

Employment Position Statement For New Hampshire's Regional Service System

VALUES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We believe that employment, with its powerful and irreplaceable opportunities for autonomy, earned income, self-esteem development, social contacts, structured activity and life satisfaction, is an important ingredient of a fulfilling and valued life for adults in our society. We also recognize that the capacity of adults with any type or degree of developmental disability or acquired brain disorder to participate in employment, in the right setting and with the proper supports, has been amply demonstrated.

It is the position and responsibility of New Hampshire's regional system (area agencies, subcontract agencies and Bureau of Developmental Services) to provide the necessary services and supports to enable individuals to live in and become contributing members of their communities. All members of New Hampshire's regional system shall, therefore, pledge to:

- 1 Emphasize the importance and benefits of employment.
- 2 Effectively use allocated funds to emphasize, create and maintain integrated employment opportunities.
- 3 Provide staff and providers with appropriate and ongoing training, supports and supervision.
- 4 Support innovative workforce development opportunities.
- 5 Identify systemic barriers to employment and eliminate them.
- 6 Advocate for a systematic and collaborative approach between all partners and stakeholders.
- 7 Continuously evaluate, adjust and improve services and operations.

INFORMED CHOICE

We believe that informed choice is the right of all individuals and that they, their family or guardian have the authority to make decisions regarding all aspects of their employment. Accordingly, all members of New Hampshire's regional system shall:

1. Assist individuals to explore and obtain employment opportunities based on the individual's interests and goals.
2. Provide employment information in a variety of formats that are easy to understand.
3. Insure that individuals have access to assistive technology for effective communication, to assist with career decision-making, job attainment and performance.
4. Provide effective planning for self-discovery and decision-making.
5. Support the on-going development and access to career focused life long learning and training.

6. Deliver work incentives counseling to insure individuals and families understand the impact of income on benefits and the opportunities for asset accumulation.
7. Demonstrate that everyone can work with the right job opportunity and supports.

TRANSITION

We believe the expectation of employment must be incorporated into the educational experience of all students beginning in early childhood and explored through age appropriate opportunities. Therefore, all members of New Hampshire's regional system shall:

1. Advocate for effective transition and successful employment outcomes for individuals entering the adult service system.
2. Assist families to understand the transition process as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
3. Inform families of the resources, supports and strategies available after transition and the vital role families play in this process.
4. Support appropriate career development services, (including a variety of formal and informal assessments, internships, and/or extended learning opportunities) that will help to identify interests, skills, capacity and/or additional training and education opportunities.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH BUSINESS COMMUNITY

We believe that collaboration with the business community is essential for optimizing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities and for strengthening New Hampshire's overall workforce. Successful employment outcomes will require the practice of a dual customer philosophy, where individuals and businesses are treated equally as valued customers. Thus, all members of New Hampshire's regional system shall:

1. Promote professional outreach to build effective partnerships with the business community.
2. Insure that services meet or exceed the expressed needs and standards of the business customer.
3. Continuously nurture business partnerships to keep them strong and vibrant.
4. Recruit, retain and develop highly trained and informed staff.

All members of New Hampshire's regional system understand the importance of achieving the above goals for the benefit of the individuals with disabilities, businesses and the community-at large and pledge to implement them.