



Andy Beshear
Governor

Jamie Link
Education and Labor Cabinet Secretary

Provider Capacity Committee

Minutes
September 9th, 2025
2:00pm – 3:00pm (EST)

Attendees:

Jeff White, Zac Sappenfield, Lisa Carrico, Stephanie Miller, Cathy Anderson, Amanda Owen, Todd Coffey, and Ron O'Hair.

Staff Attendees:

Nanci Howard, Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Administrator, and Anu Kumari, Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Administrative Specialist Senior.

Members Absent:

Staci Cain, Cora McNabb, Leslie Hoffmann, Annette Jett, Katie Wolf Whaley, Shelly Durbin, Melissa Marvel, Todd Coffey, Amanda Hutchison, and Lori Norton.

Welcome:

Employment First Committee Chair, Jeff White welcomed everyone to the meeting. The agenda was reviewed by all participants.

Exploration of Potential Funding Sources and Training:

Employment First Committee Chair Jeff White emphasized the need to improve provider awareness of available funding for employment services. Training geared towards providers was discussed among the committee and specifics of the training are still in review. The webinar may be offered as a single webinar or a series of two to three sessions with earliest timeframe projected for October 2025 or November 2025, pending accessibility.

All webinars will be recorded and made available on the Employment First page for later viewing.

Key Highlights:

Becoming an Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Vendor – CRP Branch, OVR

The Committee noted the need to gather more information on supported employment operations both through providers and directly through Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (KYOVR), along with the involvement of WIOA's America's Job Centers Program. Ron O'Hair will assist in collecting this information for a provider training series.

Obtain Certificate as a 1915 (C) Waiver Provider

Lisa Elstun, from the Department of Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities' (DDID) Provider Development Team, has agreed to prepare materials and present on how to become a 1915(c) certified waiver provider. Her presentation will cover the full certification process, including guidance for providers already certified under the waiver on adding supported employment if not currently approved.

Seeking Funding through State General Funds

It was highlighted that David Wheeler provided an overview at the last committee meeting, and either he or a regional liaison from the DDID Community Supports Team will participate in the webinar to cover this topic in greater detail.

Become a I-RISE Provider

It was noted that becoming an I-RISE employment provider requires Individual Placement Supports (IPS) certification, though funding for new IPS providers

may be limited. Other I-RISE services under the I Waiver remain available to support employment, and providers are prepared to deliver them. A representative from the I-RISE team, coordinated through the Department for Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities – Behavioral Health, will present on these services during the webinar.

Become an employment network (Ticket to Work)

Donna Osburn, KYOVR Staff, has agreed to provide information and participate in developing partnerships with local school districts, including projects and related initiatives. Contact has also been made with Veronica Dale, also KYOVR staff, to contribute information as well.

Develop a relationship with local school districts

- a) Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)
- b) Supported/Customized employment
- c) Project search or other school-to-work partnership

Applying for funding through Special AD Valorem (Mental Health/ intellectual disabilities) Tax Districts.

The Committee is exploring funding through special ad valorem tax districts in Kenton, Campbell, and Boone Counties. These districts levy taxes to support services for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

Seek funding through grants and philanthropy- United Way/Private Foundation/Corporate Sponsorship

The Committee is currently exploring potential funding opportunities through Ransom Philanthropy. While specific contacts have not yet been identified, the Committee is aware of organizations in Northern Kentucky that are receiving significant support from United Way and will be reaching out to them for guidance and potential connections.

The Committee encourages members to share any additional leads or connections that may support this effort.

Develop a fee schedule for private pay service

It was highlighted that Down Syndrome Louisville has experience supporting families whose members are not on Medicaid but still need long-term or monitored supports. They have indicated this approach is feasible.

Utilizing Able Account to fund employment Services

The Committee is exploring the use of ABLE accounts to fund employment services, an approach that has been successful in other states. ABLE accounts allow families to contribute up to \$19,000 annually for eligible expenses, including supported employment. If an agency has a private pay fee schedule, services could be funded directly through these accounts.

Building strong Employer Relationship

The Committee is focusing on building stronger employer relationships. In some states, employers directly pay providers to recruit talent on their behalf. Kitty Zachary with Coalition Forward will share information on employer partnerships and Zoom Group will provide examples of their work with UPS, among others.

Initiate your own fund development opportunity

The Committee is exploring opportunities for organizations to establish their own funding development programs. Down Syndrome Louisville provides a strong model through giving campaigns, and Amanda Owen, Advocacy and Education Committee Chair and Founder/Executive Director of Puzzle Pieces, will be invited to share her expertise in hosting successful special events.

Committee Question and Answer

Are we still under Order of Selection?

Answer: Yes.

How is this process expected to proceed?

Answer: It will be evaluated at the end of October or the beginning of November after the close of the federal fiscal year. At that point, the agency will determine whether individuals can begin being pulled from the waiting list.

Did RSA accept the priority definitions?

Answer: Yes, RSA has accepted the priority definitions.

How many people are currently on the waiting list?

As of August 27, 2025, there were approximately 2,710 individuals on the waiting list.

Will services at will be available soon?

No. Services will not be available freely for some time. The rate of pulling from the waitlist will depend on the fiscal picture at the end of October/November.

What should providers share with families if misinformation is being circulated?

Answer: The official source is the agency's [website](#). Any information shared must align with what is published there.

Can Pre-ETS still be accessed while under order of selection?

Answer: Yes. Pre-ETS can be provided under "potentially eligible" status without requiring a full eligibility determination or plan.

If students have waiver funding, can they still access supported employment?

Answer: Yes. Waiver funding can be used immediately for supported employment if the person is a waiver member and ready to pursue employment. Families often drive the decision of readiness, particularly for minors.

Memorandum of Understanding for Supported Employment

Committee Chair, Jeff White, mentioned that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is in the works between the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), the Department of Medicaid Services (DMS), and the Division of Adult Guardianship within the Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

As funds are available, time-limited Supported Employment services can be provided, including person-centered job selection, under the following conditions:

Person-centered Job Selection when:

- It is documented that the services are unavailable utilizing OVR funding; or
- Until the Participant makes a timely application for OVR Services and is determined to be eligible

Job Development, when:

- It is documented that the services are unavailable utilizing OVR funding.
- Until the participant makes a timely application for OVR Services and an individual plan for employment is developed.

Outcome Measurement and Career Advancement

- Agencies will jointly track and report
- Number of individuals achieving Competitive Integrated Employment
- Duration of employment sustained
- Use and continuity of services
- Engage in annual review and quality improvement activities.

Discussion regarding Medicaid Buy-In

Discussion was held regarding Kentucky's Medicaid Buy-In program and barriers related to Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) level and Medicaid eligibility.

Efforts are ongoing to pursue structural changes to address these limitations.

Recap of Project NEON work

It was discussed that, due to time constraints, the Project NEON initiative could not be completed this year despite initial planning and data gathering with subject matter expert Michael Dalto. If the initiative continues next year, efforts will need to focus on ensuring the Medicaid Buy-In is properly structured and recognized as a qualifying form of Medicaid for waiver participation. Significant progress has been made in the area of Customized Employment, with KYOVR staff, council members, and subject matter experts from Project NEON reporting positive outcomes.

2025 Annual Report Recommendations

KYOVR Administrator Nanci Howard provided an overview of ongoing Annual Report activities, noting that work is actively underway. She stated that a draft will be presented to the Employment First Executive Committee this Friday, with the full Council expected to receive a draft for review in October. Ms. Howard emphasized that the report would highlight the activities and contributions of all committee members and expressed her appreciation for their continued support in its preparation.

Additional Discussion:

Employment First Council Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley, shared with committee members a [link](#) to the "*Modifications to the Regulations Implementing Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended; Extension of Comment Period*". The public comment period will conclude on September 17, 2025."

Public Comment:

No public comment addressed.

Adjournment:

Chair Jeff White thanked everyone for their contribution and adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting

Date: November 11, 2025

Time: 2:00pm to 3:00pm (EST)

Administrator: Nanci Howard

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