

Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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EMPLOYMENT FIRST

POLICY

A vast majority of citizens with disabilities across the nation, Ohio and Stark County are underemployed or unemployed despite their demonstrated ability to be valued employees. The Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities supports "Employment First" or as defined, the belief that each and every person eligible for services from the Board who is of working age and desires to work should have community-based employment as a service delivery outcome. Under the Employment First approach, community-based, integrated employment is the first option for employment services for youth and adults, including people with significant disabilities.

The Board is committed to making integrated, community-based employment of individuals with developmental disabilities a high priority despite the challenges in obtaining and maintaining a competitive job. Gainful and integrated employment for people with disabilities promotes dignity, respect, responsibility, economic independence, social opportunities, self-reliance, community inclusion and working to their maximum potential.

The Board defines community-based employment as:

- Regular or customized employment where employees with disabilities are paid by the business (unless self-employed), pay and benefits are the same for any employee of the company completing the same job and where there is opportunity for career advancement.
- A job where the majority of employees do not have disabilities and typical opportunities exist for integration and interactions with co-workers without disabilities, with customers, and/or the general public.

As part of Employment First, Board staff or subcontract providers will provide education to students, individuals and families about the Board's initiatives and the benefits of community-based employment. Integrated into the Board's Employment First initiatives, we will hold individuals with disabilities to the same employment standards, responsibilities, and sets of expectations as any working-age adult.

Historical Resolution Information	Reviewer(s):								
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