



YOUTH
POWER!

Easy Read Edition

Real Work For Real Pay:

A Self-Advocate's Guide to Employment Policy

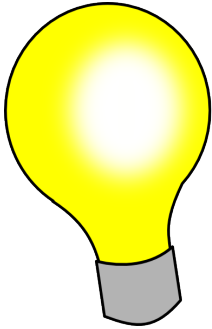
**Part 1:
Introduction**

1. Introduction

What is this toolkit?



This toolkit is about **Employment First**.



Employment First is an idea.



Employment First is an idea about how to help people with disabilities get good jobs.

Employment First means that:



- disabled people should be able to get the same kind of jobs as non-disabled people.



- disabled workers should get paid the same as non-disabled workers.

This toolkit will explain:



- What Employment First is



- What problems made Employment First happen



- What **sheltered workshops** are



- Why it is hard to get rid of sheltered workshops



- How we can solve problems disabled people have with **employment**



- Why **work requirements** are a bad idea

Why is this toolkit important?



Many people with disabilities want to work.



Many things make it hard for disabled people to get good jobs.



- Bosses might not think disabled people can do a job well



- The law lets some companies pay disabled workers a lot less money than non-disabled workers



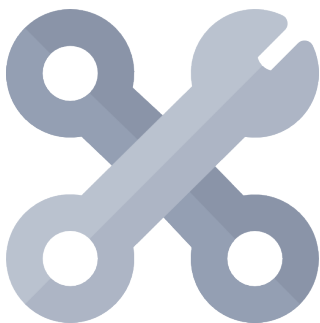
- Sometimes the government makes bad **policies** and programs



People with disabilities should be able to do **real work for real pay**. Real work for real pay is what Employment First is all about.



Disabled people might have problems when we look for good jobs. This toolkit will talk about those problems.



The toolkit will explain how we can fix those problems.



At the end of the toolkit, we will talk about work requirements. Work requirements are an important policy issue.

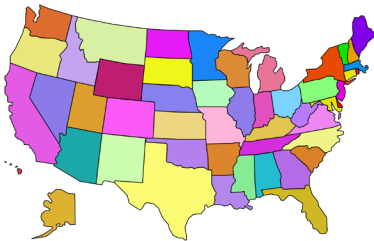


We will explain what work requirements are. We will explain why work requirements would not help people with disabilities.

You can use the information you learn in this toolkit.



- You can use it to explain what kind of job you want.



- You can use it to understand employment programs in your state.



- You can use it to help fight for the rights of disabled workers.

How can I use this toolkit?



You can read this toolkit from beginning to end. Or you can go straight to the parts that you want to know more about.

Glossary words

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You'll see some words in this guide that are **bolded**. We explain these words in the Glossary at the end of each section.



END

There is also a Glossary at the end of the toolkit. The Glossary at the end has words from every section.

Examples



This toolkit uses examples to show how things work in real life. To make it clearer, examples will look like this:



For example, ASAN published a toolkit called *Real Work For Real Pay: A Self-Advocate's Guide to Employment Policy*. The toolkit uses an Easy Read format with large text and plain language.



ASAN designed this toolkit so that any person with any disability can use it and learn from it.

Glossary



employment

Employment means that you work at a job and get paid for the work you do.



Employment First

Employment First is the idea that people with disabilities should be able to get real work for real pay.



policy

Policy means the laws and rules that the government makes.



real work for real pay

“Real work” means that people with disabilities can get the same kinds of jobs as non-disabled people. “Real pay” means disabled workers are paid the same amount as a non-disabled worker doing the same work.



sheltered workshop

Sheltered workshops are places that give disabled people jobs. But, these jobs do not help workers gain skills. Workers often have to do the same task over and over. For example, putting together a toy in a factory. The disabled people that work in sheltered workshops do not make much money. They are usually paid less than minimum wage for their work.

work requirements



Work requirements are rules saying that you have to have a job to get benefits. If a state decides to use work requirements, many people in that state will not be able to get benefits.