

**Kentucky Employment First Council**

500 Mero Street, 1st Floor SE

Frankfort, KY 40601

Toll Free: (800) 372-7172

Direct: (502) 782-3421

Email: Nanci.Howard@ky.gov

Andy Beshear

Governor

Jamie Link

Secretary, Education and Labor Cabinet

Employment First Council

Advocacy and Education Committee

Minutes

July 24, 2026

9:00 am – 10:00 am (EST)

Zoom

Meeting ID: 843 2807 2518

Members' Present

Committee Chair, Amanda Owen, Melanie Lybarger, David Allgood, and Tracy Belfield.

Members' Absent

Katie Wolf Whaley, Thomas Thompson, Rhonda Logsdon, and Jeff Edwards.

Staff Present

Nanci Howard, Michelle Cobb, and Anu Kumari.

Welcome

Employment First Committee Chair Amanda Owen welcomed attendees. The agenda was reviewed and acknowledged by all participants.

Newsletter Updates | Content Discussion

The committee discussed finalizing the first newsletter insert before developing additional content and agreed to prioritize completion of the first newsletter insert for submission.

Insert 1: “Start with the Expectation”

The committee reviewed the first newsletter insert and discussed its purpose as an introductory Employment First message intended to direct readers to the Employment First Frequently Asked Questions resource. Members also reviewed a sample Kentucky Autism Training Center newsletter to better understand the format and style used in partner publications. The following newsletter insert was recommended to be submitted to the Cabinet for potential approval.

Key discussion points included:

- Verifying the employment percentage statistics included in the draft with Council Chair Katie Wolf Whaley before submission.
- Submitting the newsletter language to Cabinet Communications for approval prior to public distribution.
- Coordinating with the Transition Committee to obtain its existing distribution contact list to support future outreach efforts.
- Discussing opportunities to distribute approved Employment First messaging through partner organizations' social media platforms following Cabinet Communications approval.

Plan for Submission of Newsletter Content

The committee agreed to proceed with submitting the first newsletter insert to Cabinet Communications for approval after the employment percentage statistics have been verified. Following Cabinet Communications approval, the approved content will be distributed through partner newsletters. The committee also discussed encouraging partner organizations to share approved Employment First messaging through their existing social media platforms.

Action Items

The committee identified the following action items:

- KYOVR Administrator Nanci Howard will verify the employment percentage statistics with Council Chair Katie Wolf Whaley before submitting the newsletter insert.
- Nanci Howard will submit the first newsletter insert to Cabinet Communications for review and approval after the employment statistics have been confirmed.

- Nanci Howard will coordinate with Transition Committee Chair Tal Curry to obtain the Transition Committee's existing distribution contact list and share it with the committee.
- Committee Chair Amanda Owen will work with her communications staff to develop two to three image options for potential social media use and share the options with the committee for review.

Public Comments

None.

Adjournment

Employment First Committee Chair Amanda Owen thanked everyone for their contribution and adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting Date

September 4, 2026
9:00am – 10:00am – Friday (EST)