



YOUTH
POWER!

Easy Read Edition

Real Work For Real Pay:

A Self-Advocate's Guide to Employment Policy

Part 2:

Overview: Employment First

2. Overview: Employment First

What is employment?



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



The money you get from your job is called your “**wage**.”



There are different kinds of employment.

Segregated employment



Some jobs make people with disabilities work apart from non-disabled people. This is **segregated employment**. Another name for this is congregate employment.

Competitive employment



Competitive employment means that disabled workers get the same amount of money as a non-disabled worker doing the same work.

Integrated employment



Integrated employment means that disabled people work in the same place as people without disabilities. Disabled workers do the same kind of work as the non-disabled workers.



A job does not count as integrated employment unless it is also “competitive” employment. Sometimes this is called “Competitive Integrated Employment.” To keep things simple, we will usually just say “integrated employment.”

Supported employment



Supported employment gives disabled workers support at our jobs. Supports help disabled people succeed at work.



Supported employment helps disabled people get jobs in our communities.

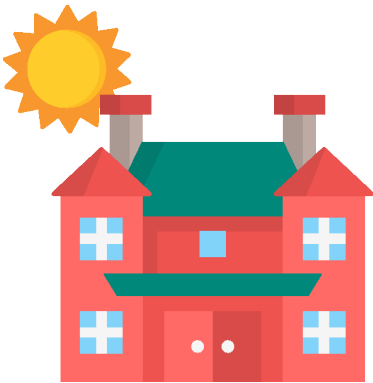
Employment First is an idea



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



Employment First means a state should help everyone who wants to work, find **real work for real pay**.



Before a state tries other services, like **day habilitation**, they should try *employment first*.

Here's what Employment First means:



- Disabled people should be able to work if we want to.



- Disabled people should be able to work in our communities. We should be able to work in the same place as non-disabled people.



- Disabled people should be able to get the supports we need to work. We should be able to get the supports we need if we need a lot of support, or if we only need a little.



- Disabled people should get the same wage that non-disabled people do.



Disabled people should get real work for real pay as a first choice.

Real work for real pay



“Real work for real pay” means the same thing as “**competitive and integrated employment.**”



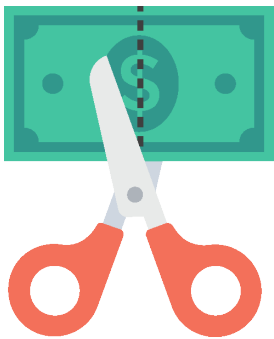
“Real work” means people with disabilities work in the same place as people without disabilities.



“Real work” also means disabled people do the same kind of work as our non-disabled coworkers.



“Real pay” means disabled workers get paid the same amount as a non-disabled worker doing the same job.



Right now, there are some jobs where disabled workers get paid much less than non-disabled workers. We’ll talk about that more later.



Employment First means that disabled people can get real work for real pay.

Why is Employment First important?

Too many disabled people are ending up in segregated employment



Some people think that disabled people who need a lot of support cannot work.



Some people think that disabled people who need a lot of support will not be good enough at a job.



Because of these wrong ideas, companies do not give people with disabilities a chance.



Instead, disabled people end up working in **segregated** places like **sheltered workshops**.

**Working in our communities
is better than working in
segregated jobs**



Disabled people in segregated work cannot choose what kind of job they do.

Segregated jobs hurt people with disabilities.



- Segregated jobs keep disabled people away from our communities.



- Disabled people in segregated work might get paid less than people without disabilities.



- Low wages make it hard to pay for basic things like food and rent.

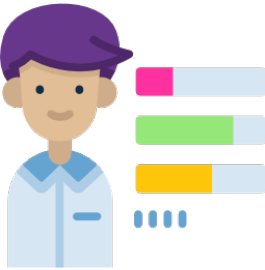


It is good for people with disabilities to work in our communities. It is better than working in segregated places.

When we work in our communities, we:



- make more money



- learn more skills

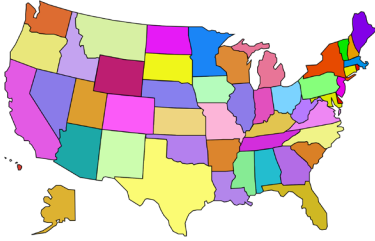


- have better lives



People can use the Employment First idea to help more disabled people get work in our communities.

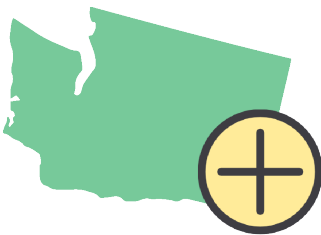
Employment First helps disabled people get real work for real pay



Every state has its own government. A state government makes laws and programs for their own state.



Some states have their own Employment First laws.



The laws help states make new programs and services.



The new programs and services help disabled people get real work for real pay.

Example: Illinois Employment First



In 2013, Illinois passed a law called the Employment First Act.



The law makes Illinois an Employment First state. That means real work for real pay has to be the first choice for disabled people in Illinois.

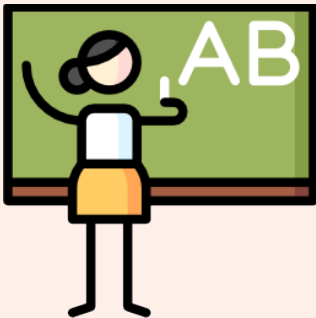


The state government made changes because of the new law. They started trying lots of ways to help disabled people get real work for real pay.

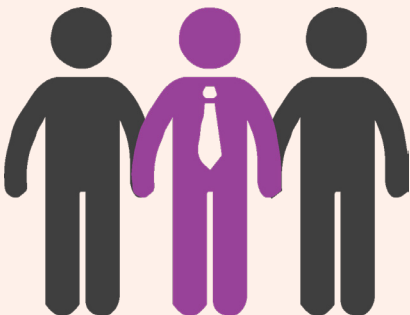
Some of these ways were:



- Giving more money to programs that help disabled people in Illinois find jobs they want to do



- Teaching service providers how to give better job supports to disabled workers



- Training big companies to hire people with disabilities and give them the supports they need



Employment First programs help disabled people get integrated employment.



Some disabled people need supports to help us get a job.

Some examples of these supports are:



- someone who works with you to help you find out what kind of job you want



- someone who can drive you to your job or teach you how to take the bus



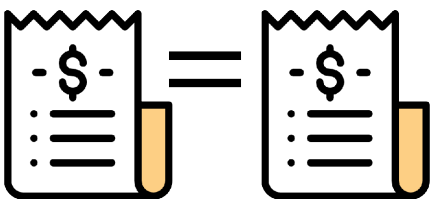
- a job coach who goes with you to your job and helps you stay on track



Employment First programs help disabled people get supports to work in our communities.



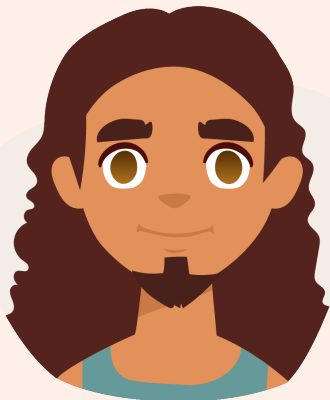
Employment First programs can also help people leave sheltered workshops and get new jobs.



Integrated employment services are not expensive. They cost about the same as segregated employment services.

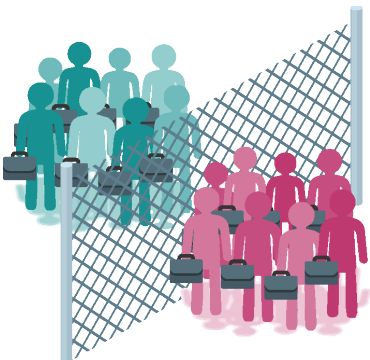
Integrated or Segregated Employment?

Here are some examples of integrated and segregated employment. Can you tell the difference?



Example 1: Mark

Mark has an **intellectual disability**. He works four hours a day, five days a week in a factory that makes clothes. All of Mark's co-workers also have intellectual disabilities. Mark makes 1 dollar an hour for his work.



This is segregated employment. This is a good example of what a sheltered workshop looks like.

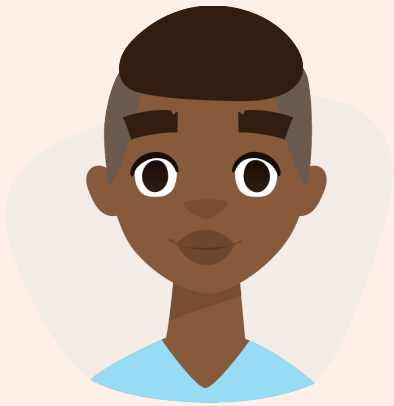


Example 2: Beth

Beth is deaf and has a **developmental disability**. She works 3 days a week making car parts. Most of Beth's co-workers were her classmates in high school. Her co-workers are also disabled and have high support needs. Beth makes 8 dollars an hour for her work, which is the minimum wage in her state.

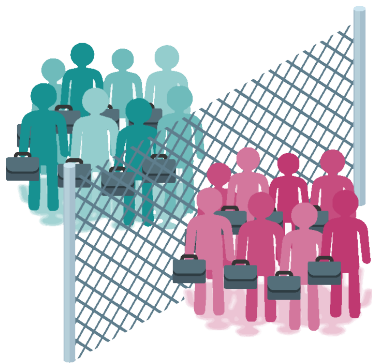


This is segregated employment. Beth is making the minimum wage. But, her job is still segregated employment. That is because Beth only works with other disabled people, separate from non-disabled people.



Example 3: Joe

Joe and his friends all have Down Syndrome. They are all janitors at the local elementary school. When classes are going on, they go around the school and clean. They also clean the classrooms after school is over. They make minimum wage for their work.



This is segregated employment. Joe and his friends are working in the same building as non-disabled people. But, they are doing a different job. They still do not get to be around non-disabled people that much.

This type of work is also called an **enclave**. That is when disabled people are in the same space as non-disabled people, but are still separated.



Example 4: Sally

Sally works in a fast-food restaurant on weekday afternoons. She started out making the salads. Now, her non-disabled co-worker is teaching her how to use the fryer. Sally makes the same amount of money as all of her other co-workers.



This is integrated employment. Sally is doing the same work as her non-disabled co-workers. That means it is a “real job”. Sally is making the same amount of money as her co-workers. That means she gets “real wages”.

Example 5: Harold



Harold is blind and has an intellectual disability. He gets distracted easily. Harold needs a lot of job training and someone to help him stay on-track. He works in the laundry section of a hotel folding towels and sheets.



A job coach helps Harold set up his work station each day and keeps him on-task. Harold works five days a week for three hours each day for minimum wage pay.



This is integrated employment.

This is an example of what supported employment might look like.

Glossary



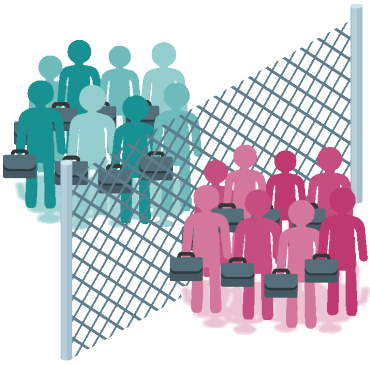
competitive and integrated employment

Employment where disabled people work in the same place as people without disabilities. Disabled workers do the same kind of work as the non-disabled workers. Workers with disabilities are paid the same amount as a non-disabled worker doing the same work.



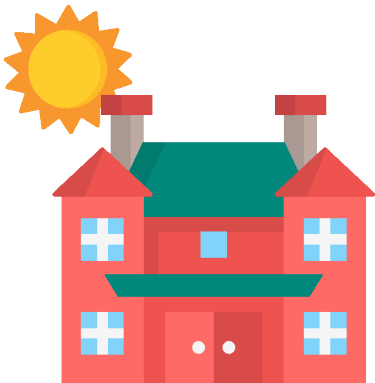
competitive employment

Competitive employment means that disabled workers are paid the same amount as a non-disabled worker doing the same work.



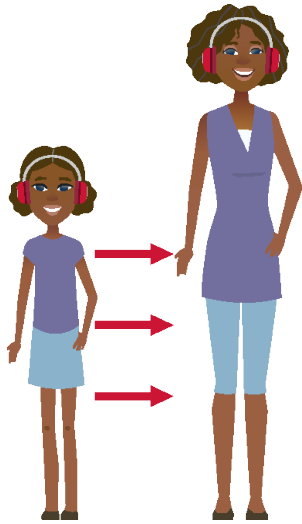
congregate employment

Some jobs make disabled people work separate from non-disabled people. This is congregate employment. Segregated employment is another name for congregate employment.



day habilitation center

A daytime program for adults with disabilities. “Day programs” and “adult day care” are other names for day habilitation. These places might offer social activities and skill building activities. But, they do not offer employment.



developmental disability

A lifelong disability that can begin from ages 0-21.



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.



enclave

A type of segregated employment. Disabled work in the same space as non-disabled people, but are not doing the same kind of work. Instead, the non-disabled workers supervise the workers with disabilities.



integrated employment

Integrated employment means that disabled people work in the same place as people without disabilities. Disabled workers do the same kind of work as the non-disabled workers. A job doesn't count as integrated employment unless it is also "competitive" employment.



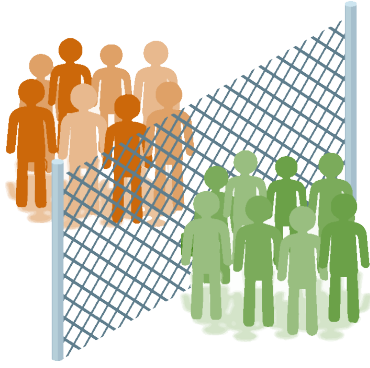
intellectual disability

Intellectual disabilities are disabilities that affect everyday life skills. People with intellectual disabilities might learn in a different way. They might say things in a different way. Or, they might need support with things like cooking and house cleaning.



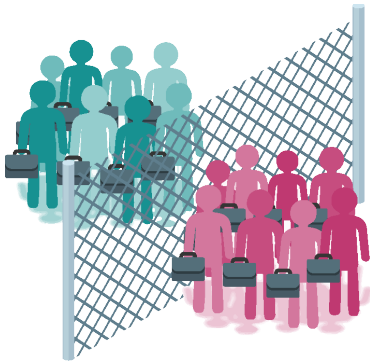
real work for real pay

“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.



segregated

When groups of people are segregated, they are kept apart from each other.



segregated employment

Some jobs make disabled people work separate from non-disabled people. This is segregated employment.



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.



supported employment

Supported employment is a kind of integrated employment. Supported employment gives disabled workers support at their job. Supports help disabled people succeed at work.



wages

Wages are the money you get from working at your job.