

EMPLOYMENT FIRST MAINE COALITION

BYLAWS

Second Draft July 31, 2013

Reviewed and Approved by Membership: _____

ARTICLE 1 – NAME and PURPOSE

Section 1: The name of the organization shall be the Employment First Maine Coalition, as established by the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 26, Chapter 39.

Section 2: ~~The Employment First Maine Coalition (hereafter “the Coalition”) is to serve as a conduit for information and input for advocacy groups, commissions, and councils that focus on issues facing persons with disabilities in Maine, including making recommendations to the Governor, Legislature, and state agencies regarding ways to improve the administration of employment services and employment outcomes for persons with disabilities, and to conduct other activities consistent with the purpose of the Employment First Maine act.~~

The coalition shall:

- A. Promote coordination and collaboration among state agencies that provide services and supports for persons with disabilities to advance integrated community-based employment and customized employment services for persons with disabilities;
- B. Review, on a continuing basis, state policies, plans, programs and activities concerning the integrated community-based employment and customized employment of persons with disabilities that are conducted or assisted, in whole or in part, by state agencies or state funds in order to determine whether such policies, programs, plans and activities effectively meet the employment needs of persons with disabilities;
- C. Serve as a conduit for information and input to aid in the implementation of the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 26, chapter 39 for advocacy groups, commissions and councils that focus on issues facing persons with disabilities in the State;

- D. Make recommendations to the Governor, the Legislature and state agencies regarding ways to improve the administration of employment services and employment outcomes for persons with disabilities;
- E. Review and comment on proposed legislation affecting the employment of persons with disabilities; and
- F. Propose and promote rules and policies to state agencies that provide services and supports to persons with disabilities to improve integrated community-based employment and customized employment of persons with disabilities.
- G. The coalition may submit annually, by the first Wednesday in December, proposed legislation to the Legislature to improve integrated community-based employment and customized employment of persons with disabilities. Legislation submitted pursuant to this subsection may include recommendations regarding extending the coalition's authorization beyond the date specified in subsection 7.
- H. For purposes of this subsection, "customized employment" means employment acquired as a result of implementation of a flexible blend of strategies, services and supports designed to increase employment options for job seekers with complex needs through voluntary negotiation of the employment relationship with the employer.
- I. For purposes of this section, "integrated community-based employment" means employment in the competitive labor market that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis in the general community or through self-employment and for which a person with a disability is compensated at or above the minimum wage but not less than the prevailing wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by persons without disabilities.

J. For purposes of this section, "state agency" means the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services or the Department of Labor.

ARTICLE 2 – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: The coalition shall strive to ensure that at least half of its members are persons with disabilities.

Section 2: The Chair, or the Chair's designee, shall maintain an official membership roster.

Section 3: ~~The coalition membership shall be constituted by those entities listed in the statute, and by additional individuals and entities as elected by a majority vote at a duly called and properly noticed meeting when a quorum is present.~~

The members of the Coalition shall be only those individuals whose names appear on the membership roster maintained at all times by the Chairman of the Coalition. The membership roster shall include:

- (a)** all individuals who may be members pursuant to Section B-1.1 Subsections A-U of the Act that certify their eligibility by submitting a completed and signed Membership Registration to the Chairman of the Coalition in the form attached to these Bylaws as Exhibit A (the "Membership Registration Form");
- (b)** One individual who is a certified rehabilitation provider that provides integrated community-based employment or customized employment services who the Coalition has invited to join the Coalition as a Member and who has submitted a complete Membership Registration Form (note that one individual must be invited, but no more than one);

- (c) At least two individuals who are parents of a person with disabilities who the Coalition has voted to invite to join the Coalition as members and who have submitted a complete Membership Registration Form (note that at least two parents must be invited, but additional parents may be invited); and
- (d) Any other individuals who the Coalition may vote to invite to join the Coalition as a member and who have submitted a complete Membership Registration Form (note that the Coalition may, but need not, vote to invite an unlimited number of additional individuals to join the Coalition as members).

The Coalition shall endeavor to recruit members to fill all of the seats available for potential members and replacements for any members who resign.

Section 4: Any member may resign as a Member of the Coalition by giving 30 days advance written notice to the Chairman of the Coalition.

Section 5: All members of the Coalition are expected to attend meetings of the Coalition, or provide advance written notice to the Chairman when they cannot attend. A member who fails to attend three successive meetings of the Coalition without providing advance written notice of each absence to the Chairman shall be deemed to have resigned as a member of the Coalition and his or her name shall be removed from the membership roster without action by the Coalition.

Section 6: Any member may be removed as a member of the Coalition at the discretion of the members with or without cause or notice at any meeting of the Coalition by vote of the members. Without limiting the broad discretion of the members of the Coalition to remove members as aforesaid, submission of a false Membership Registration Form shall constitute grounds for immediate removal. Any action by the members to remove a member shall be final and open to question by none.

Section 7: When acting on any business before the Coalition, the Coalition shall act by majority vote of the members voting at a duly called and properly noticed meeting of the Coalition when a quorum is present.

ARTICLE 3 – OFFICERS

Section 1: The coalition shall annually elect from among its members a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary to serve a term of one year.

Section 2: The Chair of the Coalition shall:

- (a) Call meetings with proper advance notice as defined in Article 4 Section 1 of the coalition bylaws;
- (b) Facilitate or delegate facilitation of meetings;
- (c) Prepare meeting agendas in consultation with the Coalition steering committee;
- (d) Ensure minutes are taken and distributed by the Coalition Secretary;
- (e) Call for votes;
- (f) Work to build consensus around issues;
- (g) Represent the Coalition and serve as point of contact;
- (h) Coordinate Coalition workgroup activities.

Section 3: The Vice-Chair of the Coalition shall:

- (a) Assume duties as Chair if the Chair is not available;
- (b) Assist the Chair in performance of duties.

Section 4: The Secretary of the coalition shall:

- (a) Ensure the minutes are taken and distributed, including on the Coalition website.
- (b) Maintain the roster of Coalition members;
- (c) Draft correspondence as requested by the Chair.

ARTICLE 4 – COALITION MEETINGS

Section 1: Notice of meetings – Notice of all meetings shall be provided to all coalition members at least 30 days, but no more than 90 days, before any coalition meeting. Notice shall be provided by the preferred method of contact provided by each member as recorded on the formal membership roster.

Section 2: Minutes - The chair or the chair's designee shall ensure that minutes of all meetings be promptly compiled and permanently maintained as a public record of the acts of the coalition. A draft of the minutes of each meeting of the coalition must be circulated to the members with the notice of the succeeding meeting. Minutes shall be posted on the coalition website and remain available to the public.

Section 3: Quorum - A quorum is constituted by a majority of the coalition members.

Section 4: Voting - The members of the coalition may act only by majority vote of the members present in person or via telephone or remotely such as by Skype, at duly called and properly noticed meetings when a quorum is present.

Section 5: All meetings of the coalition must be open to the public and public comment must be invited before action on any item of business is taken.

ARTICLE 5 – STEERING COMMITTEE

Section 1: The coalition steering committee shall be comprised of the coalition's elected chair and vice-chair and the leaders of the individual workgroups. Other steering committee members may be elected by majority vote of coalition members.

ARTICLE 6 – WORKGROUPS

Section 1: The primary workgroups of the Coalition shall be:

- (a) Legislation/Rule Change Group
- (b) Communication Group
- (c) Business/Employer Group
- (d) Transition/Children's Issues

Section 2: Additional workgroups may be added as determined necessary by the Coalition membership by majority vote.

Non-members of the Coalition may participate in its workgroups, but cannot vote or take leadership roles.

Workgroups will have defined project plans within their scope, and will coordinate information and activities with the rest of the Coalition membership.

ARTICLE 7 – AMENDMENTS

Section 1: These bylaws may be amended when necessary by a two-thirds majority vote of coalition members in attendance and voting.

Section 2: Proposed amendments to these bylaws must be distributed to the coalition membership, as listed on the formal membership roster, no less than 30 days in advance of the coalition considering the amendment.

