



**LEAD CENTER**

# Pathways to Employment: A Guide for Advocates

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# TODAY'S PRESENTERS

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**The National Center on Leadership for the Employment and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities (LEAD)** is a collaborative of disability, workforce and economic empowerment organizations led by **National Disability Institute** with funding from the **U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy**, Grant No. #OD-23863-12-75-4-11.

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# LEAD CENTER MISSION

- ▶ To advance sustainable individual and systems level change that results in improved, competitive integrated employment and economic self-sufficiency outcomes for individuals across the spectrum of disability.

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# OBJECTIVES

Participants will learn about:

- ▶ The opportunities created by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to support employment and economic advancement outcomes for people with disabilities
- ▶ Partnerships, collaborations and resources that can provide services through formal and informal public and private systems, and how to locate them in your community
- ▶ Opportunities for people with disabilities, providers and advocates to become involved in the implementation of WIOA and to take charge of their employment future and advocate individually and collectively
- ▶ Useful resources



# STRUCTURE OF THE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEM



# WHAT ARE AMERICAN JOB CENTERS (AJCS)?

- ▶ AJCs, formerly called One-Stop Career Centers, are designed to provide a full range of assistance to job seekers under one roof.
- ▶ AJCs provide training, referrals, career counseling, job listings, and similar employment-related services.
- ▶ A job seeker can visit a center in person or connect to the center's information remotely through a computer.
- ▶ Services are free.
- ▶ Staff are available to help people look for work, find training, and answer employment-related questions.
- ▶ AJCs have computers, printers, phones and fax machines available that people can use in their job search.



# WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE FROM AN AJC?

Services vary by location but can include:

- ▶ Resource rooms with phones, free internet and resume writing tools
- ▶ Employment plan development
- ▶ Job training services
- ▶ Job search assistance
- ▶ Career counseling
- ▶ Practice interviewing
- ▶ Skills testing
- ▶ Labor market and employer information
- ▶ Employment Workshops



# WHAT DOES WIOA PROVIDE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

- ▶ Job seekers with and without disabilities may receive and benefit from job search and placement assistance, career counseling, skills training, and other supportive services.
- ▶ Emphasis on career pathways and sector partnerships to promote employment in in-demand industries and occupations
- ▶ Establishes a single Unified or Combined State Strategic Plan that includes VR



# FROM A DISABILITY PERSPECTIVE WHAT ARE OTHER THE BIG CHANGES?

- ▶ People with disabilities must be a part of State and Local Strategic Plans
- ▶ Performance outcomes must be identified and reported (including by disability)
- ▶ Criteria for certifying American Job Centers must include assessing physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology and materials, and appropriate staff training and support



# WHAT ARE BIG CHANGES REGARDING YOUTH?

- ▶ 75% of the youth formula program funds must be spent on out-of-school youth as compared to 30% under WIA (Title I)
- ▶ At least 20% of local youth formula funds must be used for work experiences such as summer jobs, on the job training and internships (Title I)
- ▶ At least 15% of state VR funds must provide pre-employment transition services to prepare youth for post-secondary education and employment (Title IV)



# ADDITIONAL SYSTEM COORDINATION REQUIREMENTS (TITLE IV)

- ▶ VR must enter into formal agreements with state Medicaid, I/DD, and Mental Health agencies to improve coordination of resources
- ▶ VR must improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis.
- ▶ In the state plan, VR must indicate how services will be coordinated with the Ticket to Work program
- ▶ VR must improve engagement with in-demand industry sectors to increase competitive integrated employment opportunities



# FOR THE FIRST TIME

- ▶ Adds definition of customized employment in Title IV:
  - ▶ Competitive integrated employment
  - ▶ Based on individual determination of strengths, needs, and interests of the individual with a significant disability
  - ▶ Designed to meet specific needs of the individual and employer
  - ▶ Carried out through flexible strategies
- ▶ Promotes financial literacy activities for youth and adults with disabilities (Title I)
- ▶ Extends length of time for supported employment services from 18 to 24 months (Title IV)
- ▶ Places new limitations on use of subminimum wage (Title IV)
- ▶ Creates a Federal Cross-Agency Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities (Title IV)



# WHAT MIGHT CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT LOOK LIKE IN THE WORKPLACE?

Customized employment might involve:

- ▶ **Task reassignment**, with some of the job tasks of a worker reassigned to a new employee. This reassignment allows the incumbent worker to focus on the critical functions of his/her job (i.e., primary job responsibilities) and complete more of the central work of the job. Task reassignment typically takes the form of job creation, whereby a new job description is negotiated based on current, unmet workplace needs.
- ▶ **Job carving**: An existing job description is modified, containing one or more, but not all, of the tasks from the original job description.
- ▶ **Job sharing**: Two or more people share the tasks and responsibilities of a job based on each other's strengths.



# ALIGNMENT OF HCBS & WIOA AROUND CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT

## ▶ WIOA

- ▶ Establishes customized employment as a service under VR
- ▶ Workforce investment system available to provide discovery (individual/group), skills building and career pathway development

## ▶ HCBS

- ▶ Allows HCBS waivers and state plan options to pay for customized employment strategies.
- ▶ Guidance around pay-for-performance expected that includes customized employment as a potential outcome payment



# WIOA FOCUS ON FINANCIAL EDUCATION IN YOUTH AND ADULT PROGRAMS

- ▶ Allows activities including financial literacy education and entrepreneurial training such as:
  - ▶ Placing financial education curriculums on resource room computers and having it be a requirement in between benchmarks or meetings.
  - ▶ Incorporating financial education within Job Clubs or as part of the Job Readiness workshops offered.
  - ▶ Incorporating Financial Education Resources into TANF and SNAP Programs.
    - ▶ Menu planning and shopping list tools
    - ▶ Coupon workshop and handouts



# ALIGNMENT OF HCBS RULE RE: PERSONAL RESOURCES & WIOA FOCUS ON FINANCIAL EDUCATION

- ▶ The new HCBS rule describes home and community-based settings as having the following qualities:
- ▶ The setting is integrated in and supports full access of individuals receiving Medicaid HCBS to the greater community, including:
  - ▶ opportunities to seek employment and work in competitive integrated settings,
  - ▶ engage in community life,
  - ▶ control personal resources, and
  - ▶ receive services in the community, to the same degree of access



# ALIGNMENT OF HCBS RULE RE: PERSONAL RESOURCES & WIOA FOCUS ON FINANCIAL EDUCATION (CONT'D)

- ▶ WIOA provides guidance on the use of state funds to provide services that build customer's financial education and financial capability.
  - ▶ As a program element for youth and allowable service for adults to support financial literacy, including an individual's ability to:
    - ▶ create household budgets, initiate savings plans, and make informed financial decisions about education, retirement, home ownership, wealth building, or other savings goals;
    - ▶ manage spending, credit, and debt, including credit card debt, effectively;
    - ▶ understand the availability and significance of credit reports and credit scores in obtaining credit, including determining their accuracy (and how to correct inaccuracies in the reports and scores), and their effect on credit terms; and
    - ▶ understand, evaluate, and compare financial products, services, and opportunities



# SECTION 188 DISABILITY REFERENCE GUIDE

- ▶ On July 6, 2015, Secretary of Labor Tom Perez released TEN 01-15 “Promising Practices in Achieving Universal Access and Equal Opportunity: A Section 188 Disability Reference Guide”  
[http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/TEN\\_01-15\\_Acc.pdf](http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/TEN_01-15_Acc.pdf)
- ▶ The Reference Guide was jointly developed by:
  - ▶ Civil Rights Center (CRC)
  - ▶ Employment and Training Administration (ETA)
  - ▶ Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)
  - ▶ With support and assistance from ODEP’s LEAD Technical Assistance Center at National Disability Institute.



# EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

- ▶ AJCs are required to ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal opportunity to access their programs, benefits, and activities.
  - ▶ Equal opportunity includes:
    - ▶ Nondiscrimination prohibitions;
    - ▶ Provision of reasonable accommodation;
    - ▶ Provision of reasonable modifications;
    - ▶ Administration of programs in the most integrated setting appropriate;
    - ▶ Effective communication;
    - ▶ Architectural and information and communication technology accessibility; and
    - ▶ Prohibition of discrimination in employment context.



# COLLECTIVE ACTION

Strategies for Leveraging the WIOA and HCBS Opportunities to Improve Employment Options for People with Disabilities/Actions you can consider and promote, including working in partnership with AJCs, VR, Community Colleges, community job training programs, employers, personal networks, CILs, community groups, etc.



## **COLLECTIVE ACTION: *ACTIONS YOU CAN CONSIDER & PROMOTE***

1. Become informed and involved in WIOA implementation and the HCBS Community Rule
2. Become an active stakeholder in the advisory committee on increasing competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities (<http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/WIOA.htm>).
3. Improve effective and meaningful participation of job seekers with disabilities in American Job Centers (AJCs).
4. Help inform criteria for certifying AJCs or “One-Stop Career Centers”.



## **COLLECTIVE ACTION: *MORE ACTIONS YOU CAN CONSIDER***

5. Promote customized employment, individual supported employment, and financial literacy activities for youth and adults.
6. Become involved in the Unified State Plan development in your state.
7. Improve coordination of Pre-employment Transition Services for Youth.
8. Engage in the development of an interagency agreement between your state's VR, workforce investment, education, I/DD adult services, and mental health systems to implement both WIOA and HCBS requirements with fidelity.



# WIOA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- ▶ Department of Labor
  - ▶ WIOA Resource Page - [www.doleta.gov/WIOA](http://www.doleta.gov/WIOA)
  - ▶ WIOA Dedicated Email - [DOL.WIOA@dol.gov](mailto:DOL.WIOA@dol.gov)
- ▶ Department of Education
  - ▶ Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education's WIOA Resource Page - <http://www.ed.gov/AEFLA>
  - ▶ Rehabilitation Services Administration's WIOA Resource Page - <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/ras/wioa-reauthorization.html>
- ▶ LEAD Center
  - ▶ Stay up to date - [www.leadcenter.org](http://www.leadcenter.org)



# LEAD CENTER WIOA WEBINAR SERIES

- ▶ [WIOA from a Disability Perspective](#) (Part 1- Archived)
- ▶ [WIOA and the Unified State Planning Process](#) (Part 2 - Archived)
- ▶ [Understand Changes to WIOA Youth Services](#) (Part 3 – Archived)
- ▶ [Section 188, the Nondiscrimination Provisions of WIOA](#) (Part 4 – Archived)



# WIOA POLICY BRIEFS & MATERIALS

- ▶ **LEAD Center Policy Brief:**

**Summary of Major Policies Included in Titles I and IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act**

[http://www.leadcenter.org/system/files/resource/downloadable\\_version/WIOA\\_POLICY\\_BRIEF\\_10.22.14.pdf](http://www.leadcenter.org/system/files/resource/downloadable_version/WIOA_POLICY_BRIEF_10.22.14.pdf)

- ▶ **Eight Actions You Can Consider to Support Youth and Adults with Disabilities in WIOA Implementation**

<http://www.leadcenter.org/blog/eight-actions-you-can-consider-support-youth-and-adults-disabilities-wioa-implementation>

- ▶ **WIOA: New Opportunities for People with Disabilities** blog by Bridget Brown, NAWDP at <http://www.leadcenter.org/blog/wioa-new-opportunities-people-disabilities>



# HCBS RESOURCES

- ▶ [The Arc \(2014\). The 2014 Federal Home and Community-Based Services Regulation: What You Need to Know](#)
- ▶ CMS (2014). [Regulatory Requirements for Home and Community-Based Settings](#)
- ▶ ASAN (2014). [New Rules for Home and Community-Based Settings and the Person-Centered Planning Process A Guide For Advocates and Families](#)



# MORE RESOURCES

- ▶ **Summary Description from a Disability Perspective Title I** of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (Workforce Development Activities) Notice of Proposed Rulemaking - [http://www.leadcenter.org/system/files/resource/downloadable\\_version/wioa\\_title\\_I\\_disability\\_perspective\\_0.pdf](http://www.leadcenter.org/system/files/resource/downloadable_version/wioa_title_I_disability_perspective_0.pdf)
- ▶ **Summary Description of Title IV** of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (State Vocational Rehabilitation Program) Notice of Proposed Rulemaking - [http://www.leadcenter.org/system/files/resource/downloadable\\_version/wioa\\_title\\_IV\\_summary\\_0.pdf](http://www.leadcenter.org/system/files/resource/downloadable_version/wioa_title_IV_summary_0.pdf)
- ▶ **Workforce3One**-An e-learning, knowledge sharing webspace that offers workforce professionals, employers, economic development, and education professionals a dynamic network featuring innovative workforce solutions at <https://www.workforce3one.org/>



# CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT & FINANCIAL LITERACY RESOURCES

- ▶ Introduction to Customized Employment and Customized Self Employment webinar - [www.leadcenter.org/webinars/promoting-employment-introduction-customized-employment-and-customized-self-employment](http://www.leadcenter.org/webinars/promoting-employment-introduction-customized-employment-and-customized-self-employment)
- ▶ Group Discovery: An Alternative Assessment Tool for Workforce Centers and Community-Based Providers - [www.leadcenter.org/webinars/group-discovery-alternative-assessment-tool-workforce-centers-and-community-based-providers](http://www.leadcenter.org/webinars/group-discovery-alternative-assessment-tool-workforce-centers-and-community-based-providers)
- ▶ Financial Education webinar - [www.leadcenter.org/webinars/promoting-economic-advancement-financial-education](http://www.leadcenter.org/webinars/promoting-economic-advancement-financial-education)
- ▶ NDI REI Network - [www.realeconomicimpact.org/REI-Network.aspx](http://www.realeconomicimpact.org/REI-Network.aspx)



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**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!**

**QUESTIONS?**

