



LEAD CENTER

Successful Employment: How Local American Job Centers (AJCs) Can Help

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TODAY'S SPEAKERS

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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.



OBJECTIVES

Participants in this session will:

- ▶ Receive an overview of services available through the Workforce System and its American Job Centers (AJCs).
- ▶ Discuss changes to Workforce Services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and what WIOA provides for people with disabilities.
- ▶ Review ways through which the disability community can partners with AJCs so that more people can achieve employment outcomes.
- ▶ Review resources and strategies that promote employment and career success for people with disabilities.



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 ELSE DO AJCs PROVIDE?

Many AJCs offer:

- ▶ Workshops in areas like resume writing, job search techniques, interviewing techniques and basic computer skills.
- ▶ Links to supportive services, which can include information about Food Stamps, Financial Assistance, Medicaid, Training Services, Child Care, Emergency Funds.
- ▶ Hiring events and business service information.
- ▶ Referrals to community resources and other agencies.
- ▶ Unemployment insurance information.
- ▶ Links to Employers who have job openings.
- ▶ Internship and Apprenticeship Programs
- ▶ Ticket to Work
- ▶ Co-located Partners



WHO ARE AJC PARTNERS?

- ▶ Schools
- ▶ Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- ▶ Developmental Disabilities Services
- ▶ TANF
- ▶ Veterans Affairs
- ▶ Behavioral Health Services
- ▶ Colleges and Universities
- ▶ Community Training & Employment Providers



OVERVIEW OF THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)

- ▶ President Barack Obama signed WIOA into law on July 22, 2014 (Public Law 113-128).
- ▶ Passed by Congress with wide bipartisan majority (The Senate voted 93-5 and the House of Representatives voted 415-6).
- ▶ Reaffirms ongoing role of American Job Centers.
- ▶ Promotes program coordination and alignment of key employment, education, and training programs at the Federal, State, local, and regional levels.
- ▶ Builds on proven practices such as sector strategies, career pathways, regional economic approaches, work-based training.
- ▶ Complements and supports the President's Job-Driven Workforce Vision.



HIGHLIGHTS OF REFORMS TO THE PUBLIC WORKFORCE SYSTEM UNDER THE ACT

- ▶ Requires states to strategically align workforce development programs to support job seekers and employers.
- ▶ Streamlines and strengthens the strategic roles of workforce development boards.
- ▶ Enhances services provided to job seekers through the American Job Center system.
- ▶ Improves services to employers and promotes work-based training.



PROVISIONS RELATED TO DISABILITY

- ▶ *WIOA increases access to high quality workforce services for people with disabilities and prepares them for competitive integrated employment.*
- ▶ One-Stop career centers will provide physical and programmatic accessibility for employment and training services for individuals with disabilities and implement Section 188 (non-discrimination) requirements related to:
 - ▶ functions of the local boards.
 - ▶ local plan content.
 - ▶ certification, at least every three years, of the One-Stop career centers to include an assessment of physical and programmatic accessibility in accordance with Section 188.



PROVISIONS RELATED TO DISABILITY

- ▶ The unified state plan must include all the core programs, including Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Adult Education. Among the requirements for the unified state plan is to:
 - ▶ describe how the one-stop delivery system will comply with Section 188 (non-discrimination) regarding physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities.
- ▶ Youth with disabilities will receive extensive pre-employment transition services so they can successfully obtain competitive integrated employment.



PROVISIONS RELATED TO DISABILITY

- ▶ Supports disconnected youth, of which youth with disabilities comprise a high percent, by:
 - ▶ Requiring local areas to increase percentage of youth formula funds used to serve out of-school youth to 75% versus 30% under WIA.
 - ▶ Requiring local areas to spend at least 20% of youth formula funds on work experience activities.
 - ▶ Providing additional allowable activities including financial literacy education and entrepreneurial training.
- ▶ State vocational rehabilitation agencies will set aside at least 15% of funding to provide transition services to youth with disabilities.



PROVISIONS RELATED TO DISABILITY

- ▶ Local workforce development boards may designate a standing committee to:
 - ▶ provide information and assist with operational and other issues related to compliance with non-discrimination and applicable accessibility requirements.
 - ▶ provide input regarding appropriate training for staff on these issues.
- ▶ Establishes a committee to advise the Secretary of Labor on strategies to increase competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities.



WIOA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- ▶ Department of Labor
 - ▶ WIOA Resource Page - www.doleta.gov/WIOA
 - ▶ WIOA Dedicated Email - 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



WHY IS UNIVERSAL DESIGN IMPORTANT TO THE WORKFORCE SYSTEM NOW AND WITH WIOA?

- ▶ Universal design makes access to services, jobs and learning accessible to all people, thereby serving the largest number of youth and adults, even without expertise in disability or knowledge of someone's specific disability.
- ▶ Job seekers are encouraged to use alternate methods to represent themselves and their skills, abilities and talents.



WHY ELSE IS UNIVERSAL DESIGN IMPORTANT TO THE WORKFORCE SYSTEM?

- ▶ Section 188 regulations require that recipients of WIA funds provide equal opportunities and not discriminate on the basis of disability.
- ▶ Discrimination is prohibited in registration, provision of assistance, benefits, services, and training including core, intensive, training and support services.



WHAT CAN AJCS DO TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

- ▶ Offer assistance and accommodations to all customers rather than just to a particular population.
- ▶ Make information on all services available to all customers, avoiding assumptions that certain people may not be interested in some services.
- ▶ Provide choices (e.g., technology; physical settings; assessment approaches and tools; on-line, face-to-face and self-directed approaches; accommodations for learning styles; etc.)



WHAT ELSE CAN AJCS DO TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THEIR SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

- ▶ Pursue Customized Employment in the AJC partners.
- ▶ Create networking opportunities to make the business case for hiring people with disabilities, including the benefits of incorporating universal design into employment, recruitment, hiring and retention practices.
- ▶ During orientation for all customers, review their rights to equal opportunity and their right to file a complaint.
- ▶ Provide training for staff on use of assistive technology, materials in accessible formats, materials that address different learning styles and reading levels, captioning and interpretation services, etc.



WHY THIS INFORMATION IS IMPORTANT

- ▶ More than 175,000 federal contractors
 - ▶ Substantial number of job openings all over the country
- ▶ Workforce system is front and center
 - ▶ Jobs must be listed with the appropriate employment service delivery system (One Stop Career Center)
- ▶ Provides opportunity to take a strategic look at partnerships and collaboration at the local *and* state levels



SECTION 503

- ▶ Contractors are required to set a 7% “utilization goal”
 - ▶ 7% of each job group in the contractor’s workforce must represent individuals with disabilities (or 7% of the entire workforce if fewer than 100 employees).
 - ▶ Job groups established under Executive Order 11246
- ▶ The definition of “disability” has been updated to align with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA)



INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT DOL.GOV

- ▶ Section 503:

<http://www.dol.gov/ofccp/regs/compliance/section503.htm>

- ▶ VEVRAA:

<http://www.dol.gov/ofccp/regs/compliance/vevraa.htm>



ONLINE RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE FOR CONTRACTORS THROUGH OFCCP

- ▶ Reasonable Accommodations (“Productivity Tools”)
- ▶ Tax Incentives and Other Funding
- ▶ Building Inclusive Environments that Encourage Self-Identification/Disclosure
- ▶ Recruitment and Hiring of Qualified Veterans
- ▶ Recruitment and Hiring of Qualified Individuals with Disabilities
- ▶ Disability and Veterans Community Resources Directory

<http://www.dol.gov/ofccp/regs/compliance/Resources.htm>



FEDERAL CONTRACTORS AND OTHER EMPLOYERS WILL BENEFIT FROM EFFECTIVE OUTREACH AND PRO-ACTIVE RECRUITMENT

- ▶ Increase the pool of applicants with disabilities.
- ▶ Support your employer partners in meeting their Section 503 and VEVRAA commitments.



WHAT JOB SEEKERS NEED TO KNOW

- ▶ Job seekers with disabilities should be encouraged to self-identify and know about their rights and employer reporting requirements.
- ▶ Job seekers with needs for reasonable accommodations will improve their ability to secure and maintain employment by understanding the procedures for disclosing their disability and requesting and advocating for a reasonable accommodation.



WHAT ELSE DO JOB SEEKERS NEED TO KNOW?

- ▶ Job seekers have choice of services and providers.
- ▶ Customized employment may be an approach to pursue for some job seekers.
- ▶ American Job Centers are for everyone!
- ▶ Job seekers can receive support from more than one agency at the same time to support their employment goals (i.e., AJC, VR, DD, MH/BH, EN, etc.) depending on their individual situation.



QUESTIONS?



THANK YOU

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