



Kentucky Employment First Council
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Andy Beshear
Governor

Jamie Link
Secretary, Education and Labor Cabinet

Employer Education and Engagement Committee Minutes

February 14, 2024

1:00pm – 2:00pm

Zoom

Meeting ID: 863 9806 2295

Members Present

Chair, Merry Reid Sheffer, Todd Coffey, Rebecca Wilson, and Employment First Council
Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley

Members Absent

Jessica Beaven, Zach Morgan and Dawn Gardner

Staff Present

Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (KYOVR) Administrator, Nanci Howard,
KYOVR Administrative Specialist, Pepper Caudill, KYOVR Manager, Deana Wilson-
Kimbler and KYOVR Assistant Director, Kristen Beach

Staff Absent

N/A

Guest(s) Present

KYOVR Staff, Betty Whittaker, RETAIN Kentucky, Kimberly Wickert, and Lexington VA
Medical Center, Sharelle Williams

Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review:

Administrator, Nanci Howard welcomed everyone to the meeting and screen shared the agenda with the group before turning the meeting over to Chair, Merry Reid Sheffer. Introductions were held for all attended. Nanci also provided an update of Project NEON for the group.

RETAIN Kentucky Partnership

Chair, Merry Reid Sheffer gave a recap of the three topics of interest for the Lunch N' Learn Series that the committee had previously committed to launch through partnering with RETAIN Kentucky. RETAIN Kentucky, Kimberly Wickert gave a recap of her recommendations pertaining to the three topics. The Employer Seminar Series 2024 Recharge Recommendations pdf that Kimberly had sent in a prior email was shared with the group in the chat. KYOVR Manager, Deana Wilson-Kimbler gave a recap of her plans for the topic that she will be spearheading for the series. It was decided that Merry, Deana and Kimberly would meet at a separate time to further discuss this matter. There was discussion held regarding the topic "Employment First and Competitive Integrated Employment", which is one of the three topics of interest in the partnership with RETAIN Kentucky. Guest, Katie Wolf Whaley stated she would send to Merry an HDI video depicting people with disabilities speaking, which Merry could use as part of the Lunch N' Learn Series partnership with RETAIN Kentucky. There was discussion held regarding the definition of competitive integrated employment and how it pertains to employers and the Council. It was decided that the target date of launching the first topic of the lunch N' Learn Series, through partnering with RETAIN Kentucky, would be April 2024. It was further decided that the committee would finalize any further details of this launch at their next meeting date in March 2024. Merry requested that committee members who are able, to attend the RETAIN Kentucky webinar in March 2024 in preparation for the Lunch N' Learn Series launch in April 2024. She indicated that an emailed invitation for this event would come directly from Kimberly Wickert.

New Ideas and the Strategic Plan

RETAIN Kentucky's Kimberly Wickert provided details of the lineup for the January & February 2024 webinar series. There was discussion amongst the group of which topics could be added to the RETAIN Kentucky's webinar series. It was discussed that this committee would attend the January & February 2024 RETAIN Kentucky's webinars to gain a better understanding of the process. It was also discussed that Kimberly Wickert

would review the Employer Education & Engagement Committee's proposed Lunch & Learn Series topics and make recommendations of the top three topics that would be best to collaborate with RETAIN Kentucky.

Future Areas of Focus

It was decided that Merry, Deana and Kimberly would meet at a separate time to further discuss the topic of the Lunch N' Learn Series matter.

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It was decided that the target date of launching the first topic of the lunch N' Learn Series, through partnering with RETAIN Kentucky, would be April 2024. It was further decided that the committee would finalize any further details of this launch at their next meeting date in March 2024.

Merry requested that committee members who are able, to attend the RETAIN Kentucky webinar in March 2024 in preparation for the Lunch N' Learn Series launch in April 2024. She indicated that an emailed invitation for this event would come directly from Kimberly Wickert.

Next Committee Meeting Date

Wednesday, March 13, 2024
1:00pm – 2:00pm
Zoom

Next Quarterly Meeting Date

Friday, April 12, 2024
1:00pm – 3:00pm
Hybrid Format
Location: Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
200 Mero Street
Frankfort, KY 40601