



Kentucky Employment First Council

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Andy Beshear

Governor

Jamie Link

Secretary, Education and Labor Cabinet

Advocacy and Education Committee

Minutes

November 7, 2025

9:00 am – 10:00 am (EST)

Zoom

Members Present

Committee Chair, Amanda Owen, Council Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley, Bill Bates, Tracy Belfield, Megan Kuhlwein, and Melanie Lybarger

Members Absent

David Allgood and Jeff Edwards

Staff Present

Nanci Howard, Michelle Cobb, and Anu Kumari

Welcome and Agenda Review

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

FAQ Document Update

The Employment First Council FAQ document has been formally approved and is now available on the Employment First “Resources” [webpage](#). It was announced that a new six-week Cabinet approval process has been established for all public-facing documents. Moving forward, all materials must comply with accessibility standards prior to submission for Cabinet review and approval.

Distribution of the FAQ Document(s)

The committee engaged in a comprehensive discussion regarding strategies to promote the message of Employment First through the dissemination of the FAQ document to a variety of entities, networks, and stakeholder groups.

The following potential outreach groups and platforms were identified:

- State Interagency Advisory Council (SIAC) and Regional Interagency Advisory Councils (RIACs). More information is available through the Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities at the [SIAC Website](#) and [RIAC Website](#).
- Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Conference.
- Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) and related Employment conferences available at the [Kentucky APSE Website](#).
- Kentucky Autism Training Center and other disability/advocacy social media channels.
- Family Resource and Youth Services Centers (FRYSCs) – identified as an additional group to share the FAQ and related resources.
- Transition Fairs.
- Kentucky Career Centers.
- Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Project SPARK participating districts' detailed grant and program information is available at this [KDE Competitive Grants Page](#).
- Coalition Forward and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)-based coalitions and trainings
- Kentucky Retaining Employment and Talent after Injury/Illness Network KY RETAIN / employer-focused listservs and campaigns
- Community Work Transition Program, interagency and transition councils, and similar collaborative networks
- Relevant provider, educator, family, and self-advocate networks via social media posts, email lists, conference presentations, and Employment First information tables.

It was also suggested that information be shared with Regional Education Cooperatives such as GRREC (Green River Regional Educational Cooperative) and WKEC (West Kentucky Educational Cooperative). Members are encouraged to further disseminate materials across all state cooperatives to maximize outreach and visibility.

The committee agreed to continue identifying additional dissemination opportunities and to share the FAQ document within their respective networks and stakeholder groups between committee meetings.

Action Items

FAQ & Email Templates

- Editing permissions will be updated to allow committee members to review, edit, and provide feedback prior to the next scheduled meeting.
- QR codes will be created and distributed to committee members for use in presentations and related materials. It was suggested to utilize a QR code creator to generate and track QR codes for Employment First resources.

Resource Access

- The committee will use the designated Dropbox/shared folder to store: FAQ documents, QR codes, email templates, and outreach materials.
- It was suggested to include the Dropbox link in future meeting invitations for easy access.
- It was recommended to include a QR code on the Employment First one-page flyer that links directly to the FAQ documents and other resources on the website.
- It was also suggested that the Employment First one-page flyer be repositioned at the top of the Resources page, above the FAQ documents, to enhance visibility and accessibility.
- Committee members were encouraged to maintain a running list of where and how the FAQ and related materials are shared so that dissemination activities can be accurately reflected in the Employment First Council Annual Report.

Upcoming Committee Meetings

The next committee meetings will be scheduled between the quarterly Council meetings. The committee agreed to meet in February and March, prior to the April quarterly meeting, from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST).

Public Comments

None.

Adjournment

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

Next Meeting Date

February and March 2026
9:00am – 10:00am – Friday