

Employment Initiative: Potential Strategies/Actions

From Two Sources:

1. Top 3 Priorities by Focus Area; May 30, 2014 Action Plan Brainstorming
2. AMHTA Employment Policy Review

CAPACITY BUILDING

May 30 Results (page 1)

- Capacity building committee **(5 votes)**
 - SWAT team of expert practitioners
 - Coordinate
 - List serve updates
 - Recurring needs assessment
- Standardized competency based training **(4 votes)**
 - Everyone gets the same training and competencies
 - Core competencies around employment (adapted from APSE)
 - Regional needs addressed
 - Interagency training team (CBC model)
 - Ongoing/cycled schedule of training
- One stop location for resources updated annually **(0 votes)**
 - List of resources
 - Toolkits
 - Policy directory
 - Tap into disability and aging center infrastructure

Policy Review Recommendations (page 35)

1. Strengthen staff qualification requirements and standardize contractual and personnel competency requirements across agencies
2. Invest in expanding the number of SDS and DBH providers that provide employment. Consider offering short term organizational development grants enabling agencies to restructure and rebalance resources to focus on integrated employment awarded in conjunction with technical support and consultation.
3. Require SDS providers to establish a goal to increase the number of individuals engaged in individual integrated employment, and to submit an organizational development plan for achieving the goal.
4. Identify and qualify approved training providers and fund training slots to support provider staff meeting qualification requirements.
5. Develop a statewide employment institute that is responsible for providing and coordinating training and providing onsite mentorship to staff. Such an institute could also provide regional employment consultants who are responsible for implementation support. Such an entity would operate in ways more congruent with the overall strategic direction the AMHTA would choose to set regarding its employment initiatives. It would also have the capacity to provide ongoing technical support to local organizations to implement needed structural changes in operating policies, program design, human resource development, and funding models.
6. Develop a provider recruitment training strategy for rural/remote communities. Consider use of elders

and their resources – a strategy that many of the Tribal VR programs use currently.

7. Require transition competencies as part of special education teacher certification at the middle school and secondary levels. Consider establishing a formal transition endorsement as part of teacher certification.
8. Develop an outreach strategy designed to build demand for employment outcomes and build the knowledge and effectiveness of job seekers and families to identify and manage employment supports.
 - Pilot peer-to-peer training and outreach strategies.

GOALS + OPERATING POLICY

May 30 Results (page 2)

- Develop a sustainability plan **(9 votes)**
- State leadership buy-in **(8 votes)**
 - Annual goals by agency
 - Plans at agency and provider levels
 - Annual report
 - Supported employment coordinator in each agency
- Common employment definitions and data **(7 votes)**
- Operating systems that are user friendly **(0 votes)**

Policy Review Recommendations (pages 27-29)

1. Establish common definitions of employment across Alaska agencies that clearly define individual integrated jobs (“gainful employment”), self-employment, subsistence employment, and group supported employment.
2. Establish subsistence employment as a supported outcome that is tracked within all Alaska agencies using a common definition based on the RSA regulations allowing subsistence as an acceptable employment outcome for VR services.
3. Define Medicaid waiver services so that pathway activities such as volunteering, in- program assessment, and program businesses are clearly separate from employment supports.
4. Prioritize individual employment outcomes in funding and policy by reviewing and adjusting operating policies, definitions, and rates. This increased emphasis would entail clearly stating that community employment is the expected and preferred outcome for people served in the community whether in DBH, SDS, or any other service system. In addition, there is a need to examine how Medicaid can be used more effectively to support employment even if the direct employment service is not supported (current DBH Medicaid operations). Also, for SDS, making waiver services funding more focused on employment than day habilitation services. SDS already has a stated employment goal at least. For DBH, employment should be highlighted as one of the 4 major goals of a Recovery oriented system of care – health/ providing effective treatment, building personal relationships, assisting people in stable housing, and helping people find personally satisfying and meaningful employment.
5. Review operating policies for the SDS plan of care to:
 - Speed up the approval process. Consider presumptive (immediate) approval for plan modifications in response to changes in employment status within defined parameters.

- Develop guidance on service definitions and provide cross training to providers and SDS staff on employment and service definitions.
 - Establish a mandatory employment goal within the care plan. Develop a structure and operating policy for this section of the plan.
6. Revise/clarify waiver billing rules related to face-to-face contact for individual supported employment services under the Medicaid waiver (SDS).
 7. Clarify the role of SDS day habilitation services as a resource for building career pathways.
 8. Develop DBH guidance on allowable employment supports and billing including examples and a frequently asked questions document. DBH service plans should include attention to employment for all consumers who have been unemployed 3 months or more. Even if the beneficiary does not wish to seek employment at the current time, the service plan should indicate how the clinical and case management staff will deal with this clinical risk factor.
 9. Require mental health services to provide or partner with employment supports.
 10. Establish goals and outcome expectations for employment participation across DBH funded mental health clinical services, not just for employment specific services.
 11. Review the allocation of intensive special education funding. Require that students receiving intensive funding have employment experiences prior to graduation. Allocate supplemental funds to the individual student rather than to the school district general funds.
 12. Clarify/expand SDS and VR engagement with schools prior to school exit. Portions of this recommendation are also addressed under interagency collaboration.
 - Define a role, responsibility, and funding model with SDS services for transition outreach to schools, students, and families. This may require changes to the role and funding for care coordinators, or the establishment of specialized care or transition coordinators.
 - Establish operating policy regarding early engagement with schools
 - Define in an MOU between at least DVR, SDS, and Education a systematic transition model for implementation statewide

LEADERSHIP

May 30 Results (see “Goals + Operating Policy” results below for leadership-specific action)

- State leadership buy-in **(8 votes)**
 - Annual goals by agency
 - Plans at agency and provider levels
 - Annual report
 - Supported employment coordinator in each agency

Policy Review Recommendations (pages 22-25)

Based on the personal visits and interactions over the course of the last four months and the extensive review of current operational policies, MMIS, and contracts the following issues arise for AMHTA and the state to

address in the area of leadership to improve the quality and quantity of employment services and outcomes for AMHTA beneficiaries and agency clients:

1. While Alaska contains many long standing advocates for employment for AMHTA beneficiaries there is still not a unambiguous expectation created within DBH, SDS and their partners that employment is a clear expectation, even for non-employment specific service agencies. Concurrently, though special projects are in operation (e.g., DEI) in more generic employment systems, there is not a statewide expectation about how these systems should collaborate to assist citizens with significant disabilities reach employment goals. The recent Employment First legislation takes some steps towards this goal but it has been too recent to fully understand its impact.
2. Furthermore, there is a need for much more clarity that these system expectations are significant mandates and that all stakeholders see them as serious. This is very hard to quantify but fits into the “People will know it when they see it” category. As a first step, it would be fruitful to have the Commissioners make a public statement regarding commitment to employment for all citizens. See Appendix F for a possible template for this based on a recommended interagency statement that ICI suggested in previous work in terms of DBH and DVR. Another statement of intent that indicates concrete action is a statement ICI suggested for AMHTA to implement regarding expectations of suppliers and contractors (see Appendix G). This could easily be adapted more broadly to a large state agency’s public statements of expectations and personal commitment. Overall, whatever the specific language used agency and political leaders in the Alaska systems must communicate a conviction that:
 - all people should work since
 - people with disabilities have the capacity to become employed
 - have the citizenship right to equal access to employment
 - will be assisted to do so because employment is a way for people to become economically self-sufficient, healthier, and fulfilled.
3. As noted in the Data and Performance Management section of this report there is a need for system administrators to set in place the data for performance measurement and financing systems that support the overall employment goals
4. There should be an expectation for Alaska system leadership above the staff levels designated for employment advocacy to ensure it is an agency wide goal, with all staff, including those not directly engaged in employment, expected to develop intervention strategies and competencies to support it
5. While leadership has to extend beyond just the formal authority structures those people in such top tier roles should develop agency wide strategies for creating employment “Champions” (internal and external). These activities should recognize that using both “authority” and “influence” are required to effect lasting change.
6. States with stronger employment outcomes have dedicated staff who have a full time responsibility for employment service and policy development. Some states have established regional employment staff who have responsibility for supporting policy and service implementation. Examples include Missouri, with a full time state employment director in its IDD agency and 12 regional employment consultants, and Florida with a state director, 2 additional central office staff, and 5 regional employment consultants.

In Alaska there is a designated employment (and housing) person located in DBH. While DBH has developed this position, it is not located in proximity to the central office and the position is located at

a fairly low level within the organization chart with little formal authority. This does not preclude the person's being a strong advocate for employment as the previous occupant of that position was, but it does indicate a certain amount of ambivalence about the relative priority that employment occupies within the DBH sphere of influence. DBH should reinforce its current commitment to this position and examine how to ensure it is seen by other agency staff and providers as a significant force in developing, monitoring, and funding employment services throughout the system.

There is no staff person at SDS who has a primary focus on employment, and leadership is provided by a staff member with significant competing priorities. As with DBH, SDS should create a lead employment person within its agency, and structure it so as to provide overt administrative visibility and potential authority.

7. Given the distribution of the Alaska population, establish regional employment consultants as either state staff or through a contracted employment institute to support implementation of services and policy. Regional consultants could support post-training implementation of skills for employment staff, work with providers to rebalance resources and build organizational capacity, and facilitate partnerships between schools, adult agencies, and VR.
8. There is a need for both DBH and SDS, in partnership with DVR and also training/ technical assistance partners to provide support for local implementation of employment service enhancement. Ultimately it is a leadership task to set standards and expectations for agency personnel and providers to carry out; but in the early innovation stage it is beneficial to provide concrete support through additional resources (financial and otherwise including training, technical assistance, additional staff help for a time, etc.).
9. The leadership of the agencies in the state should create more options for peer-to-peer and family outreach as one strategy for developing and nurturing grass roots leadership. These could include partnerships with state and local advocacy groups, development of community outreach forums, devising a formal communication plan to target different groups, and funding structures that facilitate peer support or peer advocacy (e.g., Recovery Centers in Behavioral Health, youth outreach activities for transition age students with I/DD).
10. If employment is an agency and system wide priority then it should be a topic addressed in all areas of agency operations, not just in the narrow scope of specific service programs. Employment must be an identified segment of every broad agency activity such as budgeting, quality assurance, program monitoring, new staff orientations, management/ supervisory training, etc., including but not limited to service planning approval and monitoring. One strategy would be to establish an agency employment team within SDS and DBH that includes staff from key areas including policy, budget and rate setting, service planning, and quality assurance with an explicit goal of identifying operating policies and practices that incentivize employment as a priority.
11. Many states have struggled with creating employment system change for many years, some more successfully than others, but none achieving success at a level that reaches an employment rate comparable to non-disabled citizens. A state like Alaska, while encompassing many unique features due to its geography, population, and culture also faces many of the same conundrums and barriers to change that other states do. One strategy that some state agency leaders in the I/DD arena have found useful is becoming part of the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN), a membership group of state I/DD agencies (currently with 30 members) facilitated jointly by the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disability Services (NASDDDS) and ICI. The SELN overview is available at www.seln.org for more information to decide about whether this may meet a state need for Alaska SDS.

FUNDING (FINANCING) + CONTRACTING

May 30 Results (page 3)

- Develop/submit a 1915c waiver that is employment focused **(6 votes)**
- Provide training on underused resources (PASS, Ticket, CRP status with DVR and how to access DVR) **(6 votes)**
- Develop system/strategy for describing return on investment **(2 votes)**
 - Service cost
 - Other costs (health care, etc.)

Policy Review Recommendations (pages 31-33)

1. Focus on redefining the role of day habilitation as both a pathway to employment and a wrap-around support for individuals who are employed, including addressing the CMS rules on community integration through Home and Community Based Services funding. Ensure that funding for day habilitation services does not redirect individuals from an employment pathway.
2. SDS and providers need to become more effective in using prevocational and SE funding in order to improve results. This will require internal and external training and technical assistance services and greater attention to program design, monitoring, and supervision and management within both SDS and providers.
3. Agencies need to streamline the current SDS service plan and VR eligibility/ IPE approval processes. There are logical reasons why these processes often are delayed but not enough attention has been devoted to streamlining them in recognition that these timelines inhibit client engagement and motivation.
4. DBH needs to use CCSS and TCM more effectively to support employment for its mental health/ substance abuse clients. An example of how this could be driven using the existing regulations within the Medicaid State plan is included in Appendix H, from work ICI has done dealing with a similar issue with the Missouri state Mental Health authority.
5. DBH and SDS should examine the feasibility of implementing a 1915[j] state plan that would include employment. This would give DBH greater flexibility in use of Medicaid funds to meet the employment needs of beneficiaries.
6. The current interactions between SDS and VR regarding the use of the Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver vs. VR funding has to be handled in terms of best for client needs not ease for those systems. It should not be acceptable for clients to be diverted from VR services either because they are seen as too challenging by DVR or because the SDS provider finds it easier and more beneficial for its own operations to just place the person within the existing HCBS service stream. Operational guidance needs to be jointly developed and implemented with an interagency staff development strategy.
7. It was not always clear as to the rationale for different rates for CCSS (DBH) and for SDS Supported Employment/ Pre Vocational as well as SDS time limits in Pre Vocational services. The reasons may be quite appropriate but transparency is lacking.
8. Agencies and providers should finance Human Resource Development and Capacity Building for all

direct line staff as well as employment managers.

9. SDS should conduct a comprehensive rate review and analysis that establishes rates based on outcome priorities and service costs. SDS may need to rebalance payment levels between day habilitation and employment (what should day habilitation be and when, if at all, should it be used?). One way to examine the impact of rates and the extent to which they prioritize specific services is to convert the rate/unit to a rate/direct staff person hour. Because personnel is the most significant cost to a provider and a system, converting rates to cost/direct staff person hour provides a normed comparison of state payment for an hour of service. Using that approach current rates in Alaska establish a strong incentive for non employment services and supports (Table 5).

Table 5. SDS rates per staff hour

	Rate as of 7/1/2014	Unit	Assumed ratio	Rate/hour/staff person
Day habilitation individual	\$10.71	15 minute	1:1	\$42.84
Day habilitation group	\$7.50	15 minute	1:6	\$180.00
SE individual	\$12.12	15 minute	1:1	\$48.48
SE group	\$8.49	15 minute	1:6	\$203.76
Pre employment individual	\$12.12	15 minute	1:1	\$48.48
Pre employment group	\$8.49	15 minute	1:6	\$203.76

10. SDS should resolve or eliminate the requirement that billable services only be face-to- face. Supports for integrated employment include a variety of activities such as employer interaction and support, coordination with families and residential staff, job development, or telephone support that are individual supports but may not involve face-to-face interaction with an individual. Defining these activities as billable provides a more accurate definition of the service, and allows providers the flexibility to provide supports in the most effective manner possible.
11. As noted in the Partnerships section, and equally relevant in regard to funding models, cross system joint service delivery would be enhanced if the affected agencies developed comparable staff/provider qualifications and rates across agencies (“Deeming”)
12. SDS could provide flexibility given the intermittent nature of employment support delivery if it changed its waiver funding authorization from units/day to units/quarter

SERVICE INNOVATION

May 30 Results (page 4)

- More concentrated training for job development with outside "sales" personality characteristics **(8 votes)**
- Put prevocational services into systems to lead into the DVR process **(3 votes)**

- More probation officers that understand mental health **(1 vote)**
 - Positive, proactive, constructive services rather than reactive

Policy Review Recommendations (pages 41-42)

1. Strengthen Alaska state government as a model employer by developing policy that extends the current provisional hiring program to create opportunity for customizing or creating jobs for qualified individuals who may not easily match established positions.
 - Set hiring goals for Trust beneficiaries within state agencies participating in the Trust employment initiative
 - Establish policy that provides more flexibility in Position Control Numbers (PCNs) and allows for job creation and customization
2. Expand access to benefits and work incentives counseling as well as broader financial education so that it is readily available to students and adults. Make benefits counseling an expected part of transition services. Consider a range of strategies including centralizing coordination of benefits counseling in an employment institute, adding benefits counseling as a waiver and state plan service, or allocating state funds to support benefits counseling.
3. Expand the range of employment options that are supported with state services including self-employment and subsistence options.
 - Develop pilot projects that use community members and elders as trainers or mentors for village and subsistence skills. One respondent described an example of a woman who hired her grandmother to teach her to bead.
 - Provide skill building opportunities with waiver services by providing supports for community volunteer work including chopping wood, dumping honey buckets etc.
 - Develop pilot projects that expand business-within-a-business (e.g., a consumer's operating a hot dog stand[s]he owns placed within a retail establishment), self-employment, and other customized employment outcomes.
4. Currently pre-employment is a modifier to supported employment for SDS services. Develop a distinct service, and strengthen guidance and training to the field on eligible activities.
5. Pilot the use of peer supports as employment advocates. This would provide both the opportunity to pilot employment of individuals with significant disabilities in state positions and to test peer outreach and support models. Examples of this model exist in various forms within many states (e.g., WA, OR, MO, NJ, MD, NY and several other state behavioral health systems and providers).
6. Develop policies and strategies for flexible support models including coworker supports and job sharing,
7. Extend wrap-around support models such as the Family First customized employment model, Fairbanks youth outreach, and engagement of adult providers in IEP meetings to address systematic barriers to employment such as homelessness particularly in remote communities.

INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

May 30 Results (page 5)

- Interagency training academies on employment -bring them back **(13 votes)**
 - Academy for special education teachers
- Use resources more wisely for training **(5 votes)**
 - Structuring leadership and stakeholder focus
- Create a one stop place for clearinghouse for policies, definitions **(0 votes)**

Policy Review Recommendations (pages 37-39)

1. There are various Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) that exist already in the state among and between various entities (e.g., SDS- DVR, DBH-DVR). These need to be analyzed in terms of their current ability to create seamless transitions allowing for joint clients and where appropriate, braided or at least coordinated funding.
2. There is a need for public agencies to use a “lean management” business principle approach to identify agency specific processing barriers that have been identified throughout this process. Examples mentioned frequently throughout this endeavor have been the timing of SDS service plan approval and the DVR eligibility and Individual Plans for Employment (IPEs) development process.
3. The recent enactment of the Employment First legislation provides an excellent opportunity to include the entire fabric of state government agencies, whether involved with disability or not, as partners in developing employment options for Trust beneficiaries within state governments. It would be good as part of this focus to encourage the state to set a numerical goal for including people with disabilities within its workforce, ideally identifying Trust beneficiaries as a target group within this number.
4. Agencies that support employment currently (DHSS, DEED, DOLWD) should consider “deeming” of employment providers, i.e., if providers are approved for a specific service provision in one agency having that approval deemed acceptable by other public agencies who offer that service for their clients. A possible alternative method of accomplishing the same outcome would be for different agencies to develop a joint qualifications process.
5. Rapid engagement and joint service planning are seen as important clinical elements for effective service delivery for beneficiaries with significant disabilities. Consequently DVR, SDS, DBH, Criminal Justice, local school systems should develop specific structures that focus on enhancing the capacity of each of these agencies to create service pathways that maximize the pacing of service delivery and engagement of clients and make joint planning occur regularly and consistently without undue delay.
6. There appears to be some confusion or concern in both DVR and SDS about whether they have any ability under their current regulations to pay for career/work supports when the consumer is still in school. Every agency has an equivalent of a “last dollar in” requirement for use of its funds and this mandate tends to be complicated by the fact that most young beneficiaries seeking career/work supports would be covered under an IEP. There are various ways that other states have managed to provide some services for such students (e.g., paying for summer work experience when not in school, getting involved in work and career service interventions in last year of school). ICI would encourage the agencies involved to work collaboratively with the state Department of Education and local school districts to develop models of early intervention for students with disabilities under an IEP that does not detract from school systems’ responsibility for students under IEPs while at the same time providing timely and efficient employment oriented services to this same group. This intersection

between DVR and school systems is more relevant with the recent passage of the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA), replacing WIA, which mandates increased involvement of DVR in transition services while youth are still in school.

7. There is some but not nearly complete overlap between DVR and SDS providers and it would expand the state's employment service capacity as well as offer more options for seamless transitions between agencies to increase the amount of overlap.
8. It appears from the national 911 data (the federal reporting that DVR has to abide by) that Alaska has more limited engagement with [potential] clients with I/DD than many other states. Given the multitude of system change and employment grants that have been developed for Alaska, the long term working relations among agency staff that exist, and the current operation of the AIEI grant, this information appears somewhat surprising. It would be useful for representatives of these two agencies to examine these statistics and offer suggestions as to why this situation exists and need not change, update them if they do not accurately reflect the current status of services, or develop a plan for rectifying this state of affairs if it is seen as problematic. Any plan for system change probably should include some shared guidance and training across SDS and DVR about eligibility process and short and long term supports.
9. The Tribal programs are functions of sovereign nations and thus independent of most control by state agencies. Nevertheless there are options for enhanced partnering especially between Tribal VR and the state DVR. There is a federal requirement that Tribal VR agencies develop an MOA with the state DVR. These do exist in Alaska and some clients are shared currently. There is an opportunity in addressing employment issues statewide for Tribal and state DVR collaboration especially around the development of employer relations (to avoid duplication) and share expertise that the state DVR might have around small business development.
10. Since employment is a goal, one partner that cannot be overlooked is the business community and employers. Effective employment outcomes cannot be achieved without such relationships. It is crucial to understand that fruitful business relations are a tool for employment providers, not an end in itself. Any linkage with business ultimately must be judged by outcomes in terms of beneficiaries hired or retained in employment. There is a rationale for overall employer marketing between state government entities and employers in the state both as an outgrowth of the Employment First legislation and the recent inclusion of a 7% hiring goal for employees with disabilities for federal contractors under the Office of Federal Contract Compliance (OFCCP). Ultimately neither of these laudable legislative and regulatory improvements gets people hired themselves. That still requires much employer- provider-beneficiary contact on a 1-1 basis. However, these public expressions of intent do provide a context to engage employers in high visibility commitments of good will and create expectations for increased hiring behavior for individual advocates to pursue.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT + DATA MANAGEMENT

May 30 Results (none)

Policy Review Recommendations (pages 44-46)

1. One of the key management strategies of effective data management and performance measurement is to keep data expectations simple, streamlined, and clearly defined. Data should be collected at the individual beneficiary or participant level, and it would behoove the agencies to collect only 3-5 data points regarding employment. For funding agencies ICI would recommend that the following constitute the core elements of information expectations and reporting from providers:
 - o Work setting/type (e.g. individual integrated job, group supported job, self employment,

- subsistence employment)
 - Average hours worked in a given period (monthly is probably best)
 - Weekly or monthly gross income over that same period
 - Employment, not job, retention in a quarter and year (i.e., days or weeks working in the community in the time period even if the person changed jobs)
 - Consider: Source of paycheck, eligible for paid time off
2. There is a need to develop agency reporting with sharable employment data that can be compared across systems and made **easily accessible and readily understandable** to the public and advocates. Data reporting would be made available by provider and region of the state to reflect different economies and labor market conditions. Core systems measures include a summary of the variables above and:
 - Positive employment outcomes (%) for all beneficiary or consumer groups within the funded agency (number employed divided by number served overall)
 - Success rate (%) of employment services (people employed/ number served in employment service)
 3. Each system (a major issue for SDS and DBH) should define what a target employment outcome would be and what sort of processes should be in place for systems and providers to achieve “success” in terms of the respective agency expectations. For example, an agency might state employment at least at minimum wage for at least 25 hours a week as the goal employment providers are expected to reach with their clientele. This definition must encompass one for “employment” and should include:
 - acceptable wage rate (weekly wage is much more powerful indicator than hourly wage rate),
 - number of hours of employment
 - type of integration desired in a work place (or Is integration assessment needed if income and hours worked meet acceptable criteria?)
 - what is considered a quality job match meeting the consumer’s needs and how that will be measured
 4. This system expectation of success is a separate issue from what an individual success story may entail. Each beneficiary has to be the judge of what is his/her own definition of personal employment goals and achievements. However, the agencies have a responsibility to identify what they expect their resources to help consumers concretely to achieve vis a vis employment. This outcome expectation is meant as a staff and agency performance measurement not an assessment or judgment of beneficiaries’ personal life decisions.
 5. More than mere semantics, the agencies must be clear to their contractors and constituencies that employment is an outcome not a service stream. So while it is essential to identify employment service components and processes, the key data elements should be identified in terms of employment achievement, not what sorts of employment services are offered. Also, outcome measures must be developed that reflect specific employment status not a more generic “receiving employment services”. DBH has the ability to collect that within the CSR reporting but it is not always used to assess or report on outcomes consistently.
 6. Volunteering, job shadows, and community work experiences are often valuable employment pathways, especially for certain sub-groups of beneficiaries such as transition age students with disabilities, people with early onset Alzheimer’s disease, ex- offenders, and people dealing with substance abuse problems. These service modalities can (and should be) tracked by the funding agency but are not employment outcomes, and thus should not be counted as such.
 7. It would be appropriate to use the DEI grant to develop a system to ensure the inclusion of data on

employment of customers with disabilities to the standard AK DOLWD reporting.

8. Since employment is the desired outcome, it is imperative that one sort of information that is collected and used relates to the labor market overall. SDS, DBH, and VR should be obtaining from DOLWD and elsewhere constantly evolving data identifiable to specific areas of the state regarding economic development activities, wage rates, job openings, and career pathways. All of these categories can be conceptualized as the need for more accurate and timely labor market information for both agency strategic planning and individual client service planning.
9. Standard DOLWD reports on employment participation and population statistics do not currently include disability as a variable. Require that all DOLWD workforce and population reports include disability as a variable in addition to gender, ethnicity, and age.
10. Given that the state has an AIEI grant focusing on transition age beneficiaries with I/DD, another employment need is for the educational systems to add optional variables on wages, hours worked, and type of job in their reporting for IDEA Indicator 14. Indicator 14 concerns itself with the outcomes that youth with disabilities achieve once they exit high school. The three Indicator 14 elements are:
 - “Percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were:
 - Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.
 - Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.
 - Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.”