

## Governor's Task Force on Employment of People with Disabilities

Meeting notes: May 21, 2015

### **Attendees:**

Toby Olson, Robbi Norman, Andi Smith, Andreas Aguirre, Eleni Papadakis, Colleen Fukui-Sketchley, Sue Henrickson, Kirk Adams, Mark Sullivan, and Jim Baumgart

### **Summary of Results**

The proposed list of 2015 phase 1 strategies to be prioritized into a focused list are as follows:

1. Launch a state government leadership led initiative promoting a culture of valuing people with disabilities including access to a state government sponsored website
2. Create a state facilitated centralized funding pool for reasonable accommodations and technical assistance for state government
3. Promote the use of 'ticket to work' hiring incentive in state government, private employers and other government institutions
4. Create youth led internship to improve job readiness
5. Create a community forum that supports an electronic pipeline which employers and potential employees with disabilities can market and recruit
6. Raise the income eligibility for Healthcare for workers with disabilities
7. Develop and deliver a targeted instructional program for job seekers with disabilities
8. Market and promote the replication of best practices

Strategies recommended to be moved to a watch list:

- Expand supported employment availability under the state Medicaid Plan – this task is being worked by DSHS and does not require direct involvement from the task force

### **Next steps**

- Conduct a public meeting as part of the next task force meeting to solicit comment on the proposed strategies.
- DTF full in person meeting to follow public forum for final prioritization and recommendation to the Governor.
- The next task force meeting is July 22<sup>nd</sup> from 9-11 am at Nordstrom's Seattle.

### **Detailed Meeting Minutes**

- I. Update from the current legislative session – Andi Smith.

1. There is money provided in neither the House nor the Senate versions of the budget for centralized funding of reasonable accommodations or for the governor's leadership academy. It is unlikely that any funding will be provided in the final approved 2015-2017 biennial budget.
  2. As part of the governor's commitment to increasing employment for persons with disabilities, Jim Baumgart from the governor's policy office will be assigned to work this issue. Jim will provide support to the task force beginning in May.
  3. Additionally, state agencies will contribute a portion of their budget to establish a centralized fund for reasonable accommodations. The total amount of this funding will be determined after the 2015-2017 budget is passed and would be available no earlier than July 2015.
- II. Update on the leadership academy - Andreas Aguirre
1. Leadership academy is a tool to create internships leadership forum
    - i. 15% of DVR budget to be used for pre-employment services for youth aged 16-21 years old will assist with the leadership
- III. Discussion of current Phase I strategies
1. Disability Equality Index – six state agencies have participated in the survey. It takes roughly 20-30 hours to complete the survey. It can serve to assist agencies in identifying the low hanging fruit to improve disability employment within the agency and drive behavior change based on the survey results. The Office of Financial Management expects to have the survey results from the six state agencies compiled by July 2015.
  2. Access to a state sponsored website – Do we need to recommend a policy that establishes a standard for agency websites? Should there be a prioritization of existing agency websites that have the greatest impact on employment? Will new IT solutions accommodate those with disabilities?
  3. Disability Employment Initiative round 6 grant to increase participation and improve outcomes for jobseekers with disabilities through WorkSource and existing Career Pathways programs - ESD is writing two grant proposals that would include Task Force members serving on a coordinating committee to the grantees, the Task Force would be informed on the grant outcomes, and could incorporate best practices into future strategies.
  4. Talent Acquisition Portal – can the Monster solutions replacement for Go To Worksource and SKIES be adapted to include a filter for disabled workers and employers seeking to hire disabled workers.
- IV. Discussion of new opportunities for Phase I strategies
1. The following criteria was used when considering additions to the phase I strategies:
    - i. Does this strategy address an existing or emergent need?
    - ii. Is the strategy actionable?
    - iii. Is the strategy within the established roles of the task force?
    - iv. Who within the task force will be accountable for the strategy?
  2. Additions to the Phase I strategy that were recommended by task force members
    - i. Item # 17 - Establish a state contracting preference for businesses owned and operated by people with disabilities – The goal is would be to establish a contracting preference with the adoption of certifications standards and a contracting goal through a legislative

proposal. A similar strategy was considered for veterans in the 2015 legislative session (SB 6034)

- ii. New strategy - Develop and deliver a targeted instructional program for job seekers w/ disabilities – This strategy is based on the success surrounding increasing veteran employment. By creating specific targeted programs, veterans’ employment increase by more than 20% for job seekers transitioning from JBLM. Does a similar potential exist for transition services delivered to persons with disabilities?
  - iii. Item # 20 – Market and promote the replication of best practices developed by Washington businesses.
  - iv. Item #8 – Raise the income eligibility for Healthcare for workers with disabilities
3. Items from the strategy list that were moved to a watch list
    - i. Expand supported employment availability under the state Medicaid Plan – this task is being worked by DSHS and does not require direct involvement from the task force

V. The revised strategy list includes:

1. Launch a state government leadership led initiative promoting a culture of valuing people with disabilities including access to a state government sponsored website
2. Create a state facilitated centralized funding pool for reasonable accommodations and technical assistance for state government
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VI. Next steps

1. Conduct a public meeting as part of the next task force meeting to solicit comment on the proposed strategies.
2. The next task force meeting is July 22<sup>nd</sup> from 9-11 am at Nordstrom’s Seattle.