

# Employment First in Kentucky

It is the policy of the Commonwealth of Kentucky that competitive integrated employment shall be considered the first and primary option for persons with disabilities of working age who desire to become employed.

Kentucky's Employment First Policy was signed into law on March 24, 2022.

## What it Means

Employment in the general workforce should be the first and preferred option for individuals with disabilities receiving assistance from publicly-funded systems.

## Why it Matters

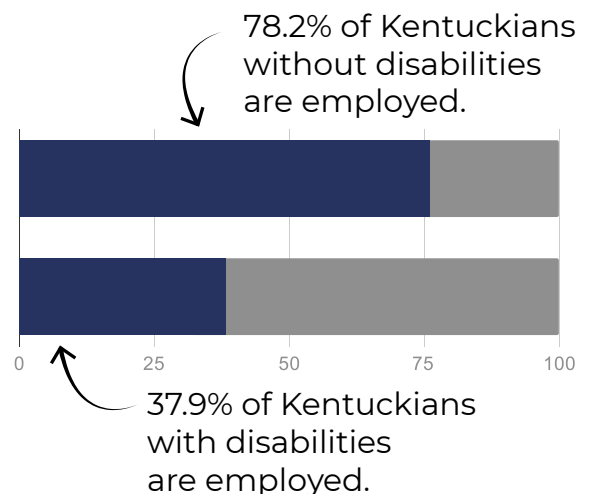
Kentucky has among the highest rate of people with disabilities in the nation and among the lowest rate of people with disabilities who are employed.\*

This 40.3% gap ranks Kentucky for 48<sup>th</sup> in the nation.

## What it Will Do

Employment First will help to:

- Build an inclusive workforce
- Strengthen Kentucky's economy
- Improve the quality of life for citizens with disabilities across the Commonwealth



## Kentucky's Employment First Council

The Employment First Council advises the executive and legislative branches of government on increasing meaningful opportunities for competitive integrated employment for citizens with a disability seeking employment, regardless of their level of disability. The twenty-eight-member Council is appointed by the Governor.

For more information about Kentucky's Employment First Council, contact: [Nanci.Howard@ky.gov](mailto:Nanci.Howard@ky.gov).

## What You Can Do



**Employers** should consider how Employment First policy impacts employee recruitment, development, advancement, and retention.



**People with Disabilities** should consider how Employment First policy can help advance their employment goals and inform the services they need.



**State Policy Makers** should consider how implementation of Employment First informs and advances workforce development plans, policies, and other related efforts.



**Schools** should consider how Employment First policy impacts the development and implementation of Individual Education Program (IEP) postsecondary employment goals for students with disabilities.



**Disability Service Providers** should consider how Employment First policy impacts the provision of goal setting and service delivery.

## Resources

For more information on Employment First, visit: [kcc.ky.gov/Vocational-Rehabilitation/boards-and-councils/Employment-First/Employment-First-Council](https://kcc.ky.gov/Vocational-Rehabilitation/boards-and-councils/Employment-First/Employment-First-Council)

For more information on Competitive Integrated Employment visit <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/program-areas/cie>

Scan the QR code to the right to view a digital version of this document.



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\*Source: 2024 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium