



Kentucky Employment First Council

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Employment First Council Provider Capacity Committee Meeting Minutes

November 13, 2025
2:00pm – 3:00pm (EST)
Zoom
Meeting ID: 828 8151 1983

Members Present

Committee Chair, Jeff White, Zac Sappenfield, Lisa Carrico, Cathy Anderson, and Amanda Hutchinson

Members Absent

Cora McNabb, Leslie Hoffmann, Council Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley, Shelly Durbin, Melissa Marvel, Lori Norton, and Stephanie Miller

Staff Present

Ron O'Hair, Nanci Howard, and Anu Kumari

Staff Absent

None

Guest(s) Present

None

Welcome | Agenda Review

Employment First Committee Chair Jeff White welcomed attendees. The agenda was reviewed and acknowledged by all participants.

Update on Annual Report

The annual report has been submitted and is progressing through the review and approval process.

Update on Potential Funding Sources Webinars

The committee discussed the development of a two-part webinar series intended to support providers in expanding their funding base.

Purpose of the Webinars

To educate providers on the existence of practical, actionable ways to expand employment service revenue across multiple funding sources in an effort inform and provide a path to obtain additional information.

Webinar, Part One: Expanding Service Fee Income

The committee reviewed multiple strategies for enhancing service-related revenue.

Becoming an Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Vendor

- To educate providers on the OVR vendor approval process as well as services beyond traditional supported employment that could provide increased income potential.

Obtaining Certification as a Waiver Provider

- To assist providers with the waiver certification process and ensure they understand the path to waiver certification as well as the other potential income producing opportunities certification might make available.

Utilizing State General Funds

- To educate providers how to pursue the use of state general funds as a source of employment service funding for those with no other options.

Supporting Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Services

- To educate providers on the use of alternative funding streams to support IPS services, potentially including i-RISE.

Ticket to Work Revenue

- Highlight the availability of Ticket to Work milestones that remain after the OVR service delivery mandate has been met and services closed; and providing basic information on how to access those milestone payments.

Building Relationships with Local School Districts

- Veronica Dale will present information regarding potential opportunities to partner with school districts to enhance early employment exposure and improve transition outcomes for youth.

Developing Private-Pay Fee Schedules

- A discussion of the opportunity to establish and promote private-pay models to support individuals not having access to alternative funding sources, in a manner that does not violate Medicaid requirements.

Use of ABLE/STABLE Accounts

- Carolyn Wheeler will present information regarding how ABLE funds may be used legitimately to pay for employment supports; and lead a discussion on the role provider agencies/CRP's could play in sharing appropriate information with consumers and their families.

Webinar, Part Two: Expanding Income through Fund Development Strategies

A second webinar will address broader fund development strategies for organizations seeking to expand philanthropic revenue.

Potential Topics include:

- Community fundraising events.
- Recurring donation programs.
- Working with private foundations.
- Grant-writing approaches and capacity development.
- Long-term planned giving (wills and/or trusts).
- Consideration that nonprofit status may be required for some activities.

Participation for part two may be a smaller segment.

Webinar Target Duration:

- Part One: approximately 1½ hours
- Part Two: likely shorter, depending on content and speakers

Communications and Approval Process:

The Administrator will consult with the OVR Leadership:

- Confirm the correct and approved PowerPoint template for the webinars

- Verify the process for submitting materials for approval

Our goal is to work with segment presenters and the Provider Capacity Committee to finalize the content of the slide deck for the Part I webinar, and identify an appropriate date for the event, by early December.

Upcoming Waiver Employment Survey

To establish a baseline in preparation for potential participation in the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN), a statewide provider employment survey is proposed.

Key Data Points to Be Collected:

- Consumer initials
- Waiver type
- Work status:
 - *Not interested in work.*
 - *Wants to work.*
 - *Receiving supported employment to find a job.*
- Average weekly hours and wages will be collected across four categories:
 - *Workshop/day training (piece-rate converted to estimated hourly rate).*
 - *Group or enclave work.*
 - *Employment without funded employment supports.*
 - *Supported employment through either (OVR/waiver-funded).*

A working age definition of 14 to 67 was proposed, aligning with Kentucky labor law and Social Security criteria.

SELN Membership Discussion

An overview of DDID/Behavioral Health's interest in pursuing membership in SELN was discussed.

Key Points:

- SELN is a national initiative under the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services; approximately 28 states participate.
- Benefits of membership include:
 - A standardized national data collection protocol.
 - Access to cross-state employment comparisons.

- Technical assistance and shared strategies to improve employment outcomes.
- Ability to include partner agencies such as:
 - Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
 - University of Kentucky Human Development Institute (HDI)
 - CCDD
 - Protection & Advocacy

Funding

DDID has identified potential funding to support Kentucky's participation and partner agencies would not incur additional costs.

Kentucky Transportation Policy

The committee discussed Kentucky's transportation policy:

- Saturday transportation for day training is eligible for Medicaid non-emergency transportation.
- Saturday transportation for supported employment is not eligible.

The committee agreed that this inconsistency should be addressed in the next statewide transportation planning cycle.

2026 Meeting Dates

The committee agreed to convene twice between quarterly Council meetings. The Council Administrator will schedule 2026 meeting dates on behalf of the committee.

Public Comments

None

Adjournment

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

Next meeting

2026 dates TBD (to be determined)