



Andy Beshear
Governor

Jamie Link
Education and Labor Cabinet Secretary

Employer Education and Engagement Committee **Minutes**

May 22, 2024
1:00pm – 2:00pm
Zoom
Meeting ID: 819 3105 9171

Members Present: Chair, Merry Reid Sheffer and Rebecca Wilson

Members Absent: Dawn Gardner, Jessica Beaven and, Todd Coffey

Staff Present: Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (KYOVR) Administrator, Nanci Howard, KYOVR Manager, Deana Wilson-Kimble, KYOVR Assistant Director, Kristen Beach

Staff Absent: KYOVR Staff Assistant, Betty Whittaker

Guest(s) Present: Project NEON Subject Matter Expert, Steve Blanks (Director of Partnerships, SEEC), KYRETAIN, Kimberly Wickert, Employment First Council Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley

Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review:

Chair, Merry Reid Sheffer, welcomed committee members and guests. Steve Blanks introduced himself to the team. Merry Reid Sheffer elaborated and reminded the committee that on Best Practice Day, Steve, was the Subject Matter Expert assigned to the Employer Education and Engagement Committee. Merry stated Steve and Council Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley, will be discussing in detail the upcoming webinar series hosted by Project NEON and the Employment First Council.

Update on KYRETAIN and Employment First Council Lunch N' Learn Series:

Committee Chair, Merry Reid Sheffer, provided an update on the Employment First Lunch N/ Learn Series. She thanked Deana Wilson-Kimble for presenting at the Lunch N' Learn Series a day prior. Kimberly Wickert from KYRETAIN praised the event and said there was 79 people register and 59 in attendance. She stated she received positive feedback. Deana Wilson-Kimble thanked Kimberly for her information and said the audience had good questions. Merry reminded committee members to look for presenters, think of topics, or make suggestions for future presentations. Kimberly Wickert stated on June 14, 2024 at the Norton Healthcare Goodwill Opportunities Center, Dr. Dennis McClain will provide a presentation entitled, "Return to Work and Stay at Work is Good Business: Keeping

Your Bottom Line Healthy". She stated she would send this information to KYOVR Administrator of the Council, Nanci Howard, and to committee members. The in-person event will be the first and will be from noon to 12:45pm. She stated it may be recorded and uploaded. She encouraged committee members to provide employers with the information. Kimberly continued to announce that on July 11, 2024, the Lunch N' Learn series will be virtual once again and Bev Harp will be discussing innovative strategies to hire and retain individuals with autism. She then said she would reach out to Merry's colleague to present at the series. Merry stated she will send connecting email to the two. Emails with suggestions from committee members can be sent to Kimberly.

Collaboration with Project NEON, Steve Blanks Update:

Project NEON (National Expansion on Employment Opportunities) Subject Matter Expert, Steve Blanks provided background information about the upcoming webinar series and explained the series is getting back to the basics surrounding employer engagement. He provided a presentation to the committee explaining the details of the webinar. The dates of the webinar series are June 20th, July 18th, and August 15th from 10:00am – 12:00pm. The series will be interactive with videos and polls, etc. KYOVR, Employer Services Branch Manager, Deana Wilson-Kimble suggested developing a 'fact sheet' to leave with employers after a meeting as she has been asked for this before during her interactions with employers. Steve agreed this would be a good resource for employers. Council Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley, explained this event meets the charge of Council and UKHDI will be the host of the series. Brandon Cannada will be the host of the event for June and August. An alternative host will be asked to conduct the July webinar. She explained how people should register and asked Steve if the webinar series could be recorded and posted. He agreed. She explained there will be a certificate of completion for the series given to all attendees. Katie said she sent a save the date to over 800+ emails and posted on social. She said the focus is to have Kentucky Providers to attend and how they can talk to employers. Merry Reid agreed to welcome attendees during the series. Katie asked if there was a logo for Project NEON. Steve Blanks is unsure of there is a logo for Project NEON but will check with Karen Lee. Katie forwarded the description of the sessions to the committee members via email.

One Page Discussion:

Discussion was held regarding the development of a one-page informational flyer to employers. Council Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley asked if the committee's one page idea was different than the one-page Employment First flyer that has already been approved by the Council in 2022. She sent the document in the chat. Steve Blanks agreed the approved flyer looked well. Discussion was held on how to get the flyer in the hands of others since it had been shared multiple times with the Council. Extensive discussion was held regarding the approved document. Nanci will send the Employment First one-page document to the Chairs of the Council to distribute to their committees. Steve Blanks suggested giving the resource out during the webinar series.

Next Meeting Date:

Employer Education & Engagement Committee:

Wednesday, June 12, 2024

1:00pm – 2:00pm EST

[Zoom Link](#)

Employment First Council:

Friday, July 12, 2024

1:00pm – 3:00pm EST

[Zoom Link](#)

Hybrid Format

Location: Transportation Cabinet
200 Mero Street
Conference Room C107
Frankfort, KY 40622

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