



YOUTH
POWER!

Easy Read Edition

Real Work For Real Pay:

A Self-Advocate's Guide to Employment Policy

**Part 5: How can we solve
these problems?**

5. How can we solve these problems?



There are a lot of ways states can get rid of **sheltered workshops** and help more people get **real work for real pay**.

Through the legal system



Courts and judges are part of the **legal system**. The U.S. Department of Justice and the Supreme Court are part of the legal system.

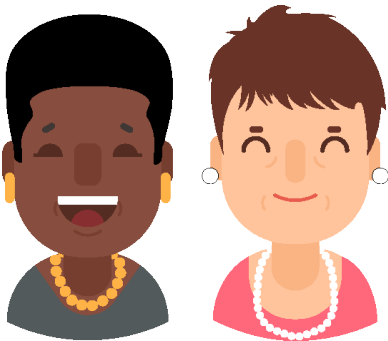


The legal system makes decisions about what is against the law.

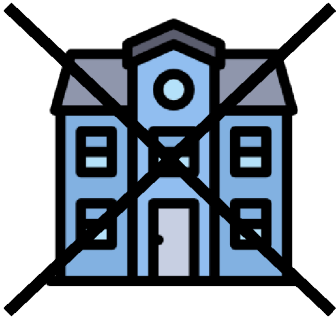
Olmstead



Olmstead was a Supreme Court case in 1999.



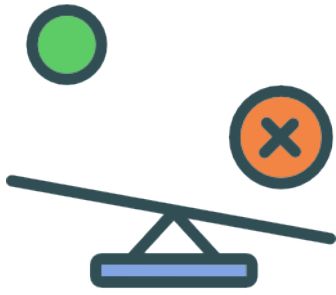
There were 2 disabled women living in an institution. Their names were Lois Curtis and Elaine Wilson.



Lois and Elaine did not want to live in the institution.



Lois and Elaine went to court to explain.



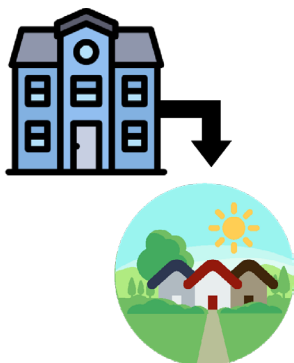
They told the judges it was unfair to keep them in the institution. It was unfair because they could get the help they needed in their community instead.



Lois and Elaine won the case.



The judges decided that disabled people have the right to get services in the community.



Because Lois and Elaine won the case, states have to give people with disabilities a way to get services in the community instead of in institutions.



The *Olmstead* decision is important for people with disabilities.



Many people talk about what *Olmstead* means.



Most people talk about how *Olmstead* applies to housing for disabled people.



But, the *Olmstead* case can support the right to **integrated employment** too.



There are groups who fight for the rights of disabled people. These groups are called **advocacy groups**.



Some advocacy groups worked with the U.S. Department of Justice to sue states for having sheltered workshops. That means the legal system had to decide if the states are breaking the law.



These advocacy groups brought up the *Olmstead* case. They said the *Olmstead* decision applies to jobs, too.



The advocacy groups said the *Olmstead* case shows segregated employment is against the law.



States are starting to act differently because of the **lawsuits**.



Some states are closing their sheltered workshops.



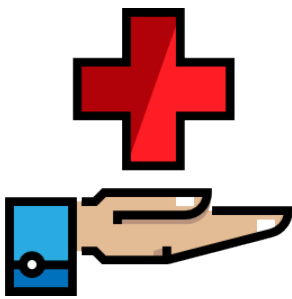
3 states have changed their laws about wages. Companies in those states are not allowed to pay disabled workers less than the **minimum wage**.



Using the legal system is a good way to start closing down places like sheltered workshops.

What else can states do?

Change the way they use the state's Medicaid money



States get money from **Medicaid** to give health care and services to people with disabilities.



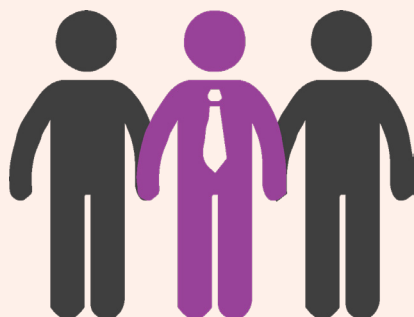
States can make choices about Medicaid money in their state.



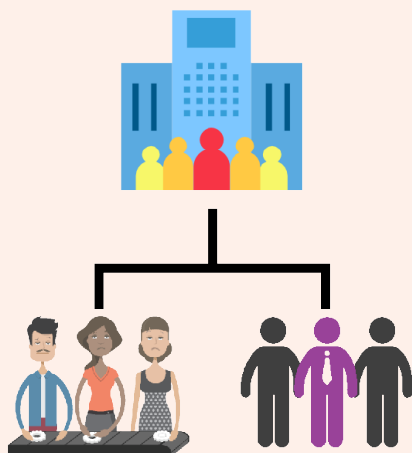
States can choose how much money goes to helping disabled people get jobs.



Here is an example. One state might want to stop **sheltered workshops**.



So, the state chooses to give more money to **supported employment** programs. The state gives less money to sheltered workshops.



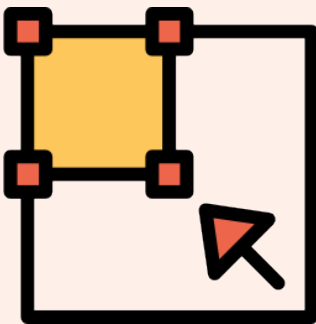
There are groups that run sheltered workshops. A lot of times, these groups also run supported employment programs.



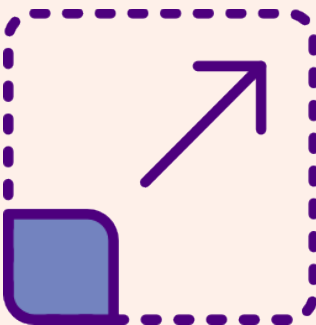
The groups see that the state changed how much money they get from Medicaid.



Now, the sheltered workshops do not get as much money. But, the supported employment program gets more money than before.



This makes the groups change too. They make their sheltered workshop program smaller.



They make their supported employment program bigger.



Eventually, they close their sheltered workshop. They only do supported employment.

This is one way to get rid of sheltered workshops.

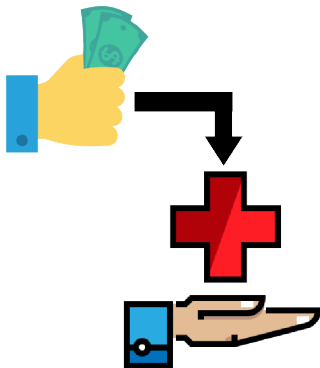
Make it easier to keep Medicaid



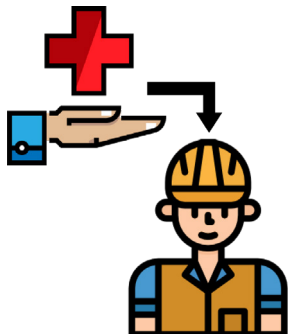
Some disabled people worry about losing their Medicaid.



There are government programs to help disabled people keep their Medicaid if they get jobs.



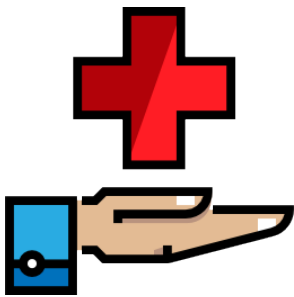
One program is called **Medicaid Buy-In**.



Medicaid Buy-In programs give Medicaid to disabled people who work.



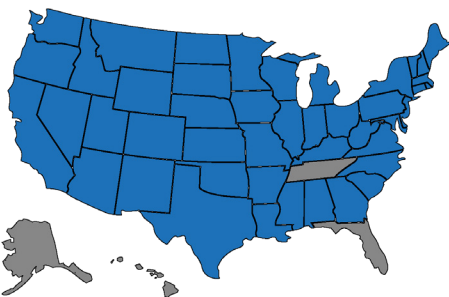
The Medicaid Buy-In program lets disabled workers make more money.



They can make more than minimum wage
and not lose their Medicaid.



People have to pay to get health care from a Medicaid Buy-In program. But they do not have to pay a lot.



46 states have a Medicaid Buy-In program.



Every state picks the rules for their own program.



Not a lot of people know about Medicaid Buy-In. We need to work on telling people with disabilities about these programs.

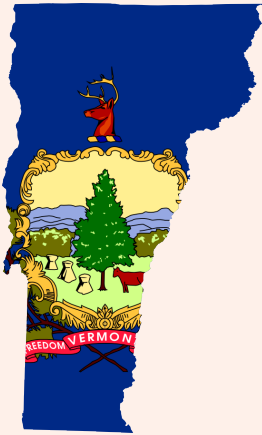


That way, workers with disabilities will know we can get **real work for real pay** and also get Medicaid.

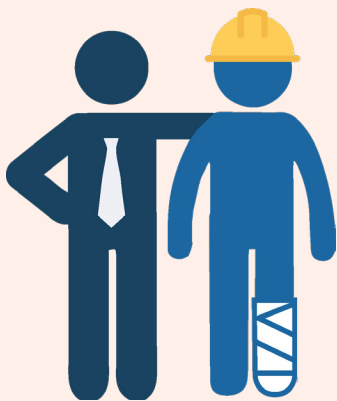
Example: Vermont



States need good examples of how to get rid of sheltered workshops for good.



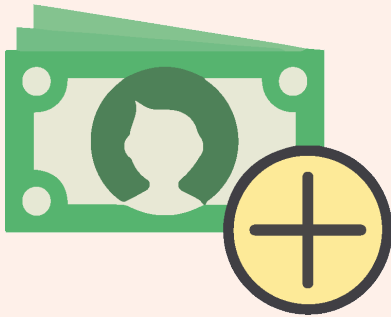
Vermont is a good example for other states to follow.



Vermont helped Medicaid work with **vocational rehabilitation** programs. They work together to help disabled people get supported employment.



Vermont takes some money from the vocational rehabilitation programs. Vermont uses this money to give people **supported employment**.



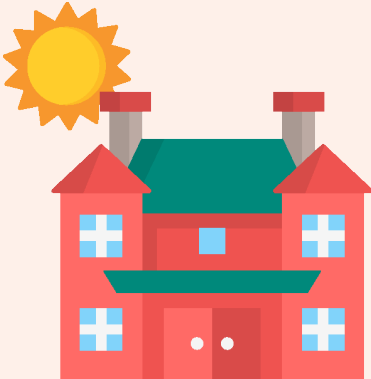
Medicaid adds more money. Vermont adds the Medicaid money to the supported employment money.



The money helps people with disabilities get **integrated employment**. Disabled people work in the same place as non-disabled people and make the same wage.



Eventually, Vermont did not have any more sheltered workshops.



Vermont also changed how it does **day habilitation**.



Now, the day habilitation programs are integrated instead of **segregated**. Now, disabled people in these programs get to choose what to do during the day. They get to be around non-disabled people.

Glossary



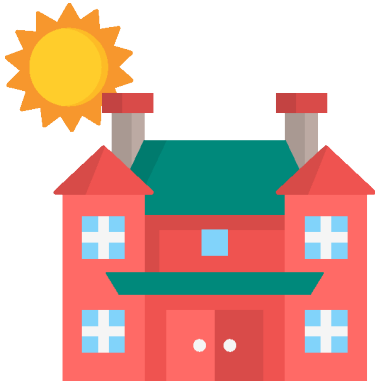
advocacy groups

Groups of people who fight for equal rights for people, including people with disabilities.



competitive employment

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



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.



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.



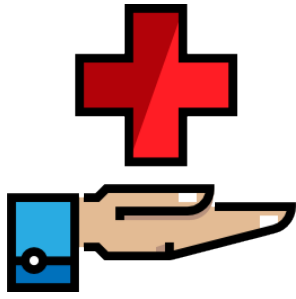
lawsuit

When you sue somebody, you are bringing a lawsuit against that person. A lawsuit is when you bring a disagreement between people to a court of law. The judge in the court makes a decision. The judge can force the other person to do something or to give you something.



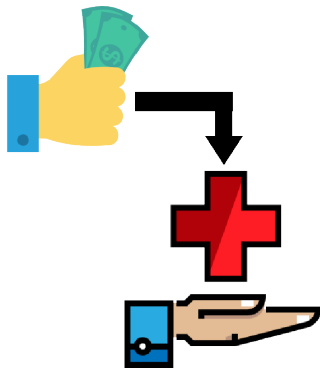
legal system

The laws of a country and the ways those laws are enforced. This includes courts and judges.



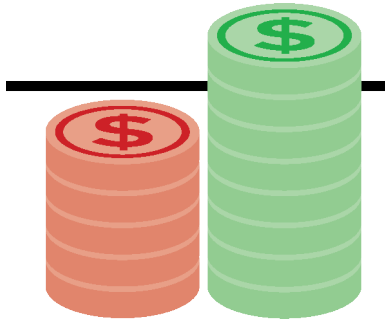
Medicaid

A health care program in the United States. The U.S. government pays for Medicaid.



Medicaid Buy-In program

A program that offers low-cost Medicaid health care to disabled people who work. The program allows disabled workers to earn more money without the risk of losing their Medicaid.



minimum wage

The minimum wage is the smallest amount that your boss can pay you for your work. Right now, the minimum wage is \$7.25. The law says that workers have to be paid at least \$7.25 for every hour of work they do. It is illegal to pay somebody less than \$7.25 for an hour of work.



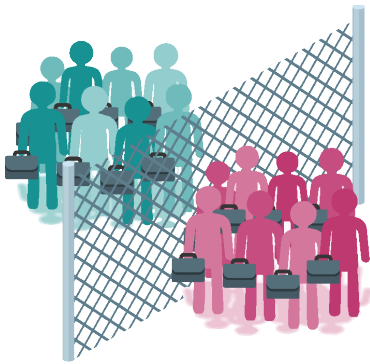
Olmstead

A Supreme Court case that decided disabled people have the right to get services in our communities.



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 employment

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



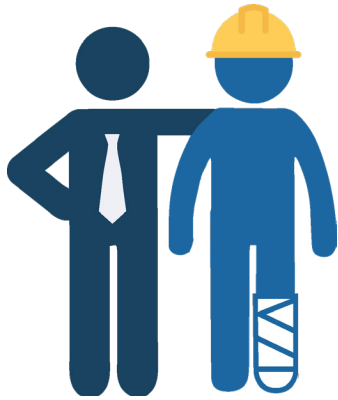
sheltered workshop

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.



vocational rehabilitation (VR)

Services that help disabled people find and keep employment.



wages

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