

To: All DHS Staff, Partners and Stakeholders
From: DHS Director Erinn Kelley-Siel
Re: Executive Order from Governor Kitzhaber on Implementation of Employment First

Dear OED and DHS staff:

Today, I am releasing an Executive Order that affirms our statewide commitment to offering integrated employment services to people with Intellectual and/or Development Disabilities. This is the latest step in our longstanding policy efforts to promote fair and equitable work for all Oregonians. Further, it reinforces the goals behind recommendations in my 2013-2015 budget that include investments in integrated employment services. This Executive Order will provide operational direction for all state agencies. I am also announcing the appointment of the first Statewide Employment Coordinator for people with I/DD. Mike Maley will serve the state in this role, reporting to DHS Director Erinn Kelley-Siel, and helping to implement the directives outlined in the Executive Order. Thank you for all your hard work on behalf of all Oregonians.

Sincerely,
John A. Kitzhaber, M.D.
Governor

Today's Executive Order by Governor Kitzhaber is the next step in Oregon's ongoing commitment to integrated employment for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and aligns with work already underway to implement Oregon's Employment First policy. The Executive Order is posted online at: http://www.oregon.gov/gov/docs/executive_orders/eo_13-04.pdf

Oregon is a leader in providing supported employment services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in community residential settings and has set an example for other states by demonstrating its express commitment to the benefits of transitioning individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities into integrated, community residential settings.

As the Governor said in his message above, I have appointed Mike Maley today as the statewide Employment First Coordinator to oversee and coordinate the Department's employment services program for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In his new role, Mike will report directly to me and be responsible for implementation of Oregon's Employment First policy, including all activities required by the Governor's Executive Order.

He will be working with designated Office of Developmental Disabilities, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Oregon Department of Education staff to advance specific strategies to expand access to supported employment services, including all necessary planning and policy changes, training and technical assistance for providers, expansion of service capacity and development of quality assurance mechanisms, such as a centralized data system and monitoring.

He will also work with the Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction, Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities, State Rehabilitation Council, State Independent Living Council, legislators and stakeholders to create a policy advisory group to make recommendations to the Governor and other officials about the implementation of Oregon's Employment First policy, including recommendations on metrics designed to monitor performance.

In order to realize the vision of the Executive Order, the state will partner with a variety of stakeholders to develop a plan for successful implementation, and a major part of this plan will include statewide outreach and conversation with key partners.

The implementation plan will include:

- Developing strong inter-agency coordination between the Department of Education, the Department of Human Services and Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities to promote the development of coordinated policies and practices that are grounded in the expectations of Employment First.
- Developing strong coordination with the disability and workforce systems to ensure they leverage their efforts to benefit employers and job seekers with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We will work with these systems to create more opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities.

- Strengthening training to assist providers in developing the skills to make the shift from sheltered to competitive employment. Focusing on efforts to build needed capacity, we will work to assist providers of sheltered workshops to transform operations toward integrated employment and develop local Employment First Leadership teams in Oregon communities.
- Providing local communities with the resources and tools to make Employment First successful, through training and other technical assistance activities.
- Improving key infrastructure systems such as data collection, service rate structures and quality assurance activities.

I will provide additional information on this important work as the implementation of Oregon's Employment First policy continues to move forward.

~ Erinn