation

- Remove the waiver spending cap on transportation.
- Change the Transportation service definition for FSW and CIH waivers to include more than two, one-way trips per day.
- Expand the Transportation service definition to include rideshare programs.
- Participate in a stakeholder-driven Transportation Coalition to design and implement a strategy to communicate the importance of transportation to long-term economic development.

### Employment

- Create a series of documents and materials outlining the benefits of hiring people with disabilities and disseminating it to local Chambers of Commerce and Mayor's Councils across the state.
- When an individual loses community employment and returns to a workshop/day program, by individual's request, a VR referral must be made by the individual's interdisciplinary team immediately. The interdisciplinary team will also conduct follow-ups at least every 90 days until successful community employment is reestablished.
- Recommend the state seeks funding to support providers transitioning away from a 14c model within a specified time frame. This funding can be used to cover time-constricted transitioning costs such as infrastructure and physical plant.



- Establish a tracking/outcome system and incentive payments for providers that meet certain benchmarks. Examples of benchmarks could include:
  - Net number/percentage of individuals transitioned to competitive, integrated employment (both full-time and part-time)
  - Number of hours individuals worked in competitive, integrated employment and number of hours individuals worked in workshop
  - Percentage of clients dually enrolled in both Voc. Rehab and the workshop
  - Bonuses for helping a client keep competitive, community employment for 6 months, 1 year, etc.
  - Financial incentives for work-discovery experiences
- Within the first year of employment, there should be a follow-up satisfaction survey administered by VR to make sure the individual is employed in a setting that they enjoy and find fulfilling.
- Expand the Pre-Vocational Services definition to specify that pre-vocational services can be provided in community settings and can include volunteer activities.
- There should be open exchange of information and resources from providers that have successfully transitioned away from 14c certificates to current 14c holders.
- Encourage providers to collaborate with local employers to increase the number of individuals employed at market rates in the community.
- Urge the Governor to prioritize individuals with I/DD as a key workforce and create targeted initiatives focused on employment of individuals with I/DD.
- Collaborate with the Indiana State Chamber of Commerce to implement apprenticeship programs in conjunction with major employers in diverse industry families.
- Allow more flexible VR funding for technological equipment and allow or provide waiver funding for virtual, skills-based training and technology.
- Educate individuals and direct service providers about training opportunities for virtual, skills-based training through VR services.
- Reevaluate VR policies and programming related to funding technology and virtual, skills-based trainings.

Respectfully,

Shawn Fulton, Chair  
Self-Advocates of Indiana, President



**Workgroup Members:**

**John Barth**, INARF

**Ted Brown**, Toyota Motor Manufacturing

**Jonathan Burlison**, Bridges of Indiana

**Courtney Clark**, Self-Advocates of Indiana

**Bitta Dewees**, Stone Belt Arc

**Chris Doerr**, Family Member

**Andy Kirby**, The Arc of Indiana

**Joe Langerak**, Family Member

**Erin McGuire**, Family Member

**Phillip Parnell**, INARF

**Julie Reynolds**, BDDS

**Heather Sorrells**, IPMG

**Donna Belusar**, ADEC

**Megan Burger**, Self-Advocates of Indiana

**Sarah Chestnut**, INARF

**Steve Cook**, INARF

**Kim Dodson**, The Arc of Indiana

**Tony Euler**, Rausch Inc.

**Theresa Koleszar**, IN Vocational Rehabilitation

**Kathleen McAllen**, Family Member

**Jason Meyer**, Passages Inc.

**Shawn Rector**, Self-Advocates of Indiana

**Jimmy Richardson**, Self-Advocates of Indiana

**Michele Trivedi**, Family Member