

# EmploymentFirstMaine

## Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

*Draft Version*

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, October 1, 2014  
Time: 11am – 1pm  
Location: MDOL, 45 Commerce Drive, Augusta  
Facilitator: Betsy Hopkins

### Present

Name/Affiliation	Name/Affiliation
Betsy Hopkins, VR	Rick Langley, DRC
Scott Jacqmin, DEI	Lisa Sturtevant, OADS
Debbie Gilmer, Syntiro, APSE	Jan Breton, DOE
Brad Strause, Alpha One	Jane Jewell, Epilepsy Foundation NE
Mike McLellan, SILC	Karen Fraser, BRS
Carrie Lemos, Unlimited Solutions	Leticia Huttman, SAMHS
Kim Moody, DRC	Lisa Soucie, High Hopes Clubhouse
Diane Fregon, DBVI	Kelly Osborn, Goodwill
Mel Clarrage, CDE	

### Discussion and Issues

#### 1. Discussion of Policy recommendations for years 1, 2, and 3 of EFM Coalition

Betsy: Overview of work groups recommendations. Agreed we would format this information into a working document, with recommendations for years 1, 2, and 3, and tiered as legislation, policy, or other initiatives. Agreed we

**Every person. Every talent. Every opportunity.**

would use legislative/policy groups template and merge all recommendations for next time.

**Jan/Transition group recommendations:**

1. That the various State agencies formalize a process for working together to develop transition protocols based on best practice that are most likely to lead to employment.
2. That mechanisms be developed to ensure that collaboration among state agencies is implemented at all levels and especially at the practitioner level.
3. That resources be repurposed or new ones developed in order to conduct the work of transition planning and implementation.

**Lisa/Business Engagement group recommendations:**

1. A coordinated Educational/Marketing approach to Businesses about the benefits of engaging a diverse workforce that includes employees with all abilities.
  - In order to share consistent information, practices and approaches based in best employment practices.
  - Utilize Maine stories that show outcomes.
  - Across all DOE,DHHS, DOL offices that engage with businesses.
2. Provide increased support to Businesses that include resources, tools and access to information on Accessibility, Accommodations, Electronic Applicant Screening, Disclosure and other areas as identified by business
  - In order to have ongoing, updated information readily available to all businesses.
3. Provide a Business to Business platform that engages and shares information, resources and strategies that have been effective in a Business
  - Continued financial support to efforts such as The Maine Business Leadership Affiliate established in 2010 that provides a mechanism for business to support one another
  - In order to promote more businesses hiring employees with disabilities
4. Re-commit Maine as a Model Employer with an Updated Executive Order
  - In order to bring new focus to Maine State Governments commitment to hiring employees with disabilities

5. Increased focus about Business as a Customer in the Employment First Initiative and across all DOL, DHHS and DOE initiatives
  - Allow for Business Consultant roles within State Offices that provide support and services directly to a Business engaging in disability hiring initiatives
  - Implementation of new WorkForce Innovation and Opportunity Act Employer Section
  - Improves Services to Employers and Promotes Work-Based Training: WIOA contributes to economic growth and business expansion by ensuring the workforce system is job-driven – matching employers with skilled individuals.

**Debbie/Capacity Building group recommendations:**

**YEAR ONE**

1. That a comprehensive workforce system be established and build upon over time, a wide range and tiered system of professional development and technical assistance be made available to providers of service (including educators) to individuals with disabilities across the state that is accessible and affordable to assure a common foundational level of knowledge and skill in at least the following topics:
  - Strategic planning for agencies to address conversion of services
  - Innovative funding strategies to support an array of employment options including blending, braiding and amalgamating funding using strategies such as resource ownership, business within a business, and using SSA work incentives like PASS plans for job creation.
  - Whole life supports—wrapping a supports package around an individual that includes employment and inclusive community supports
  - Career Planning and Discovering Personal Genius ™
  - Information on SSA work incentives and using work incentives
  - Customized Employment
  - Job development and job carving
  - Strategies to negotiate with employers
  - Financial literacy, financial planning, asset development and economic empowerment
  - Evidence-based Individual Placement Supports and integration of employment into the ACT teams
2. That professional development and technical assistance be required for all providers that creates a culture of supportive employment for all

3. That an Employment First 101 curriculum be designed and made widely available in multiple formats to provide a values-based and foundational introduction to the concept that everyone can work. EF 101 should be required for case managers, educators, and policymakers and recommended for individuals with disabilities, parents and board members.
4. That a job coach credential be established and added to the career ladder of Maine's employment support providers. Training for this credential must be accessible and affordable and jointly recognized by the Maine Departments of Education, Labor and Health & Human Services.
5. That the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services adopt a policy of presumptive eligibility for individuals on all of the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waivers.
6. That the use of sub-minimum wage certificates (14c in the Fair Labor Standards Act) be phased out and eliminated in Maine as it is direct conflict with the Employment First Maine Act.
7. That the Maine Department of Health & Human Services' Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services work in collaboration with MaineCare to submit a 1915(i) waiver.
8. That a mentoring program be designed and delivered to support agency leadership in their transformation.
9. That provider agencies, at least annually, post a "Report Card" that identifies the number of individuals served, the number of individuals employed, the number of hours worked and wages earned.

## YEAR TWO

10. That, as a component of the CMS required transition plan, Maine re-allocate Medicaid funded intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health funds from segregated day treatment and/or day habilitation services to pay for employment services consistent with the new CMS final rule on non-residential community services.
11. That the Departments of Education, Labor and Health & Human Services assure and annually report that individuals with disabilities served are on a pathway to employment and barriers are addressed in person-centered planning processes.

12. That Maine's Department of Education will use the "Discovering Personal Genius" model in its transition and career planning process.
13. That, as a component of the CMS transition plan, Maine eliminate the conflict of interest where the individual with a disability is employed by the same agency that is providing him/her services and supports of any kind (employment, residential, etc).
14. That small group employment be phased out and eliminated as it is in direct conflict with the Employment First Maine Act.

### YEAR THREE

15. That the analysis of pre-service programs be conducted and recommendations be made to enhance and improve university-based programs related to skills and knowledge necessary at the pre-service level across education, rehab, social services, etc.

### **Kim/Legislative/Policy group recommendations:**

#### Year One

##### A. Legislation

Phase out the use of sub-minimum wage provisions in Maine's service system.

Develop 1915 (i) waiver opportunity for Maine mental health consumers.

##### B. Policy/Rules

Promote a message, from the Commissioners of DHHS, DOL, and DOE, and from management at funded service provider agencies, advocating a strong Employment First orientation.

##### C. Other initiatives

Develop and promote resources on customized employment, highlighting successful employment outcomes.

Develop and promote resources for families regarding proper transition services, what good transition should look like, and how to conduct strong career goal setting.

## Year Two

### A. Legislation

### B. Policy/Rules

Commit Maine's DOE to using Discovering Personal Genius model in transition/career planning process.

### C. Other initiatives

Develop and promote resources on funding and utilizing adaptive equipment and assistive technology in employment.

Explore crowd-sourced transportation options, outside the box carpooling, and public/private collaboration with small businesses and schools.

## Year Three

### A. Legislation

Phase out small group employment.

Reform the reimbursement for providers, giving preference for employment supports rather than day habilitation services.

Amend the Section 21 and 29 waivers to address funding disincentives and service caps/limitations on employment support services.

Increase funding for long term employment supports, and create greater flexibility in job supports, i.e. when a person doesn't need a job coach but needs other support to maintain long term employment, or needs only short term 1:1.

Fund and develop apprentice and practicum experience opportunities for high school students with disabilities.

B. Policy/Rules

Develop a system to hold schools accountable for transition outcomes that include employment by the time a student graduates.  
A report card?

C. Other initiatives

**2. Planning for October 17 Summit**

Debbie: 100 registrants, Joyce will be resending notices.

Partner agencies should re-send as well. And EFM member should be registering!  
Distribute packets with EFM act, PowerPoint, agenda, bios, info re website, member list, work groups, evaluation, alternative format for online.

Need info by oct 14, noon.

**3. ODEP Community of Practice**

Debbie: In 2011, Maine applied to be a protégé state, but was not selected. Current opportunity re the community of practice and subject matter expertise: Selecting 15 states, decision made in December, resulting in 100 hours of on-site technical assistance and other support. 250 hours total, with 100 on-site. 5 or 6 priority areas. Invite is out, Maine will likely get it if we apply. Not clear re application details yet. Agreed we should proceed, Debbie will take lead and coordinate with others.

**Next Meeting: Full Coalition Meeting**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Friday, November 14, 2014</b>
<b>Time</b>	<b>11am to 1pm</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>MDOL, 45 Commerce Drive, Frances Perkins Room</b>