



**LEAD CENTER**

# Successful Employment: Partnering with the Workforce System to Achieve Employment Outcomes

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# TODAY'S PRESENTERS

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**The National Center on Leadership for the Employment and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities (LEAD)** is a collaborative of disability, workforce and economic empowerment organizations led by **National Disability Institute** with funding from the **U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy**, Grant No. #OD-23863-12-75-4-11.

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# LEAD CENTER MISSION

- ▶ To advance sustainable individual and systems level change that results in improved, competitive integrated employment and economic self-sufficiency outcomes for individuals across the spectrum of disability.

[www.leadcenter.org](http://www.leadcenter.org)



# OBJECTIVES

Participants will learn about:

- ▶ The opportunities created by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to support employment and economic advancement outcomes for people with disabilities
- ▶ Partnership and collaboration opportunities
- ▶ Opportunities for people with disabilities, providers and advocates to become involved in the implementation of WIOA
- ▶ Useful resources



# A CONTEXT FOR CHANGE

Building system capacity through partnerships

- ▶ Critical importance of leveraging and braiding resources across systems (e.g., Medicaid/DD, Vocational Rehabilitation, Workforce, Education, Ticket to Work, community sources)
- ▶ Resource coordination across systems is required for successful systems transformation
- ▶ Partners all benefit from collaboration and the introduction of promising practices



# OPPORTUNITIES CREATED BY WIOA

- ▶ On July 22, 2014, President Obama signed into law Public Law No. 113-128, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). WIOA is the first legislative reform of the public workforce development system in more than 15 years.
- ▶ Title I of WIOA reaffirms the role of the customer-focused one-stop delivery system, a cornerstone of the public workforce development system, and enhances and increases coordination among several key employment, education, and training programs.



# WIOA JOINT FINAL RULE

- ▶ On June 30, 2016, the Departments of Labor (DOL) and Education (ED) issued a Joint Final Rule to implement jointly administered activities authorized under Title I of WIOA (Joint WIOA Final Rule); and were published in the Federal Register on August 19, 2016.
- ▶ This Joint WIOA Final Rule provides guidance for State and local workforce development systems that increase the skill and credential attainment, employment, retention, and earnings of participants, especially those with significant barriers to employment (**which includes individuals with disabilities**).



# WHAT ARE AMERICAN JOB CENTERS (AJCS)?

- ▶ AJCs, formerly called One-Stop Career Centers, are designed to provide a full range of assistance to job seekers under one roof.
- ▶ AJCs provide training, referrals, career counseling, job listings, and similar employment-related services.
- ▶ A job seeker can visit a center in-person or connect to the center's information remotely through a computer.
- ▶ Services are free.
- ▶ Staff are available to help people look for work, find training, and answer employment-related questions.



# WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE FROM AN AJC?

Services vary by location but can include:

- ▶ Resource rooms with computers, printers, phones internet access, resume-writing tools and fax machines available that people can use in their job search.
- ▶ Employment plan development
- ▶ Job training services
- ▶ Job search assistance
- ▶ Career counseling
- ▶ Practice interviewing
- ▶ Skills testing
- ▶ Labor market and employer information
- ▶ Employment Workshops



## FROM A DISABILITY PERSPECTIVE, WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BIG WIOA CHANGES?

- ▶ Individuals with disabilities must be a part of State and Local Strategic Plans
- ▶ Performance outcomes must be identified and reported (including by disability)
- ▶ Criteria for certifying American Job Centers must include assessing physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology and materials, and appropriate staff training and support

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

- ▶ AJCs are required to ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal opportunity to access their programs, benefits, and activities.
- ▶ Equal opportunity includes:
  - ▶ Nondiscrimination prohibitions (including policies, assessments, registration/intake, training, support services, etc.)
  - ▶ Provision of reasonable accommodations;
  - ▶ Provision of reasonable modifications;
  - ▶ Administration of programs in the most integrated setting;
  - ▶ Effective communication;
  - ▶ Architectural, information and communication technology accessibility;
  - ▶ Providing appropriate auxiliary aids and services, including assistive technology devices and services, where necessary, to afford programmatic accessibility.



# ADDITIONAL SYSTEM COORDINATION REQUIREMENTS (TITLE IV)

- ▶ VR must enter into formal agreements with state Medicaid, I/DD, and Behavioral/Mental Health agencies to improve coordination of resources
- ▶ VR must improve and expand VR services for youth with disabilities on a statewide basis.
- ▶ VR, in the state plan, must indicate how services will be coordinated with the Ticket to Work program
- ▶ VR must improve engagement with in-demand industry sectors to increase competitive integrated employment opportunities
- ▶ Extends the length of time for supported employment services from 18-24 months
- ▶ Adds definition of customized employment



# HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED SETTING REQUIREMENTS

The Home and Community-Based setting:

- ▶ Is integrated in and supports access to the greater community
- ▶ **Provides opportunities to seek employment and work in competitive integrated settings, engage in community life, and control personal resources**
- ▶ Ensures the individual receives services in the community to the same degree of access as individuals not receiving Medicaid home and community-based services



# MORE HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED SETTING REQUIREMENTS

- ▶ Person-centered service plans document the options based on the individual's needs, preferences; and for residential settings, the individual's resources
- ▶ **Optimizes individual initiative, autonomy, and independence in making life choices**
- ▶ Facilitates individual choice regarding services and supports, and who provides them



# WHAT IS CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT?

- ▶ Customized employment is a flexible process designed to personalize the employment relationship between a job candidate and an employer in a way that meets the needs of both.
- ▶ It is based on an individualized match between the strengths, conditions, and interests of a job candidate and the identified business needs of an employer.
- ▶ Customized Employment utilizes an individualized approach to employment planning and job development — one person at a time . . . one employer at a time.



# ALIGNMENT OF HCBS & WIOA AROUND CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT

## ▶ WIOA

- ▶ Establishes customized employment as a service under VR
- ▶ Workforce investment system available to provide discovery (individual/group), skills building and career pathway development

## ▶ HCBS

- ▶ Allows HCBS waivers and state plan options to pay for customized employment strategies.
- ▶ Discovery enables people to explore employment and opportunities for community integration

# LEAD CENTER'S CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT APPROACHES & PARTNERSHIPS

- ▶ Introducing Customized Employment as a Universal Design
- ▶ Piloting Guided Group Discovery in AJCs with either VR, I/DD, CILs, BH/MH, Community Rehabilitation Providers, Homeless Services Providers, etc.
- ▶ Piloting Self-Guided Discovery with AJCs and VR, I/DD, Schools, Community Rehabilitation Providers, etc.



# SUMMARY OF COMPONENTS OF A CUSTOMIZED APPROACH

- ▶ Discovery (Gathering Information)
- ▶ Development of a Profile (Written summary of what was learned in Discovery)
- ▶ Development of a Customized Employment or Job Search plan
- ▶ Engage in Local Research and conduct Informational Interviews (Discovering employer and community needs)
- ▶ Propose employment opportunities or, for self-employment, assess business feasibility
- ▶ Always take advantage of the person's networks and your own



# WHAT IS SELF-GUIDED DISCOVERY?

- ▶ Self-Guided Discovery enables a job seeker with a disability and their support network (e.g., staff, family members, etc.) to identify their own ideal conditions for employment and develop a career plan of their own, with the help of a facilitator or coach at key points in the process.
- ▶ This Discovery process includes Discovering Personal Genius, an employment planning tool and model for individual employment evaluation that results in a comprehensive vocational profile, which can be used to develop a customized employment plan.



# WHO BENEFITS FROM SELF-GUIDED DISCOVERY AND CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT?

Self-Guided Discovery may benefit:

- ▶ Job seekers in the Workforce System, including job seekers with disabilities
- ▶ People with previous careers who recently acquired a disability
- ▶ People with a college degree, technical certificate, or advanced training
- ▶ Veterans with service-related disabilities
- ▶ Transition age youth with strong family and community ties

AND employers benefit!



## LEAD CENTER'S FOCUS ON LEVERAGING OF RESOURCES ACROSS SYSTEMS TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

- ▶ LEAD Center 2013 National Policy Roundtable on “Making Collaboration Real— Blending and/or Braiding Resources to Improve Employment Outcomes”
- ▶ At federal and state levels, multiple agencies administer separate funding streams to support eligible individuals with disabilities with pursuing, obtaining, or maintaining integrated employment.
- ▶ No single source of funds or resources is able to respond effectively to individuals with disabilities who often face multiple barriers to employment – and everyone cannot be the funder of last resort.



# CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT

- ▶ Introduction to Customized Employment and Customized Self Employment webinar -  
[www.leadcenter.org/webinars/promoting-employment-introduction-customized-employment-and-customized-self-employment](http://www.leadcenter.org/webinars/promoting-employment-introduction-customized-employment-and-customized-self-employment)
- ▶ Group Discovery: An Alternative Assessment Tool for Workforce Centers and Community-Based Providers -  
[www.leadcenter.org/webinars/group-discovery-alternative-assessment-tool-workforce-centers-and-community-based-providers](http://www.leadcenter.org/webinars/group-discovery-alternative-assessment-tool-workforce-centers-and-community-based-providers)
- ▶ Customized Employment: Moving Beyond the Basics  
<http://www.leadcenter.org/webinars/customized-employment-moving-beyond-basics>



# CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT

- ▶ Introduction to Customized Employment and Customized Self Employment webinar - [www.leadcenter.org/webinars/promoting-employment-introduction-customized-employment-and-customized-self-employment](http://www.leadcenter.org/webinars/promoting-employment-introduction-customized-employment-and-customized-self-employment)
- ▶ Group Discovery: An Alternative Assessment Tool for Workforce Centers and Community-Based Providers - [www.leadcenter.org/webinars/group-discovery-alternative-assessment-tool-workforce-centers-and-community-based-providers](http://www.leadcenter.org/webinars/group-discovery-alternative-assessment-tool-workforce-centers-and-community-based-providers)
- ▶ Customized Employment: Moving Beyond the Basics <http://www.leadcenter.org/webinars/customized-employment-moving-beyond-basics>



# NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT 1<sup>ST</sup> WEB PLATFORM VIA LEAD CENTER

[employmentfirst.leadcenter.org](http://employmentfirst.leadcenter.org)



# WIOA FOCUS ON FINANCIAL EDUCATION

- ▶ *WIOA provides guidance on the use of state funds to provide services that build customer's financial education and financial capability.*
  - ▶ As a program element for youth to support financial literacy, including an individual's ability to:
    - ▶ create household budgets, initiate savings plans, and make informed financial decisions about education, retirement, home ownership, wealth building, or other savings goals;
    - ▶ manage spending, credit, and debt, including credit card debt, effectively;
    - ▶ understand the availability and significance of credit reports and credit scores in obtaining credit, including determining their accuracy (and how to correct inaccuracies in the reports and scores), and their effect on credit terms; and
    - ▶ understand, evaluate, and compare financial products, services, and opportunities
  - ▶ Financial literacy services are considered individualized career services and must be made available if determined to be appropriate in order for a youth or adult to obtain or retain employment.



# CMS – HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES (HCBS FINAL RULE)

## *Opportunity to Control Personal Resources*

- ▶ Employment or other habilitative services must offer opportunity to “control personal resources.”
- ▶ Consumers may need counseling in financial competency in order to manage benefits and finances while earning a paycheck.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (CONTINUED)

- ▶ WorkforceGPS Disability and Employment Community of Practice: Discussion Forum on Disability and Workforce <https://disability.workforcegps.org/discussions>
- ▶ Webinar on [Implementing the WIOA Final Rule \(Title I\) from a Disability Perspective: What Workforce Professionals and Partners Need to Know](#)
- ▶ [Summary Description from a Disability Perspective: FINAL RULE Implementing Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(Workforce Development Systems\)](#)
- ▶ [Summary Description of FINAL RULE Implementing Title I of the Rehabilitation Act \(State Vocational Rehabilitation\), as amended by Title IV OF WIOA](#)



# CONNECT WITH THE LEAD CENTER

- ▶ Website: [www.leadcenter.org](http://www.leadcenter.org)
  - ▶ Employment First: <http://employmentfirst.leadcenter.org/>
- ▶ Sign up for LEAD Center News: <http://eepurl.com/sQiHr>
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**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!**

**QUESTIONS?**

