

EMPLOYMENT FIRST ACT OF 2018

INTERAGENCY PRIORITIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

JANUARY 2020
UPDATES & PROGRESS



Progress & Updates to the Initial Interagency Priorities and Recommendations for Employment First Act Implementation

Act 36 of 2018, the Employment First Act, required the Office of the Governor to submit an initial three-year plan to the General Assembly, outlining specific policies and strategies commonwealth state agencies will adopt to implement the Employment First Act and ensure individuals with disabilities have the opportunity to achieve economic independence through competitive integrated employment.

The Office of the Governor, in collaboration with the Governor's Cabinet for People with Disabilities, developed this initial three-year plan, which outlines the commonwealth's policy recommendations to implement the Employment First Act and identifies the lead state entity charged with implementing each recommendation. In most cases, the recommendations in this initial plan will be implemented through inter-agency partnerships and in collaboration with Employment First stakeholders.

Act 36 of 2018 also requires the Office of the Governor to submit an annual report to the General Assembly every year by January 30. This first annual report, builds on the initial three-year plan to include specific, measurable performance indicators and the implementation status of each policy recommendation. This information is based on the actions taken in the last six months since the publishing of the three-year plan by the various agencies identified as state leads in the original plan. These indicators are informed by the feedback and priorities of the Employment First Oversight Commission, and the measurable goals and objectives the commission published in its first annual report from October 1, 2019.

The Wolf Administration has made substantial progress collaborating with the Employment First Oversight Commission and other stakeholders to further develop this comprehensive plan to advance Employment First across the commonwealth and improve employment outcomes for Pennsylvanians with disabilities.

I. **Priority: Review, identify, and change policy and practice to align with the letter and the spirit of the Employment First Act of 2018.**

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Status Update	Indicators (if applicable)
<p>Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement</p> <p>Pennsylvania’s Employment First efforts have been shaped by the perspectives, expertise, and input of diverse stakeholders, and meaningful stakeholder engagement should continue to inform implementation efforts. Agencies at the state and local levels will actively seek feedback and ideas from partners representing a variety of sectors and backgrounds, and will prioritize the inclusion of individuals with disabilities within these discussions.</p> <p>The Governor’s Office will have collected input from the Employment First Oversight Commission regarding the development of this initial three-year implementation plan by June 2019.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor’s Office of Intergovernmental Affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of Governor Tom Wolf continues to engage the Employment First Oversight Commission as well as the Employment First Cabinet to elevate this initiative. • In December of 2019, the Governor’s Office altered the leadership structure of the Employment First initiative by assigning the Governor’s Deputy Chief of Staff of Administration to oversee the progress of the cabinet and commission. • The Governor’s Office has also bolstered support for the initiative by dedicating additional staff members to support Employment First. 	

<p>2. Cross-Agency Collaboration and Coordination</p> <p>Individuals with disabilities in Pennsylvania often receive services and supports from a variety of agencies, service providers, and organizations. To ensure these efforts are effective and efficient, coordination of these cross-agency efforts is vital. As part of Employment First efforts, state agencies will continue to meet regularly and identify opportunities to improve the structure of collaboration at the state level, including memorandums of understanding, interagency workgroups, and program/policy guidance.</p> <p>The Governor’s Cabinet for People with Disabilities will identify other governmental entities (such as task forces, workgroups, boards, commissions, etc.) that should be regularly engaged to support Employment First implementation by November 2019.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor’s Office of Policy and Planning • Governor’s Office of Intergovernmental Affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of Governor Tom Wolf continues to connect the cabinet with groups such as the Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center, and has involved the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to make the full breadth of advisory commissions under the Governor’s jurisdiction available to the cabinet for information-sharing purposes. 	
<p>3. Data and Reporting</p> <p>Agencies are tasked with using data more effectively to increase competitive integrated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor’s Office of Policy and Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of Governor Tom Wolf has made significant progress in this area. All commonwealth agencies have signed onto the state’s 	

<p>employment opportunities for Pennsylvanians with disabilities.</p> <p>Agencies will use data to identify areas for improvement, establish benchmarks for accountability, and measure progress.</p> <p>In consultation with the Employment First Oversight Commission, state agencies will identify current data collection on education, training, and employment of people with disabilities in Pennsylvania, including opportunities to establish interagency data sharing agreements that better identify short- and long-term outcomes and areas for improvement.</p> <p>An interagency data sharing memorandum of understanding will be executed with all agencies by August 2020 and will serve as a basis for enhanced data analysis and reporting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor’s Office of Performance through Excellence (OPE) 	<p>interagency data sharing agreement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the fall of 2019, the data sharing agreement led the Governor’s Office to create a new role within state agencies called an Agency Data Steward. When data is requested from an agency, the data steward will facilitate the data sharing and champion the benefits of data sharing to improve customer service to Pennsylvanians. • The Governor’s Office has trainings available and has shared communication with the various agency secretaries and agency chief council personnel to facilitate this data sharing agreement. • The Governor’s Office continues to evaluate the agreement to identify short-comings or gaps in the data sharing. Once these gaps have been identified the Governor’s Office and the associated agencies will reconvene to establish any new data-sharing agreements. 	
<p>3.a. Labor Participation and Unemployment Labor & Industry should mainstream the collection and publication of labor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry’s Center for Workforce Information and Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L&I will address this recommendation in 2020. 	

<p>participation rates and unemployment rates for Pennsylvanians with a disability in commonwealth press releases and reports.</p>			
<p>3.b. Early Childhood The Office of Child Development and Early Learning should continue to collect and publish the number of children receiving early intervention services in segregated environments and non-segregated environments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Child Development and Early Learning • Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education 	<p>OCDEL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCDEL follows the US Department of Educations’ Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) reporting requirements that identifies the percent of infants and toddlers with Individualized Family Services Plans (IFSPs) who primarily receive early intervention services in the home or community-based settings and the Educational Environments for children ages 3 to 5. • OCDEL publishes data in the annual State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) report. Data for preschool Early Intervention is also reported to OSEP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of infants and toddlers receiving EI services (0 to 3) • Number of preschool children (age 3 to 5) served by EI programs, disaggregated by environment type and demographics (race/ethnicity, age, location, etc.) • Number of children with disabilities that have access to early childhood education (ECE) and receive the majority of their services in ECE and the number of children that receive the majority of their services in a specialized setting
<p>3.c. Human Services The Department of Human Services should continue to collect and publish data on all program participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services’ Offices of Long-Term Living, Developmental Programs, and 	<p>DHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data is being collected on a regular basis by OLTL, ODP, and OMHSAS, and is reviewed by executive staff. • ODP also published a Comprehensive Employment Report for Calendar Year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of individuals who have employment as a goal in their service plan • Number of individuals who are receiving employment services

<p>enrolled in any program that provides home and community-based services and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Have employment as a goal in their service plan, B. Are receiving employment services, and/or C. Are employed. D. The Department of Human Services will determine other important data that should be published, such as hours worked, nature of work, full-time or part-time status, etc. 	<p>Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services</p>	<p>2017 on October 26, 2018 and an update to that report was published on September 9, 2019. The report for FY 18-19 is currently under development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OLTL provided the Community HealthChoices managed care organizations (CHC-MCOs) a detailed ad-hoc data report regarding employment. Datasets from that report will be added to a permanent reporting template: the CHC-MCO Employment Initiative Report Dashboard, which is in development. • OMHSAS is beginning to identify the employment data sources and methods of collection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of individuals who are employed • DHS will identify other important datasets that should be published, such as hours worked, nature of work, full-time or part-time status, etc.
<p>3.d. Work-Based Learning and Paid Work Experience The Departments of Education and Labor & Industry should continue to collect and publish data on work-based learning experiences for students with disabilities, as required under Act 26 of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>Multi-Agency Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Education and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) are developing a formal data sharing agreement to track work-based learning and paid work experiences for students with disabilities. • The OVR also updated the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) to capture data on paid-work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people with disabilities who entered competitive integrated employment and had been students while OVR customers. • Number of students with disabilities and students participating in Pre-Employment Transition Services that have at least one paid

<p>2016 (Work Experiences for High School Students with Disabilities Act). Both departments should also continue to analyze and publish information related to how many students with a disability leave secondary education with at least one paid work experience and should work collaboratively with stakeholders to identify any other metrics that may be relevant for improving pathways to competitive integrated employment for young people as they transition out of the K-12 education system.</p>		<p>experiences for students with disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Education and the OVR are developing an MOU to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each agency when serving students with disabilities, including the roles and responsibilities of a Local Education Agency and OVR counselors. • Schools annually report data to PDE, which OVR then publishes as part of their Act 26 reporting. BSE uses the data to inform practices for its cyclical monitoring process. • Beginning November 2018, PDE publishes school-, district-, and state-level measures on career readiness for all students, including students with disabilities, on the Future Ready PA Index. 	<p>work experience at graduation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of students meeting or exceeding the Career Standards Benchmark. • Percent of 12th graders that demonstrate competency on an industry-recognized assessment, earn at least one industry-recognized credential, and/or complete a work-based learning experience. • Percent of 12th graders who participate in at least one rigorous course of study. • Percentage of high school graduates who have enrolled in an institution of higher education, enlisted in the military, or entered the workforce within 16 months of receiving a high school diploma. • Enrollment and success of students with disabilities in career and technical education (CTE) programs.
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<p>3.e. Vocational Rehabilitation</p> <p>The Department of Labor & Industry should collect and publish data on the number of individuals referred to the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the number determined eligible, and the number for whom competitive integrated jobs were secured or maintained. If possible, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should show the number of these individuals who were, at the time of referral, being compensated at subminimum wage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>L&I:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) continues to publish annual and quarterly data in its annual highlights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most recent data is available in OVR’s Annual Report (2019 OVR Highlights Summary available on the Department of Labor and Industry Website).
<p>3.f. Business Assistance</p> <p>The Department of Labor & Industry should collect and publish data on the number of private-sector businesses that request and receive assistance from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation with the hiring or</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>L&I:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) continues to develop a business design tool and ad-hoc reporting capability to collect and publish data on private-sector businesses that receive assistance from OVR. OVR will train staff on these new capabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of private-sector businesses that request and receive assistance from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation with the hiring or retention of a worker with a disability.

retention of a worker with a disability.			
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II. Priority: Raise expectations of employment goals for children with a disability at an early age. Work with parents, families, and publicly funded programs to continue shifting expectations towards this goal.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Status Update	Indicators (if applicable)
<p>4. Promote Integrated Settings Serving children and youth in a segregated setting early in life may instill within them and their parents that living and working in typical community-integrated settings is not an outcome they should expect as an adult.</p> <p>The Office of Child Development and Early Learning will continue to promote and encourage the provision of early intervention services for children ages 3-5 in integrated settings. The Office of Child Development and Early Learning will continue to build provider capacity to increase the number of children, compared to baseline, receiving Early Intervention services in integrated environments and reduce the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of Child Development and Early Learning Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education 	<p>OCDEL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OCDEL continues providing trainings on inclusion and has developed modules on best practices. Trainings have included awards and grants to local Early Intervention (EI) programs with the outcome to improve inclusion of children with disabilities and the social and emotional outcomes for these children. OCDEL continues to focus on reducing the number of children in specialized settings, promoting social and emotional skills and laying a foundation of inclusivity; changes have been made to professional development training, parent training, and monitoring of Early Intervention programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total number of children ages 3 to 5 receiving Preschool Early Intervention (EI) services. Number of preschool children enrolled in Preschool EI programs (ages 3 to 5) by environment type. Number and percentage of students ages 3 to 5 enrolled in Preschool EI programs by environment type, disaggregated by race/ethnicity. Measurable Goal: Reduce the number of students moving from more integrated elementary settings into more

<p>number of children receiving Early Intervention services in restrictive settings/special education classes.</p>			<p>segregated in middle and high school years.</p>
<p>5. Parent and Family Engagement Training Young adults with significant disabilities whose parents “definitely expected” them to obtain post-school work when their children are in high school are more than five times as likely to have paid, community-based employment within two years after exiting school (Carter, Austin, & Trainor, 2012). The Departments of Education, Labor & Industry and Human Services should continue collaborating to develop and provide training opportunities for parents of children with significant disabilities no later than high school for the purpose of promoting an expectation that their child will work as an adult.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation • Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education • Department of Human Services’ Office of Developmental Programs 	<p>L&I:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and the Department of Education are partnering to develop and schedule parent and family training seminars, and will conduct outreach to school districts and parent teacher organizations (PTOs). • OVR and local school district transition staff attended back to school night events to provide parents and families with information on Pre-Employment Transition Services and how to access OVR services. <p>Multi-Agency Update: DHS, L&I, and PDE progress includes enhancing parent and family engagement training to achieve the goal of promoting expectations for their children to work as an adult. These efforts include: ODP integrated the Charting the LifeCourse principles and philosophies into its service system at the state, county, and local levels by providing access to resources and trainings. An example of cross-system training includes a 5-part webinar series to be used by transition aged youth, families, and professionals. In addition, the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of trainings provided on the LifeCourse framework through the Supporting Families Initiative.

		<p>LifeCourse framework and philosophies were presented at the Secondary Transition conference, Pennsylvania Life Sharing Conference and Philadelphia Regional Conference on Developmental Disabilities in 2019.</p> <p>The PA Family Network produced a transition and waiver-specific presentation for parents and families.</p>	
<p>6. Change Requirements for Vendors Serving Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs The Department of Health will require vendors serving children with special health care needs and their families to promote the expectation that children with disabilities will work as an adult. This language will be phased into new grant agreements serving children and youth with special health care needs within the Bureau of Family Health. Vendors will be required to assist clients in identifying and linking to job readiness and employment services and supports when employment is a goal of the client.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Health’s Bureau of Family Health 	<p>DOH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Health has completed identifying programs within the Bureau of Family Health serving children and youth with special health care needs and their families. • The Department of Health is drafting language to be included into new grant agreements serving children and youth with special health. The approved language will be included in all new grant agreements serving children and youth with special health care needs and their families by March 31, 2020. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare language for new grant agreements and obtain internal approval. • Incorporate the language into all new Bureau of Family Health grant agreements serving children and youth with special health care needs. • Measure number of grant agreements that include the language annually. • Provide guidance and technical assistance to grantees in implementing grant requirements. • Monitor grantee implementation of grant requirements through quarterly reporting as well as annual grant monitoring visits. • Continue adding language to new grant agreements

			until all grants serving children and youth with special health care needs within the Bureau of Family Health include the language.
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III. Priority: Prepare young people with a disability to become working adults with a disability.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Status Update	Indicators (if applicable)
<p>7. Promoting a Vision and Culture of Employment First in Pennsylvania’s Education System</p> <p>The Department of Education should continue to work with partners to provide leadership and support that promotes a vision and culture throughout the K-12 education system that emphasizes the role of education is to help students with a disability transition into a job, not just transition out of school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Education 	<p>PDE: Progress Made, Ongoing.</p> <p>The Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) supports PDE’s Bureau of Special Education on a number of initiatives and helps increase capacity of local education agencies (LEAs) to more effectively serve students who receive special education services.</p> <p>The Pennsylvania Community on Transition is a state leadership team comprised of young adults and representatives from PDE, DOH, L&I, DHS, community-based organizations, parent and advocacy groups, and postsecondary education.</p> <p>PDE has a robust training plan for secondary transition that includes resources for students, families, and educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A website for students and parents; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of students enrolled in public K-12 schools receiving special education services. Number of students ages 6-21 receiving special education, disaggregated by type of disability, age, and educational environment. Number of students between ages of 14-21 exiting special education by reason. Regular attendance (all students vs. students with disabilities). Percent of students meeting or exceeding the Career Standards Benchmark.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual professional development for educators focused on the state Career Education and Work (CEW) Standards, career readiness indicators, and PA Employment First; and • Secondary transition coordinators at all 29 IUs who are trained to educate and support schools with implementing the CEW standards and career readiness indicators with students with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4- and 5-year high school graduation rate. • Percent of 12th graders that demonstrate competency on an industry-recognized assessment, earn at least one industry-recognized credential, and/or complete a work-based learning experience. • Percent of 12th graders who participate in at least one rigorous course of study. • Percent of high school graduates who enrolled in an institution of higher education, enlisted in the military, or entered the workforce within 16 months of graduation. • Enrollment and success of students with disabilities in CTE programs. • Number of students who have a competitive integrated job, or one lined up, on their last day of high school.
<p>8. Effective Use of Transition Funding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education's Bureau of 	<p>PDE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an ongoing effort. A pilot program has not yet been implemented, in part due to school districts not being ready 	<p>PDE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measurable goals will be identified when the pilot program is developed and

<p>The Department of Education, in collaboration with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, should implement a pilot project with select school districts to identify a statistically significant number of students with varying degrees of disabilities (i.e., severe cognitive disabilities and/or students with physical disabilities) and examine Individualized Education Program (IEP) expenditures for those students that can be used to develop and distribute recommendations for school districts outlining how to most effectively educate students with a disability to achieve competitive integrated employment outcomes.</p>	<p>Special Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>for such an effort and PDE not having the statutory authority to collect or review individual student IEPs. Instead, PDE’s Bureau of Special Education has dedicated funding to building awareness of the importance of integrated employment outcomes, with the goal of revisiting the pilot at a future date.</p> <p>L&I:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) revised the definitions and provider guidance for Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) to align with clarified guidance from the U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) provided through a continuum of service options by OVR staff and community rehabilitation providers in collaboration with state and local education agencies to students with disabilities who need those services to achieve competitive integrated employment and are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services. • OVR and the Department of Education (PDE) are finalizing a MOU to collect and share data on students with disabilities by school district, and summarize the results in a report. 	<p>implemented.</p> <p>L&I:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most recent data is available in OVR and PDE’s report.
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<p>9. Paid Work Experience One of the best predictors of whether students with a disability will work as adults is if they get at least one paid work experience before they leave high school. PDE should develop and promote policies to encourage local educational agencies to increase paid work experiences for students with a disability before leaving high school. As indicated in Executive Order 2016- 03, this is something that should be measured to determine whether progress is being made when implementing Employment First.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>PDE: Progress Made, Ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OVR offers a variety of work-based learning services throughout the year, including the Youth Onsite Learning Opportunities Academy at Camp Kon-O-Kwee Spencer, the MY Work Initiative in Pittsburgh, the SWEEP Program, etc., that allow hundreds of students with disabilities to participate in paid, work-based learning experiences. • PDE also encourages school districts to partner with OVR to connect students with paid, work-based learning. BSE hosted a webinar to share the core tenants of legislation and policy specific to secondary transition including: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004), Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services Final Rule (CMS Final Rule), Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act & Section 511 (WIOA), Act 26 of Pennsylvania, and PA 339 (Comprehensive Guidance Plan). The webinar also emphasized the need for LEAs to promote work experiences for students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of students who have had at least one paid work experience before their last day in high school. • Number and percentage of students with a disability who transition from secondary education to adult life with a competitive, integrated job or an integrated postsecondary education or training opportunity. • Number of job referrals made to employers on behalf of students with disabilities while still in high school. • Number of high school students with disabilities working in part-time or summer jobs as a result of referrals made by OVR staff. • Number of high school students with disabilities working in part-time or summer jobs who are receiving job coaching services. • Number of people with
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			<p>disabilities who entered competitive integrated employment and had been students while OVR customers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percent of students meeting or exceeding the Career Standards Benchmark.• Percent of 12th graders that demonstrate competency on an industry-recognized assessment, earn at least one industry-recognized credential, and/or complete a work-based learning experience.• Percent of 12th graders who participate in at least one rigorous course of study.• Percent of high school graduates who have enrolled in an institution of higher education, enlisted in the military, or entered the workforce within 16 months of graduating.• Enrollment and success of students with disabilities in CTE programs.
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measurable Goal: Each year, the Commonwealth will steadily increase access to competitive integrated employment for high school students with disabilities with funding and/or support from either OVR or PDE. This can be in the form of a WBLE experience or a job with coaching and/other supports. First year goal 1,500 students; Second year goal ,2000 students; third year goal 2,500 students.
<p>10. Self-Advocacy To increase students’ confidence, independence, and self-advocacy skills, which can translate into greater chances of success in employment, the Department of Education should promote strategies to materially increase the number of students who lead their own IEP meetings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education 	<p>PDE: Progress Made, Ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDE’s Bureau of Special Education designed a five-part webinar series to help individuals with disabilities think about self-advocacy experiences needed to move ahead in life. Throughout the series, a cross-agency panel, including representatives from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), Office of Developmental Programs (ODP), Pennsylvania Youth Leadership Network (PYLN), and PaTTAN, provided information on what IEP teams and students need to know and do to set a vision for a meaningful life, how to find or develop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of students engaged in training and technical assistance efforts. Measurable goal: Number of students reported to lead their own IEP meetings by district/county. Measurable Goal: Year of Age 14-21 measure number. Measurable Goal: At least one year before graduation, all students will meaningfully

		<p>supports, and discover what it takes for students to live the lives they want to live. More than 50 youths with disabilities attended each session.</p>	<p>participate and self-advocate in their own IEP meeting and identify and if they choose, disclose their disability identify (if necessary) what types of accommodations they need to be successful in a job.</p>
<p>11. Professional Training The Department of Education should continue to implement and increase participation in specialized training for special education teachers and transition coordinators to improve competitive integrated employment outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education 	<p>PDE: Progress Made, Ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDE annually offers professional development for educators on the CEW academic standards, career readiness indicators, and <u>PA Employment First</u> as well as state and federal laws related to employment of students with disabilities. Secondary transition coordinators have been trained at all 29 IUs to educate and support schools with implementing PA's Career Education and Work Standards and career readiness indicators with students with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See OVR insert on LEA potential use of no-cost CTI+ underwritten by U.S. Dept. of Ed., OSERS, RSA as an online career exploration and job planning tool. Number of educators participating in professional development and training. Percent of students meeting or exceeding the Career Standards Benchmark. 4- and 5- year high school graduation rate Percent of 12th graders that demonstrate competency on an industry-recognized assessment, earn at least one industry-recognized credential, and/or complete a work-based learning experience. Percent of 12th graders who participate in at least one rigorous course of study.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of high school graduates who have enrolled in an institution of higher education, enlisted in the military, or entered the workforce within 16 months of graduation. Enrollment and success of students with disabilities in CTE programs.
<p>12. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Participation The Department of Education, in collaboration with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, should continue to identify and reduce barriers that exist for vocational rehabilitation counselors to increase the frequency and consistency of participation in students' IEP meetings by vocational rehabilitation counselors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>PDE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OVR tracks IEP meeting attendance quarterly through Act 26. OVR is also working on a project with cyber schools to track and improve cyber school IEP attendance. BSE created written guidance through the annotated version of the IEP to assist LEAs in following procedures for inviting agencies, such as OVR, to IEP meetings for students with disabilities. These forms are posted on the website and are widely used. In addition, nearly 100 LEAs receive technical assistance from PaTTAN and Intermediate Units (IUs) related to agency involvement for IEP planning purposes. <p>L&I:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to work on compliance with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OVR will report annual participation as required under PA Act 26 on SwD IEP and 504 meetings when invited by the LEA with guardian and student written consent. Further indicators include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of IEP meetings attended by OVR staff Number of IEPs that include new or significantly modified goals and steps toward competitive integrated employment Number of IEP meetings attended by OVR staff Number of IEPs that include new or significantly modified goals and steps toward competitive integrated employment

		<p>Act 26 of 2018 known as the Employment First Act, including publishing quarterly performance reports on.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number and percentage of all IEP meetings for transition-age students in which an OVR counselors participated. Disaggregated by school district and OVR district office and disaggregated by age of student.
<p>13. Decrease Reliance on Sheltered Employment The Department of Education and partner agencies should exhibit leadership to train school personnel and families of students with a disability about the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act, which prohibits local educational agencies from contracting with entities whose work is compensated at subminimum wage. Personnel should also be trained on the impact the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' 2014 home and community-based services rule which prohibits adult waiver funding from being used to pay for services that tend to isolate and segregate people with a disability from the community of people without disabilities. Public education funding should</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Department of Human Services' Office of Developmental Programs 	<p>Multi-Agency Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHS partners with OVR and PDE to produce ongoing trainings and webinars that promote competitive integrated employment as the first consideration and preferred outcome for individuals with disabilities. ODP implemented a policy change to all providers of Community Participation Supports, including those serving individuals in licensed settings where individuals receive subminimum wages. Beginning July 1, 2019, this policy change requires that a participant may not receive those services in a licensed setting for more than 75 percent of their support time, on average, per month. In addition, the provider must offer each participant with opportunities to spend time in the community that are consistent with each participant's preferences, choices, and interests. This policy change promotes increased community participation in alignment with ODP's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of trainings held for school districts on WIOA requirements and CMS requirements. Number of attendees disaggregated by school district.

<p>promote educational programming that leads to competitive integrated employment and reduces the use of, and reliance on, segregated educational programming. The Department of Education should monitor progress in moving away from non-integrated, segregated educational services and programming in IEPs of students with disabilities toward goals and strategies that promote (1) paid work experiences while a student is still in school and (2) transition to post-secondary competitive integrated employment.</p> <p>The Department of Education may monitor progress by conducting a survey of a sample of special education teachers to understand the progress being made. Periodic findings and annual progress reports should be submitted to the Governor’s Office for review.</p>		<p>Everyday Lives philosophy and aligns with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Final Rule.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition, PDE-BSE regularly reviews federal and state laws impacting secondary transition (IDEA, PA Ch. 339, HCBS Rule, WIOA Section 511, etc.) and provides updates to the field. • The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), Department of Human Services, and county subminimum wage Work Activity Center programs are developing a data sharing agreement to track all competitive integrated employment (CIE) outcomes for individuals who receive 511 services from OVR. 	
<p>14. Increase Pre-Employment Skill Development When students are prepared with skills and competencies that increase the likelihood of success on the job or success in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education • Department of Labor & Industry’s 	<p>Multi-Agency Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OVR offers these services through our Early Reach Programs. In addition, the PDE Bureau of Special Education reviews and provides updates to educators on federal and state laws impacting secondary transition through PaTTAN, including IDEA, PA 	

<p>postsecondary education programs that lead to a job, they are more likely to succeed in competitive integrated employment as an adult. The Department of Education, in collaboration with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, should ensure that transition plans in IEPs exist by age 14, and that they include meaningful pre-employment services such as self-advocacy skills, public transportation and travel skills, assistive technology assessments and training, organizational skills, personal presentation and hygiene competencies, and note-taking skills.</p>	<p>Office of Vocational Rehabilitation</p>	<p>Chapter 339 regulations, HCBS rule, WIOA Section 511, etc. PDE also offers professional development annually for educators on the Career Education and Work Standards, career readiness indicators, and PA Employment First.</p> <p>L&I:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department of Education and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation are developing a data sharing agreement with school districts to track statewide disaggregated data on students with disabilities and are partnering to advocate for school districts to implement the transition plan competencies for students with disabilities. 	
<p>15. Discovery and Customized Employment Discovery is a process that identifies the unique contributions offered by people who, due to the impact of their disabilities, might not compete for jobs as well as others. Customized employment is the process of matching the abilities of an individual with the needs of a business, instead of following the traditional method of hiring people and expecting them to perform job tasks predetermined</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>PDE: Progress Made, Ongoing. The Department of Education Bureau of Special Education (BSE), through PaTTAN, provided three trainings for school leaders about the use of Discovery, Customized Employment, and Systematic Instruction as vocational tools for youth with significant impact of disability.</p> <p>PDE BSE and PaTTAN made video resources available for student support teams, including a session titled “Daring to Dream: Using Discovery in Transition Planning for Students with Dual Sensory Impairment and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of participants engaged in trainings, disaggregated by demographics and participant type (i.e., educators, parents/family members, etc.). Measure: Number of customized jobs created annually. Number of businesses educated about the potential for success with

<p>in a standard job description. Instead, customized employment enables a worker to emphasize their abilities and interests, thereby increasing the likelihood that they will succeed, while at the same time enabling the business to increase productivity by having the work completed effectively. The Department of Education should promote knowledge and awareness of discovery and customized employment services for IEP team members, including parents, special education professionals, and transition coordinators, to utilize in the development and implementation of IEPs.</p>		<p>other Complex Support Needs” video recorded at a fall 2018 statewide conference. This session highlighted using Discovery to build student transition plans with the outcome goal of customized employment upon graduation and highlighted what to look for as the essential elements of Discovery and Customized Employment.</p> <p>The Department of Education and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation are developing a joint training and presentation materials on customized employment for students with disabilities, parents, and families.</p>	<p>customized employment model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment: OVR will need to need to track and count by occurrence any contacts with businesses by OVR staff on SE or CE models. Presumably these are conversations during job development and discovery phases. CRP agencies may be the primary contacts with employers. OVR may need to add a data reporting requirement of SE or CE vendors to track all business contacts in order to measure this.
<p>16. Expand Summer Initiatives</p> <p>Over the last decade, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation’s Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services has worked with a growing team of partners, including the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network, Salus University, and Penn State University, in providing high school students and recent graduates with a sample of university life; including a packed curriculum of orientation and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>PDE: Progress Made, Ongoing.</p> <p>In response to recommendations in the 2016 interagency report, OVR and PDE-BSE developed and launched the Junior Summer Academy for students in grades 6-8 who are blind or visually impaired.</p> <p>OVR offers and administers four on-campus summer academy programs for students in grades 9-12, who are transitioning to college, and a junior summer academy for students in grades 6-8, who are blind or visually impaired. Numerous summer initiatives in district offices statewide are tailored to meet students’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Junior Summer Academy participants.

<p>mobility, vocational preparation, post-secondary preparation activities, independent daily living activities, assistive technology skill development, adapted recreational activities, and exposure to the overall college campus experience. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education should build on the development of their Junior Summer Academy by expanding access to the weeklong learning experience for more students ages 8-13, preparing students to succeed and thrive as an adult in the workplace.</p>		<p>needs. OVR also contracts with a variety of colleges to provide career exploration or supported education opportunities.</p> <p>This year BSE allocated nearly \$45,000 for the Junior Summer Academy. Funding covered the full cost of the Academy and three staff members from the PaTTAN system to assist in planning and implementation of the academy in conjunction with Kutztown University.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSE supports the Summer Academy for Blind students that is held annually at Penn State University. In this partnership, BSE provides extensive personnel during the three weeks of the academy and provides financial support. BSE promotes collaboration during the academy and financially supports the professional development of Teachers of the Visually Impaired, so that they increase their skills while learning in a practical setting with students on the college campus. 	
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IV. Priority: Transition students from secondary education to adult life. Given the significant investment of public resources preparing young people with a disability to be productive adults, all state agencies must be committed to employment outcomes, innovation, and seamlessness when students with a disability transition from school to work.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Status Update	Indicators (if applicable)
17. Community-Integrated Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education’s 	PDE: Progress Made, Ongoing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of LEAs reached through training and technical assistance, and estimated

<p>For students eligible to stay in school from age 18 through age 21 under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and state law, the Department of Education should continue to partner with other agencies and stakeholders to adopt policies and promote practices emphasizing educational programming that is based in the community, and prepares the student to work and function in a community setting.</p>	<p>Bureau of Special Education</p>	<p>According to the Department of Education Bureau of Special Education, nearly 5,500 students with disabilities between the age of 18-21 remain in school. Training and technical assistance provided to LEAs emphasize the importance of IEPs being grounded in practices that provide community opportunities, work-based opportunities, and independent living, with the least amount of supports necessary for success. Nearly 150 LEAs engaged in this type of professional development and have improved practices in this area.</p>	<p>number of enrolled students reached indirectly through those programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postsecondary readiness measures (work-based learning experiences, graduation rates, postsecondary outcomes, etc.) – <i>see earlier in document for examples.</i>
<p>18. Case Information Sharing State agencies should continue to work collaboratively to enable and promote the ability of individual student/adult case information to be accessible by, and shared between, local educational agencies, county mental health and developmental service agencies, and district Office of Vocational Rehabilitation offices. Appropriate confidentiality protections must be considered.</p> <p>State agencies should review data and outcomes from a pilot conducted in Allegheny County to promote consistent data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor’s Office of Performance Through Excellence • Governor’s Office of Intergovernmental Affairs • Department of Human Services • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>Multi-Agency Update: State agencies developed and executed data sharing agreements to improve availability of information, service delivery, and outcomes for individuals with disabilities. These efforts include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State agencies under the Governor’s jurisdiction signed a comprehensive data sharing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishing a framework for improving data and information sharing across agencies, sectors, and programs. • OVR signed an MOU with ODP allowing data sharing to occur effective December 2018. As of 12/11/19, ODP and OVR shared data each quarter this calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of OVR counselors that have access to ODP participant information in Home and Community Services Information System. • Number of ODP Supports Coordinators that have access to OVR participant information in Commonwealth Workforce Development System. • Number of County ID Agencies with an MOU with other local entities. • Number of data exchanges between OVR and ODP. • Number of IEPs that include new or significantly modified goals and steps toward competitive integrated employment.

<p>collection and sharing that created a local agreement template for use by school districts, district Office of Vocational Rehabilitation offices, and the county mental health/intellectual disability (MH/ID) offices to encourage adoption in other areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education 	<p>year, for a total of 4 exchanges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is currently an MOU in development between OLTL and OVR. <p>DHS conducted a data sharing pilot in Allegheny County using a local agreement template created for use by school districts, the OVR district office, and the local county Mental Health and Intellectual Disability (MH/ID) office to enable consistent data collection and sharing at the case level. Schools across the state can also apply for school-based mental health grants through the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) to set up services on-site, which allows students to receive both support and educational programming while at school. These grants are available through PDE’s federal discretionary Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds.</p>	
<p>19. Career and Technical Education Programs Career and technical education programs, including those provided through career and technical centers, are valuable resources for students with disabilities. As part of Pennsylvania’s State Plan requirements under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor’s Policy Office • Department of Education’s Bureaus of Career and Technical Education and Special Education • PA State Board of Education 	<p>PDE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perkins V implementation has just begun. • In March 2020, PDE will submit its state plan for to the U.S. Department of Education for how Perkins funding will be used by the state and schools for career and technical education over the next four years. • The Federal Perkins Act (Perkins V) establishes numerous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples from federal laws (Perkins V and WIOA): labor market data; high school graduation rate; academic proficiency; postsecondary outcomes (education/training, military, service, workforce); percent graduating with industry-recognized credential; percent graduating with postsecondary credits (dual enrollment or advanced

<p>Century Act (Perkins V), the Department of Education and partner agencies, including Labor & Industry and the PA Workforce Development Board, should explore opportunities to improve outcomes for students with disabilities, both within academic and technical programs as well as in postsecondary endeavors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry • PA Workforce Development Board 	<p>performance metrics for states and programs, as well as requires that states identify additional performance metrics within their plans related to the academic success of student populations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state’s revised WIOA Combined State Plan must also be submitted in 2020, and includes requirements around performance outcomes for programs, many of which overlap with areas covered in Perkins V. 	<p>coursework); percent graduating with work-based learning experiences; percent of CTE concentrators in CTE programs and programs of study that lead to non-traditional fields.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of students with disabilities enrolled in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. • Number of students with disabilities who complete CTE programs and graduate with a competitive integrated job.
<p>20. Supports Coordination and Waiver Access for Graduating Students The Department of Human Services should continue its efforts to make supports coordination available to all transition age students with an intellectual disability and/or autism, and make waiver capacity available to students with an intellectual disability and/or autism upon graduation to ensure there is a seamless transition from school to adult life, avoiding gaps in service that could disrupt a student’s job.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services’ Office of Developmental Programs • Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education 	<p>Multi-Agency Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since September 2016, ODP and PDE have worked collaboratively to progress on this recommendation. As a result of the Graduate Wait List Initiative, Person/Family Directed Services Waiver slots are available to graduating seniors (age 21). Graduating seniors can begin receiving waiver services immediately upon graduation. In addition, schools are required to make students aware of available services when they exit and are encouraged to connect students to services long before graduation. Postsecondary transition is part of a student’s IEP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people who enroll in an ODP waiver upon graduation from high school. • Postsecondary readiness measures (work-based learning experiences, graduation rates, postsecondary outcomes, etc.) – see earlier in document for examples.
<p>21. Comprehensive Transition Programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & 	<p>DHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2016, ODP developed a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of authorizations in ODP waivers for Education Support

<p>In recent years, states – including Pennsylvania – have worked to increase the availability of Comprehensive Transition Programs, one- or two-year college-based certificate and credential programs for young adults with intellectual or other developmental disabilities who are not otherwise able to meet eligibility criteria to enroll in a traditional postsecondary degree program. The commonwealth should continue to work to strengthen access to Comprehensive Transition Programs for adults with an intellectual disability and/or autism.</p>	<p>Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education and Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education • Department of Human Services’ Office of Developmental Programs 	<p>“Braided Funding” document to promote postsecondary education as a pathway to employment, including Comprehensive Transition Programs (CTPs).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODP offers Education Support services to the extent they are not available under a program funded by IDEA or available for funding by OVR. Education Support provides payment up to \$35,000 towards tuition of post-secondary education, including CTPs. 	<p>Services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of state and federal funding spent on ODP-funded Education Support Services each fiscal year. • Number of CTPs available statewide (currently 8 programs).
<p>21.a. Expanding Access to Comprehensive Transition Programs The Department of Education and partners, including the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education and other postsecondary institutions, should work together to promote Comprehensive Transition Programs and other</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education • Department of Education’s Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education • Other postsecondary partners including the 	<p>PDE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2015, Millersville University (a PASSHE university) received federal funding to collaborate with PSU Harrisburg and Mercyhurst University and others to build the PA Inclusive Higher Education Consortium to serve young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. • PDE needs to engage other postsecondary partners more intentionally moving forward, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of CTPs available statewide (currently 8 programs). • Number of students enrolled in CTPs. • Number and percentage of students who complete CTPs and earn a certificate or other credential.

<p>innovative programs that expand access to rigorous coursework by helping K-12 and postsecondary education institutions collaborate and expand access based on successful models.</p>	<p>Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, PA Commission for Community Colleges, and state-related universities.</p>	<p>including PASSHE, state-related universities, 14 community colleges, and independent colleges and universities (AICUP). This effort is currently underway.</p> <p>L&I:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is updating the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) to track the number of OVR Pre-Employment Transition Services students participating in one- or two-year college or certificate programs. 	
<p>21.b. Provide Financial Assistance for Students in Comprehensive Transition Programs As part of its goal to expand access to rigorous coursework for all students, the Department of Education should encourage the use of available state and federal (Title IV, Part A) funding to cover tuition of students ages 18-21 participating in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Education 	<p>PDE: New Approach, Pending.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In its <u>Consolidated State Plan</u> under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), PDE identified increasing participation in advanced coursework for all students – including programs that provide students with opportunities to earn postsecondary credentials while in high school – as a priority for state and LEA federal Title IV, Part A funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of students, disaggregated by student subgroup, participating in advanced coursework. Percent of 12th graders who participate in at least one rigorous course of study. Percentage of high school graduates who have enrolled in an institution of higher education, enlisted in the military, or entered the workforce within 16 months of graduation. Number of students enrolled in CTPs.

<p>a Comprehensive Transition Program.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of students who complete CTPs and earn a certificate
<p>21.c. Identify and Address Barriers The Department of Human Services and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should continue to solicit input from Comprehensive Transition Programs, waiver participants, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation customers, and other stakeholders to identify potential barriers facing participants who want to attend and benefit from Comprehensive Transition Programs, and make changes to remove those barriers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services' Office of Developmental Programs • Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>DHS: In 2016, ODP developed a "Braided Funding" document to promote postsecondary education as a pathway to employment, including CTPs.</p> <p>In accordance with Federal Regulation and guidance from the CMS, payment for CTPs may only be furnished through a Medicaid waiver when it is not available through OVR. In 2019, OVR and ODP worked jointly to make policy changes that allow for individuals in an ODP waiver to receive Education Support services through their waiver, including payment for a CTP, during periods when OVR has a waiting list.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note: When the OVR order of selection is open, a person who wants to receive Education Support services through their ODP waiver for a CTP must first be referred to OVR since OVR can also assist in the funding for the CTP. ODP will only be able to report on the number of students enrolled in CTPs where the CTP is funded by ODP. Also, ODP does not capture data, and thus will not be able to report on the number 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODP will work with OVR to develop a new metric on how to measure success of this goal.

		of students who complete CTPs and earn a certificate or other credential.	
<p>22. Expanding Innovative Programs Connecting Young People with Disabilities to Workforce Opportunities</p> <p>The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should continue to sustain, improve, and increase access to programs that connect students with disabilities with meaningful workforce opportunities, including Project Search, Early Reach, and Jobs For All.</p> <p>A. Project Search is an innovative cross-agency program that enables high school seniors with significant disabilities to spend their final school year in non-paid training, gaining real-world experiences in hospitals and other non-profit organizations while rotating through various job experiences with a participating employer. Most graduates secure competitive integrated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>L&I:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is updating the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) to track the number of OVR Pre-Employment Transition Services students participating in Project Search, early reach services, and paid work experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of OVR Pre-Employment Transition Services students participating in Project Search, early reach services, and paid work experiences every quarter

<p>employment following graduation.</p> <p>B. Early Reach is an initiative spearheaded by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation that targets information and outreach to individual students with disabilities and their families to ensure they are aware of vocational rehabilitation services as early as possible, know when the student will be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, and learn how they can take advantage of educational programming while still in secondary education to prepare the student for competitive integrated employment.</p> <p>C. Jobs For All is a wage reimbursement initiative to offset an employer's costs of hiring a young person with a disability and providing on-the-job training. This serves as an incentive to the employer to hire young people with</p>			
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<p>a disability and increases the likelihood of retention.</p>			
<p>23. Cross-system Training and Professional Development Multiple state agencies provide critical services to individuals with disabilities across Pennsylvania. The web of program and funding rules is often complex and complicated. Given the importance of interagency coordination and collaboration to the success of an individual with a disability being supported to securing or keeping a job, it is important that professionals within each system know and understand the other systems. The Departments of Education, Labor & Industry, and Human Services should continue to conduct regionalized, in-person trainings for supports coordinators, local special education professionals, and vocational rehabilitation counselors so they can learn together how their respective systems work and services that can support competitive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation • Department of Human Services’ Office of Developmental Programs • Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education 	<p>DHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional, in-person cross-agency trainings have been held twice across the state that included partners from DHS, PDE, and L&I. The sessions focused on introducing services and supports in each system and how the systems work together. Planning for future cross-system training is underway. • OMHSAS provides trainings as needed and requested. • The Pennsylvania Community on Transition is a leadership team comprised of representatives from PDE, DOH, L&I, DHS, community-based organizations, parent and advocacy groups, and postsecondary education, who work collaboratively to ensure appropriate transitions for youth and young adults. Resources from the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) are used to develop a focus area for each school year and a 5-part cross-systems webinar series is planned each school year based on topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of trainings offered as cross-system trainings and professional development programming. • Number of OVR staff participating in cross-training and professional development. • Number of staff hours of cross-training and professional development.

integrated employment outcomes.		L&I: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is tracking annual cross-system training and professional development for OVR staff. OVR have access to over 279 different trainings offered by OVR or other organizations. 	
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V. Priority: Assist adults with a disability in getting and keeping a competitive integrated job.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Status Update	Indicators (if applicable)
<p>24. Embrace the Future, and Do Not Discount Family Fears</p> <p>Implementation of state and federal laws moving away from segregated settings and towards integrated settings should respect the fact that many families whose adult sons and daughters have relied on certain services for decades may harbor doubts and fears about what the future may hold – such concerns must not be discounted. The departments should communicate frequently to all stakeholders, emphasizing the possibilities, answering questions, and allaying concerns.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Education Department of Human Services Department of Labor & Industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an ongoing effort from all agencies. 	

<p>24.a. Provide Clear Guidance to Local Educational Agencies on Expectations</p> <p>The Department of Education should continue to implement Section 511 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act by providing clear guidance and technical assistance to local educational agencies regarding the prohibition on contracting with entities whose work is compensated at subminimum wage, among other expectations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education’s Bureau of Special Education 	<p>PDE:</p> <p>Progress Made, Ongoing.</p> <p>The Department of Education created four publications released statewide to provide guidance on WIOA regulations and practices that would support the concepts inherent to WIOA principles. These include Customized Planning, Entitlement vs. Eligibility, Exploring Options of a Two- or Four-Year College, and Secondary Transition Guide for Deaf-Blindness. These publications have been widely disseminated and are used at IEP meetings.</p>	
<p>24.b. Enhancing Supports for Individuals Receiving Services in Sheltered Workshops to Pursue Competitive Integrated Employment</p> <p>The Department of Labor & Industry should continue to implement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an ongoing effort by the Department of Labor and Industry. 	

<p>Section 511 with creativity and innovation to support individuals receiving services in sheltered workshops who want to pursue competitive integrated employment.</p>			
<p>24.c. Enhancing Trainings and Supports for Individuals and Families. The Department of Human Services should continue to implement the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services’ home and community-based services rule by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Providing training and support for families to use Life Course tools, which encourages developing a vision that includes employment; B. Identifying services that do not support or lead to competitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services 	<p>DHS: The Office of Long-Term Living (OLTL) is in compliance with the HCBS Final Rule. Monitoring began January 2, 2017.</p> <p>In addition, DHS-ODP has also worked on the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial training to families via the PA Family Network (PAFN) Family Advisors is completed. Additional, ongoing training opportunities for families will occur moving forward. • In July 2017, new and re-worked employment services were made available. Every year, waiver amendments occur in which service definition adjustments can be submitted to CMS for approval. • ODP placed expectations on the time that individuals spend in the community as part of the Community Participation Service. As of July 1, 2019, it is expected that individuals should spend at least 25% of their time in a community setting to build potential for employment and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of families engaged in training and resources in supports, including Life Course framework and tools offered by the Department. • Number of providers that attend training or participate in transformation technical assistance offered by DHS and OVR. • OCDEL will provide family survey data on a yearly basis. • OCDEL will provide the number of individuals trained on C2P2 and P3D.

<p>integrated employment and working to adopt changes to waiver service definitions;</p> <p>C. Placing limits on the amount of time an individual can receive a service in a vocational program or other large-group employment activity; and</p> <p>D. Offering training and/or assisting providers to transform their service models from segregated ones to those supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' home and community-based services rule.</p>		<p>pursue greater community inclusion that is related to their unique strengths, needs, and interests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODP held provider transformation leadership boot camp sessions in 2016 and 2017. Six providers were selected to receive one-on-one technical assistance from subject matter experts. This was completed in summer 2018. • Beginning in June of 2019, workgroups were formed through the Charting the LifeCourse Community of Practice to focus the use of the LifeCourse tools into four areas of innovation: employment, supports coordination, front door, and self-advocate and family engagement. • OCDEL will continue C2P2 (Competence and Confidence Partners in Policymaking for Families of Children in Early Intervention), P3D (Parents as Partners for Professional Development), Parent Handbook, SICC Stakeholder Engagement, and review of local programs' yearly family survey results. 	
<p>25. Benefits Counseling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services' 	<p>DHS:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of qualified providers that can

<p>People with a disability whose lives are dependent on access to medical care and long-term supports and services often fear getting a job and earning wages because earning too much can result in the loss of eligibility for publicly funded services and benefits. There are programs and work incentives that enable a person to earn an income while remaining eligible for life-sustaining services, but few people with a disability are aware of them. The Department of Human Services should continue to make its home and community-based services program participants aware of free benefits counseling available through the Social Security Administration's Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program and should also develop benefits counseling services within its waivers to cover the cost of benefits counseling when free Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program assistance is not readily available. The service should be performed by qualified professionals who hold a Certified Worker Incentive Counseling credential accepted by the Work</p>	<p>Offices of Developmental Programs and Long-Term Living</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits counseling is currently a waiver service provided by OLTL and ODP. <p>In addition, DHS provided up-to-date information on Pennsylvania-specific benefits administered by the Office of Income Maintenance to the CWICs working within Social Security Administration's WIPA.</p>	<p>provide Medicaid-paid benefits counseling disaggregated by region and funding stream (ODP & OLTL).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of people authorized for benefits counseling through ODP & OLTL disaggregated by region.
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<p>Incentives Planning and Assistance Program.</p>			
<p>26. Discovery and Customized Employment As discussed in an earlier recommendation, discovery and customized employment are innovative models of service and are particularly effective for individuals with significant disabilities. The Department of Human Services should fund the development of more provider capacity in Pennsylvania for these emerging services and should ensure that they are available to program participants of home and community-based services programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services 	<p>DHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODP contracts with the Temple Institute on Disabilities to deliver certification in Discovery and Customized Employment. <p>Discovery and Customized Employment are included within the Employment Services offered by OLTL.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of persons who received their certification in Discovery through the ODP/Temple agreement. • Number of persons who received their certification in Customized Employment through the ODP/Temple agreement. • Number of persons who received their certification in Systematic Instruction through the ODP/Temple agreement.
<p>27. State Center Residents Pennsylvania operates four public Intermediate Care Facilities for People with Intellectual Disabilities (also known as state centers). About 750 Pennsylvanians reside in these state centers and roughly two-thirds are working age. State center resources may be used to support individuals who want to hold competitive integrated jobs in the community outside the state center. The Department of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services' Office of Developmental Programs • Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>DHS:</p> <p>Supporting individuals living in state centers to obtain and maintain competitive-integrated employment will continue to be an ongoing priority.</p> <p>As of March 2018, at least two staff per state center have been trained and certified in Discovery. State centers continue to collaborate with the OVR and innovate when finding and developing jobs in the community, as well as providing transportation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of state center residents working in competitive-integrated employment in the community. • Number of State Center staff trained in Discovery or Customized Employment.

<p>Human Services should continue to make it a priority to increase the number of state center residents who hold competitive integrated jobs in the community. Specifically, it should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train staff in discovery, customized employment and other supported employment competencies; • Engage the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to make connections between center residents and vocational rehabilitation counselors for career assessment, job development, post-secondary training opportunities, and job coaching services; • Innovate when it comes to finding and developing jobs in the community; • Commit to making reliable transportation to and from a job available for individuals who get and keep jobs in the community; and • Engage non-public employment service providers, if necessary, to 		<p>State Center staff continue to use professional/personal connections with businesses, as well as chambers of commerce, local chapters of the Arc of PA, etc., to find employment opportunities that are a good match for both the employer and jobseeker.</p> <p>State Center staff have committed to providing reliable transportation to individuals who get and keep jobs in the community. OVR has also offered to send Specialists to present to residents on Section 511.</p>	
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<p>achieve the desired outcome.</p>			
<p>28. Provider Qualifications The Department of Human Services' Offices of Long Term Living and Developmental Programs require staff who provide employment services to waiver participants to obtain either the ACRE Basic or Professional Certificate of Achievement, or the Certified Employment Support Professional certification. The Department of Human Services and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue recruitment efforts for new providers and provide information to staff regarding testing and certification opportunities, including offering providers an online ACRE training course.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services' Offices of Long Term Living and Developmental Programs • Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>DHS: As of July 1, 2017, ODP raised the provider qualification standards of ID/A Waiver providers of Supported Employment, Small Group Employment, and the prevocational component of Community Participation Support. Staff must have either the Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) Basic or Professional Certificate of Achievement or the Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) Certification by July 1, 2019, or within six months of hire if hired after January 1, 2019. Beginning on July 1, 2019, all newly hired staff must also work under the supervision of an individual who meet these provider qualifications.</p> <p>ODP and OVR have collaborated to offer and supplement payment for in-person ACRE training. In addition, ODP and OVR developed the College of Employment Supports (CES), an online platform that offers the ACRE certification. As of December 12, 2019, 945 persons have obtained their ACRE certification through the CES.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OLTL - Total number of CESP test takers and percentage of pass rates. • OLTL - Total number of credentialed providers. • ODP - Percentage of providers of ODP employment services that are compliant with certification / credentialing requirements during each monitoring year. • Number of persons who receive ACRE certification through the College of Employment Supports

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OLTL is also engaged with the National Association of People Supporting Employment First (ASPE) on several CES initiatives, including promotion of certification opportunities, training, and a credentialing/career pathway initiative. 	
<p>29. Supports Coordination Supports coordinators are the professionals who work directly with participants of publicly funded home and community-based services programs to discuss their needs and goals, and to identify services and supports necessary to meet their needs and achieve their goals. Supports coordinators are foundational to implementing Employment First. The Department of Human Services should provide guidance and continue to invest in sustained training to supports coordinators to ensure that employment is the first consideration and preferred outcome of individualized service planning. This should include tools and discussion guides for supports coordinators to use when discussing employment with program participants. The Office of Long Term Living should focus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services' Offices of Long Term Living and Developmental Programs • Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>DHS: OLTL and ODP continue to provide support to Service Coordinators through ongoing trainings, communications, and related online resources (webpages, etc.).</p> <p>For OLTL, Dering Consultants provides training on a monthly basis.</p> <p>ODP, with the assistance of the State Employment Leadership Network, developed the Pathways to Employment Tool. The purpose of this tool is to provide guidance to Supports Coordinators (SCs) for engaging in conversations with participants, and their teams, in an effort to help the person become competitively employed. The tool includes helpful conversation starters for SCs to use when planning with a participant, their family, and teams about employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Supports Coordinators who have received training. • Number of training and resources provided to ODP Supports Coordination Organizations. • Number and percentage of ODP-enrolled individuals ages 18-64 that have competitive integrated employment, disaggregated by SC Organization.

<p>on working with managed care organizations ahead of the January 2020 Community HealthChoices implementation date to utilize supports coordinators and employment support services.</p>			
<p>30. Community HealthChoices In addition to home and community-based services waivers and state-funded programs, many Pennsylvanians with a disability are receiving or will receive necessary long-term supports through the new managed care program called Community HealthChoices. The Department of Human Services should prioritize competitive integrated employment as an outcome within Community HealthChoices by including necessary service definitions and data collection requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services' Office of Long Term Living 	<p>DHS: As of January 1, 2020, CHC is available statewide. OLTL continues to work with managed care organizations (MCOs) on their employment strategies to expand employment supports for individuals with disabilities. Strategies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation of an OLTL Review Committee to review the employment plans from the MCOs. • In-Person meetings that are ongoing with the MCO employment staff in order to discuss employment initiatives. • Pay-for-Performance (P4P) Medicaid MCO's will be added to the P4P List, projected 2022. <p>OLTL has also partnered with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to provide cross-agency updates and trainings on shared services to promote better collaboration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is currently a data sharing MOU in development between OLTL and OVR • There is also an MOU related to the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation and Implementation of a CHC MCO Employment Initiative Report Dashboard to serve as a consistent reporting template.

		Order of Selection Closure in development between OLTL and OVR	
<p>31. Maximize Federal Funds for Employment The federal Rehabilitation Services Administration makes available to state vocational rehabilitation agencies funding at a 78.7 percent to 21.3 percent federal-to-state ratio. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should continue to submit requests for reallocations to the Rehabilitation Services Administration, maximizing any state match available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation • Governor’s Budget Office • State Workforce Development Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an ongoing effort. 	
<p>32. Interagency Funding Memorandum of Understanding To promote interagency collaboration and program innovation, and to ensure sufficient staff capacity exists, the Departments of Labor & Industry and Human Services should sustain the interagency funding memorandum of understanding signed in 2015 which annually directs state funds from the Office of Developmental Programs to the Vocational Rehabilitation Fund for the purpose of matching those funds with additional federal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services’ Office of Developmental Programs • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>Multi-Agency Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOU implementation has improved interagency collaboration and program innovation has led to at least one ID/Autism Coordinator per OVR district office. ODP and the ID/A district coordinators participate in regular calls to discuss issues and create solutions on a district and state-wide level. Both agencies will continue to work together to expand collaborative efforts in future years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of funding moved from ODP to OVR each fiscal year.

<p>vocational rehabilitation funds. The purpose of the new funding is to meet the vocational rehabilitation needs of people with an intellectual disability and/or autism and promote program innovation and service expansion. New vocational rehabilitation staff specializing in intellectual disabilities and/or autism should be authorized, hired, and trained immediately to eliminate backlogs in eligibility determinations and employment service authorizations.</p>			
<p>33. Enhance Collaboration and Coordination with Pennsylvania’s Workforce Development System to Improve Access and Outcomes Many people with a disability simply need assistance securing and retaining employment like their peers without disabilities. The Department of Labor & Industry should direct and train the agencies connected to the workforce development system and the vocational rehabilitation system to promote improved collaboration between the two systems. People with a disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry’s Offices of Vocational Rehabilitation and Workforce Development • PA Workforce Development Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an ongoing effort. 	

<p>who visit their local PA CareerLink® site should be served by that site if possible. PA CareerLink® staff should not automatically refer all people with a disability to the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. In addition, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation staff, in collaboration with local Centers for Independent Living, Assistive Technology Resource Centers, and the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, should continue to participate regularly in on-site reviews of accessibility for PA CareerLink® sites. On-site visits should take place no less frequently than every three years.</p>			
<p>34. Meeting the Needs of Individuals with a Serious Mental Illness Individuals with a serious mental illness have many strengths, talents, and abilities that may be overlooked, including the desire to be employed in a competitive integrated job. Many individuals with a serious mental illness are capable of working competitively in the community if the right job, work environment, and needed supports are available. Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services' Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services • Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>Multi-Agency Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHMSAS and OVR are meeting regularly to develop methods of sharing data to identify individuals who are served by both systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a one-page document that identifies employment resources that is tailored to individuals with Serious Mental Illness.

<p>that help individuals find and keep jobs that capitalize on individual strengths and skills while accommodating needs with support services should be the goal for this population.</p>			
<p>34.a. Increasing Service Capacity through Interagency Coordination The Department of Human Services’ Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation have a memorandum of understanding for the purpose of increasing funding for increased service capacity to develop and support employment opportunities for individuals with serious mental illness. State funding from the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services was directed to the Vocational Rehabilitation Fund to draw down</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services’ Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>DHS: OMHSAS currently has two MOUs with OVR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first 5-year MOU, which involved Certified Peer Specialists (CPS) sub-specializations for youth, young adults, and older adults, is complete and has been implemented. Related training and curricula were also developed and implemented through funding from OVR. This MOU is recommended to end as the process for certification for individuals to become peers has been transferred to the Pennsylvania Certification Board (PCB) and is no longer housed within OMHSAS. • The second MOU was focused on the draw-down of federal funds and is also complete and finished in 2017. This MOU was a one-time pilot that allowed for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both MOUs have completed their functions; one was to increase the number of CPS and the other was to develop OVR’s ongoing involvement in the support and employment of CPS.

<p>additional federal vocational rehabilitation funds at a 78.7 percent (federal) to 21.3 percent (state) ratio. The memorandum of understanding will remain in place until the funds are expended. The Offices of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and Vocational Rehabilitation should continue to collaborate regarding funding priorities moving forward.</p>		<p>the creation of a limited amount of both state (OMHSAS) and federal funds (OVR) of approximately \$235,000. These funds were used to offer Certified Peer Specialist trainings for 137 individuals with an MH diagnosis in 2017 and 2018. There are no plans to add additional funds to this MOU.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS will explore other opportunities to increase service capacity through interagency coordination 	
<p>34.b. Evidence-based Supported Employment Service The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services should continue to focus on data collection and analysis to identify entities providing supported employment to increase the use of evidence-based supported employment services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services' Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services • Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>DHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OMHSAS completed an environmental scan in April 2019. OMHSAS reviewed the results and is determining what areas can be replicated and what existing psychiatric rehabilitation services can be enhanced to increase employment supports to individuals with Serious Mental Illness (SMI). • All current supported employment providers that provide services to those specifically with SMI are funded at the Mental Health county-office level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of individuals who have received supported employment services that lead to community integrated employment.

		Therefore, the request to these providers should be made to counties first and then to the providers in order to obtain this data.	
<p>34.c. Tracking and Improving Employment Outcomes for Individuals in the Behavioral Health System</p> <p>The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services should continue to collect and analyze data on individuals in the behavioral health system who are in competitive integrated jobs for the purpose of identifying and implementing future program and policy improvements. The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should also determine whether a memorandum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services' Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services • Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<p>DHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current data is collected through a series of employment questions that were added to the County Human Services Block Grant planning template. • OMHSAS participates regularly in data tracking and analysis meetings within DHS. • OMHSAS will also explore a data sharing agreement with OVR to enhance these ongoing efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement developed and implemented between OVR and OMHSAS to share data. • Data on competitive integrated employment outcomes from county mental health offices.

<p>of understanding would be beneficial for this purpose.</p>			
<p>34.d. Update Licensing Regulations The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services should continue to work to amend licensing regulations so that the needs of youth and young adults ages 14-17 can be met by psychiatric rehabilitation services (currently limited to age 18 and older).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services' Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services 	<p>DHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiver of current regulations is permitted if a provider wants to include services to individuals under 18; additionally, an update of psychiatric rehabilitation services (PRS) regulations is under review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OMHSAS is updating regulations to include PRS for individuals from 14 to 17; the regulations are anticipated to be completed as early as 2021.
<p>35. Self-Employment Starting and running one's own business is empowering. Publicly funded programs should assist people with a disability pursue business ownership. The Department of Labor & Industry should continue implementation of its small business policy to support vocational rehabilitation customers who want to be a small business owner and review innovative small business trainings and share information with customers. The Department of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry • Department of Human Services • Department of General Services • Department of Community and Economic Development 	<p>DCED: The agency continues to support and develop entrepreneurial spirit among the Commonwealth's citizens, including those with disabilities. The Pennsylvania Business One-Stop Shop, created by the Wolf Administration, is a valuable tool for anyone interested in creating or expanding their business in PA. The One-Stop Shop continues to evolve and expand its capabilities, and as the needs of entrepreneurs highlight new potential tools and resources,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of employment services within ODP and OLTL that support competitive integrated employment where the service definition includes language about self-employment. • ODP -Number of people enrolled with ODP reporting competitive integrated self-employment.

<p>Human Services should ensure that service definitions in its home and community-based services programs include self-employment support. In addition, Department of General Services' Bureau of Diversity, Inclusion and Small Business Opportunities should continue its efforts to make business owners with a disability and vocational rehabilitation counselors aware that businesses owned by persons with a disability may now be eligible for the Small Diverse Business program. The business must meet "small business" eligibility requirements and must be certified by the U.S. Business Leadership Network as a disability-owned business or service-disabled-veteran-owned business.</p>		<p>DCED explores and incorporates them into the One-Stop Shop.</p> <p>DCED also provides critical funding to the Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), strategically located across Pennsylvania to provide education and consulting services to entrepreneurs and small business owners on a variety of topics, including but not limited to business planning, marketing, operations, and financial management. This network is available to help those with disabilities turn their dream of business ownership into a reality.</p> <p>DCED also has several funding programs available to existing businesses looking to expand in Pennsylvania.</p> <p>DHS: For ODP, Self-employment support is included in both Advanced Supported Employment and Supported Employment offered through the ID/A waivers, as well as the Career Planning and Supported Employment offered through the Adult Autism Waiver.</p> <p>For OLTL, components of Self-</p>	
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		Employment are included within the Employment Services of the OLTL waivers.	
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VI. Priority: Transportation. For individuals to succeed on the job, they need reliable transportation to get to and from work, on time, every time.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Status Update	Indicators (if applicable)
<p>36. Establish Baseline Information to Drive Employment-Related Transportation Needs</p> <p>Transportation is frequently cited as a top barrier to employment. Defining the transportation barrier, identifying areas of need, and cataloging current resources available will help inform transportation strategies across agencies. The following items will be created:</p> <p>A. A concrete list of transportation issues that are faced by people with disabilities to further define what the “transportation barrier” is, informed by focus groups of individuals with a disability and developed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation • Department of Transportation 	<p>DHS: New Recommendation (2019). OLTL requested the Community HealthChoices managed care organizations to identify transportation barriers encountered and how they are being addressed.</p> <p>PennDOT: 36-C. PennDOT has a list of current public transportation resources available on its website and specific to each county on the transportation map.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS will partner with PennDOT and OVR in order to determine ways to collect data related to this goal.

<p>in collaboration with other key stakeholders.</p> <p>B. Data that will demonstrate the geographical areas that are most in need of transportation options.</p> <p>C. A list of current transportation resources available.</p> <p>D. A list of high-volume employment centers by county/region.</p>			
<p>37. Identify and Test Innovation Transportation Strategies</p> <p>Transportation is cited as a barrier for people with a disability in both urban and rural areas across Pennsylvania and requires innovative solutions. Historically, implementation of transportation initiatives has proven challenging due to the diverse nature of the state and the significant costs often associated with transportation. The commonwealth should utilize thoughtfully designed pilot programs to allow innovative strategies to be tested for feasibility and replicability,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation • Department of Transportation 	<p>PennDOT: 37- C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared Ride Transportation is an example of public transportation service available. While there are barriers in that it does not always operate when and where people want to go, it is still available to the general public and we invest nearly \$8 Million per year to subsidize trips for persons with disabilities. • Suggest referring to the Workforce Command Center report. 	<p>PennDOT: 37- C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 350,000 trips provided to people with disabilities in FY 18-19. Nearly 50% of those trips were to transport individuals to work. • DHS, PennDOT, and OVR continue to work to determine ways to collect data related to this goal.

<p>including but not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Volunteer networks; B. Identifying available vans throughout the state that could be used for transportation initiatives related to employment; and C. Researching current promising and innovative practices across the state. 			
<p>38. Maximize and Publicize Existing Resources</p> <p>While new and innovative transportation solutions are still needed, there are various state and local transportation options that can be utilized. The Department of Transportation, in collaboration with other state agencies, should develop a communication strategy to publicize programs that make efficient use of, and maximize, existing ride resources and any new resources that are developed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Encourage and increase awareness of carpooling and vanpooling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation • Department of Transportation 	<p>PennDOT: 38- A, D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PennDOT has encouraged transit agencies to continue to provide trips to individuals with disabilities and works to provided needed technical assistance. • The Interactive map is linked to PPTA website. • PennDOT will conduct a webinar with transit agencies to encourage them to communicate successes and share best practices. • PPTA’s annual meeting in April 2020 will contain a session that will allow agencies to share best practices on transporting persons with disabilities. 	<p>PennDOT: 38- A, D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitation to the PPTA annual meeting • Catalogue of best practices <p>38- B, F</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statewide implementation of FindMyRidePA within two years of the contract award for the RFP

<p>opportunities for people with a disability;</p> <p>B. Pursue funding for programs such as FindMyRidePA so people with a disability have ready access to information on transit options available to them, including online reservation and tracking;</p> <p>C. Promote PACommute;</p> <p>D. Use PennDOT’s interactive map of public transportation services and programs;</p> <p>E. Utilize social media and online resources;</p> <p>F. Encourage transit agencies to act as mobility managers;</p> <p>G. Determine if transit agencies can advertise accessible transportation services at Department of Motor Vehicles centers statewide; and</p> <p>H. Encourage transit agencies to share best practices as part of the marketing committees of PA Public Transit Association.</p>		<p>Someone from Cabinet could present their report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PennDOT and PPTA have begun to collect personal success stories for use on social media. • PennDOT is working on developing an online eligibility application to make eligibility determinations more streamlined and be the same statewide (Expected 18 month deployment). • PennDOT maintains Park-and-Ride facilities to offer a safe, convenient location for commuters to leave their automobiles and travel to their destinations in carpools, vanpools or buses. The interactive map can be found here. <p>38- C The PACommute website is no longer valid. All information has been moved to the Travel in PA website.</p> <p>38- B, F</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Central Pennsylvania Transportation Authority has issued an RFP, backed 	
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		<p>by FTA and PennDOT funding, to improve the existing FindMyRidePA application and expand its use to all transit providers using the statewide paratransit scheduling system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RFP also includes a task for developing media content to inform the public as to the availability and workings of the various human service transportation programs available to them. This media will be housed at the same location as FindMyRidePA, which is envisioned to become a “one-stop-shop” internet resource for information on human service transportation in Pennsylvania. 	
<p>39. Use Technology to Support and Improve Use of Transportation Options As technology advances, new methods of improving transportation’s efficiency and flexibility emerge. State agencies’ efforts to expand access to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation • Department of Transportation 	<p>PennDOT: 39- A Ecolane scheduling software has been fully deployed. The department is working to deploy advanced notifications through an interactive voice response (IVR) service to all Ecolane-using systems that have not opted out.</p>	

<p>broadband may provide individuals with a disability an alternative to commuting. To leverage new technology to meet demands, state agencies will explore and provide implementation updates to the Governor’s Cabinet for People with Disabilities and the Employment First Oversight Commission on the following strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Fully deploy statewide paratransit scheduling software to improve customer service including customer notification of vehicle arrival time the day before and 30 minutes before, customer ability to schedule online, and customer ability to track vehicle location online. B. Investigate innovative payment technologies to allow public transportation customers more flexibility in how they pay for service, including copayments. C. Expand and enhance broadband services throughout the 		<p>39-B PennDOT is allowing this to develop locally since we do not have the capacity to do this on a statewide level currently.</p> <p>39-D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIDC in Philadelphia, with support from PennDOT applied for a AV Shuttle Grant from FHWA to study use of AV shuttles at the Navy Yard. There has not been an announcement of the winners of the grant yet. • A wheel-chair user and disabilities advocate has been added to the AV Task Force. • As part of the PA AV Testing Guidance update currently underway, PennDOT has included questions to request information from testers on how they are including or thinking about ADA as part of their testing and development. 	
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<p>commonwealth to allow individuals with a disability the option to work remotely.</p> <p>D. Work with the private sector and universities exploring driverless vehicles in Pennsylvania to ensure that individuals with a disability can participate in pilot studies, if interested.</p>			
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VII. Priority: Lead by example by reducing barriers to Commonwealth employment and improving state contracts.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Status Update
<p>40. Pennsylvania will lead by example in reducing barriers to competitive integrated employment.</p> <p>A. State agencies shall make an effort to employ individuals with a disability in no less than 7 percent of the overall state work force.</p> <p>B. State agencies shall review on a biannual basis, the adequacy of hiring, placement, and advancement practices with respect to individuals with a disability.</p> <p>C. The Office of Administration shall</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of General Services • Office of Administration 	<p>OA: 40-A</p> <p>The Office of Administration (OA) continues its effort to increase the percentage of persons with a disability employed by the commonwealth. An Employment First Steering Committee has been formed with representation from OA, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Office of General Counsel. This committee meets monthly to review progress made by workgroups focused upon recruiting, hiring and interviewing, onboarding, retention, and education.</p> <p>Accomplishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OVR Internship Program: Two successful years recruiting people with disabilities to serve internships with Commonwealth agencies. Planning is underway for a third program year

<p>develop a framework for individuals to self-report a disability.</p>		<p>with internship opportunities now available in the Pittsburgh region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established one employment website for CWOPA, that has been reviewed by OVR to ensure accessibility. • Ongoing education of managers and employees to raise disability awareness and help ensure a welcoming workplace. • Traditional multiple-choice CS tests are being phased-out in favor of vacancy-based hiring utilizing Experience and Training exams, where applicants apply online and respond to questions intended to draw-out their experience and education. This helps with accessibility by not requiring applicants to travel to distant test locations. Converted nearly 400 written exams to E&T. • As part of the accommodation process, applicants unable to travel for an interview can be interviewed utilizing Skype or other available technology. Other communication options can be explored as needed. • Held calls with Delaware, Louisiana, Nevada, Utah, and Vermont to learn about their disability hiring programs. Obtained best practices and helpful guidance to inform Pennsylvania's efforts. • Drafted a civil service hiring procedure focused upon persons with a disability, which is presently under review. <p>40-B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The OA's Employment First Steering Committee meets monthly to assess its progress in establishing hiring and retention
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		<p>programs that increase the percentage of persons with a disability employed by the commonwealth, to include education efforts for employees about the availability of workplace accommodations.</p> <p>40-C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed. Developed a work force survey that enables the commonwealth to determine the percentage of employees that consider themselves as having a disability(s). • Exploring approaches for job applicants to self-identify as having a disability to help inform and assess the effectiveness of commonwealth recruitment efforts for persons with a disability.
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VIII. Priority: Expand public-private partnerships to improve availability of high-quality supports that improve competitive integrated employment outcomes for Pennsylvanians with a disability.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Status Update	Indicators
<p>41. Local Employment Coalitions</p> <p>A number of local human service, education, and employment agencies have come together to develop Employment First coalitions. These have proven to be effective at educating professionals across these systems about what other systems have to offer, sharing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education • Department of Human Services • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation • PA Workforce Development Board 	<p>PDE: Progress Made, Ongoing. State agencies have worked together to provide support and strengthen Pennsylvania’s current coalitions, as well as create and implement strategies for additional coalitions. There are 27 Employment First coalitions statewide (as of January 2019).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of county ID offices that have developed or participate in an Employment Coalition. • Number of counties where the employment coalition regularly includes cross-disability representation.

<p>information and resources, developing positive interagency relationships, enforcing policy, collecting and sharing data, and engaging the business community. However, only a few coalitions exist. The Departments of Human Services, Labor & Industry, and Education should provide financial support to develop and sustain additional employment coalitions across Pennsylvania. State agencies should also assist with a survey of all business engagement and education activities, including identifying gaps in geographic areas of the state, with the goal of aligning initiatives and addressing needs.</p>		<p>State agencies have also engaged employers through regional business/employer roundtables and coordinate to share best practices and enhance employer outreach.</p> <p>PDE also facilitates a quarterly leadership community of practice for secondary transition practices. This allows cross-agency collaboration to have a mechanism to discuss resources, share challenges and solutions to barriers encountered, and create innovative practices that promote employment for students with disabilities.</p> <p>DHS Program Offices continue to participate in cross disability local employment coalitions.</p>	
<p>42. Single Point of Contact Model Businesses interested in hiring qualified people with a disability to meet their workforce needs can easily become confused and frustrated when it comes to knowing which state or local agency to work with to find talent, get information on accommodations, and identify services to support individuals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an ongoing effort by the Department of Labor and Industry. 	

<p>with a disability. If businesses must work with multiple agencies to find, hire, and support a person with a disability, they may give up or choose not to try in the first place. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation utilizes a “single point of contact” model for businesses to make the process as easy and efficient as possible. The single point of contact model would be the only person the business works with, while assuming the responsibility of working with county human service agencies, employment providers, and the education system to meet the needs of the business. L&I should continue to support and enhance the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation’s single point of contact model and identify ways to improve the number of businesses it assists so more people with a disability can get and keep a job.</p>			
<p>43. Business Services The ability to increase the number of people with a disability employed in a competitive integrated job is directly proportional to the willingness of a business to hire a person with a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry’s Offices of Vocational Rehabilitation and Workforce Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an ongoing effort by the Department of Labor and Industry. 	

<p>disability. The Department of Labor & Industry should strengthen and publicize the Offices of Vocational Rehabilitation’s Business Services & Outreach Division, making it business’ “go-to” source for pre-screened qualified applicants with disabilities to meet staffing needs, information on federal tax incentives to hire people with a disability, information on the Americans with Disabilities Act and accommodations, disability etiquette training, customized employment and resources to retain staff who may acquire a disability after being employed for some time.</p>			
<p>44. Provide a Single, Go-To Source of Information for Employment First in Pennsylvania State agencies should collaborate to develop, maintain, and promote a credible “go-to” source of information on disability employment resources, data, success stories, and professional training resources. Targeted users should be people with a disability, families, advocates, businesses, local education agencies, post-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor’s Office • Department of Human Services • Department of Labor & Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation • Department of Education 	<p>Multi-Agency Update: New Recommendation, Progress Made. The Governor’s Policy Office and various agencies reviewed the former “Works for Me” website materials and are exploring the option to develop a new dedicated online resource (webpage) dedicated to Employment First in Pennsylvania.</p> <p>DHS program offices have been working closely with PDE and L&I</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L&I is in the process of determining the indicators for this goal.

<p>secondary education agencies, and public agencies involved in promoting employment.</p>		<p>to make recommendations for, and establish the content of, the Employment First website.</p> <p>L&I led the effort to develop an Employment First webpage, with DHS' assistance. The website is expected to go live in 2020.</p>	
<p>45. Encourage Businesses to Hire People with a Disability</p> <p>The Department of Labor & Industry should develop and implement an aggressive outreach strategy to make businesses aware that people with a disability add value to places of business, but that people with disabilities remain a largely untapped labor pool. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation's Business Services and Outreach Division and single point of contact model should be promoted as a credible, go-to resource for businesses to assist them with identifying talent to meet workforce needs and coordinate disability services and training. The effort should include making connections with local chambers of commerce, manufacturers' associations, private recruiters, human</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation • PA Workforce Development Board 	<p>DCED:</p> <p>The Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center is an ideas incubator that discusses best practices and real-time solutions to real-time issues facing Pennsylvanians with barriers to employment. To date, the Workforce Command Center has convened roundtable meetings specific to identifying these barriers to employment and other workforce challenges across the commonwealth. The Command Center will address many topics, including hiring of people with disabilities, as the Command Center continues to meet. The Command Center will host a roundtable discussion of executives on this specific topic in 2020.</p>	

<p>resources professional associations, etc.</p> <p>The Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center shall convene a roundtable of executives that are leaders in employing individuals with disabilities for their support and advice to encourage more businesses throughout the commonwealth to adopt similar practices.</p>			
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IX. Priority: Implement, monitor, and provide accountability for the Employment First Act in Pennsylvania.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Status Update	Indicators
<p>46. Designation of Employment Champions State agencies will provide the designation of employment champions, consistent with the designation utilized by the Department of Human Services, to providers of service coordination, case management, and authorization services funded through the state Medicaid program, including home and community-based waiver programs, who demonstrate commitment to Employment First</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Human Services’ Offices of Long Term Living, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, and Developmental Programs 	<p>DHS: For OLTL, now that the Community HealthChoices has been implemented statewide, the current Employment Champions will segue to the Community HealthChoices managed care organizations Employment Leads or other designated staff. The OLTL Employment Specialist will continue ongoing technical assistance and support.</p> <p>OMHSAS and ODP are</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Number of employment champions that are identified, broken down by program office.

<p>and successfully support the placement and continued placement of individuals with a disability in competitive integrated employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Champions shall be provided increased technical assistance to further support employment services. • A complete list of employment champions shall be made available on state agencies' websites. 		<p>examining ways to identify potential Employment Champions.</p>	
<p>47. Certified Peer Specialist Position Description Update</p> <p>The Department of Human Services' Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services should collaborate with the Governor's Office of Administration to update the Civil Service job description for the Certified Peer Specialist position. An updated definition would allow agencies other than the Department of Human Services to hire civil service Certified Peer Specialists. This change would also require civil service Certified Peer Specialists to obtain and maintain</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services' Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services 	<p>DHS: Approval for updates to civil service position for CPS was provided on September 19, 2019.</p> <p>This civil service position can now be used by all state agencies to onboard individuals with SMI.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of CPS hired by state agencies.

certification through the PA Certification Board.			
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