

“A world in which people with disabilities have unlimited employment opportunities”

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Office of Disability Employment Policy

Mission

- ODEP's mission is to develop and influence policies and practices to increase the number and quality of employment opportunities for people with disabilities.



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Target Population

- ODEP hopes to create opportunities for all working age people with disabilities that are age 18+
- In addition, ODEP works to prepare the youth with disabilities enter into labor force - typically age 14 and up



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ODEP's General Approach

**Research → Evaluation → Effective
Practices/Policies → Outreach →
Collaboration → Technical
assistance → Adoption**



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Five TA Centers

- PEAT - The Partnership on Employment & Accessible Technology promotes the employment, retention, and career advancement of people with disabilities through the development, adoption, and promotion of accessible technology.
- JAN – The Job Accommodation Network is a Leading source of free, expert and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues.
- Employer TA Center – The National Employer Technical Assistance Center is a collaborative that researches, influences and develops inclusive employer practices and policies and through EARN provides technical assistance to help employers hire and retain workers with disabilities.
- NCWD/Y – The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth promotes success for youth with disabilities entering the world of work.
- LEAD Center – The National Center on Leadership for the Employment and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities is a collaborative of disability, workforce and economic empowerment organizations dedicated to advancing sustainable individual and systems-level change to improve competitive, integrated employment and economic self-sufficiency for adults with disabilities.



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ODEP Initiatives

- EFSLMP – Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program
- Pathways Community College Demonstration Grants
- State Intermediary Initiative (SII)
- Return-to-Work/Stay-at-Work (RTW/SAW) Initiative
- Disability Employment Initiative (DEI)
- Disability.gov
- Campaign for Disability Employment (CDE)



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Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Plan (EFSLMP)

- Systems change effort built on the premise that all citizens, including individuals with significant disabilities, are capable of full participation in integrated employment and community life.
- Works with states to discover what works to achieve competitive integrated employment, share those practices with other states and assist them in implementation.



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Pathways Community College Demonstration Grants

- To increase the capacity of community colleges and other eligible institutions to provide inclusive integrated education, career development and training services to youth and young adults with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities.



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State Intermediary Initiative (SII)

- To advance the adoption and implementation of ODEP policies and effective practices at the state level, ODEP partners with state legislative and administrative bodies
- National Council of State Legislatures (NCSL), National Governors Association (NGA), Council of State Governments (CSG)).



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Return-to-Work/Stay-at-Work (RTW/SAW) Initiative

- Through its public/private community of practice policy group, ODEP learned that, RTW/SAW/strategies will result in lower benefits costs for the American taxpayer, lower personnel costs for employers, and a higher rate of retention for recovering workers, if sufficiently promoted
- Working to glean and promote the ideas and strategies identified in the two previous years of the initiative and to make the case for SAW/RTW both more coherent and viable through outreach efforts.



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Disability Employment Initiative (DEI)

- A grant program designed to improve the ability of American Job Center (AJCs) to effectively serve people with disabilities.
- Jointly administered by ODEP and the Employment and Training Administration, over \$96 million has been awarded to 26 states.
- States must use validated effective practices to create model service delivery systems.
 - Partnerships and Collaboration, Integrated Resource Teams, Blending and Braiding, Customized Employment, Self-Employment, Guideposts for Success, Asset Development
- Also requires state systems to serve as SSA designated Employment Networks (EN) that receive reimbursement when they provide services to beneficiaries under the SSA Ticket to Work program.



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Disability.gov

- An interactive, community-driven information Web site that provides comprehensive information about disability-related programs, services, laws and benefits.
- Portal to thousands of resources, updated daily, from the Federal government, educational institutions, non-profit organizations and state and local governments.



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Campaign for Disability Employment

- Nationwide media campaign developed through a public/private collaboration with leading business and disability organizations.
- Delivers media products and education and outreach tools to help employers, people with disabilities, families, educators and others understand the important role they play in advancing disability employment.



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Big Policy Issues

- Implementing Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
- Section 501
- Section 503
- Promoting accessible technologies



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Areas for Future Research

- Bridging the gap between labor force needs and labor supply
- Continuing research on stay-at-work/return to work
- Increase quality and quantity of disability data
 - Data on transitional outcomes for youth with disabilities