



LEAD CENTER

Improving Services for All Job Seekers by Improving Services to Customers with Disabilities

September 16, 2014

TODAY'S SPEAKERS

Rebecca Salon, Ph.D.

Project Director

LEAD Center

Elizabeth Jennings

Assistant Project Director

LEAD Center



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.

This document does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.



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.



LISTENING TO THE WEBINAR

- ▶ The audio for today's webinar is being broadcast through your computer. Please make sure your speakers are turned on or your headphones are plugged in.
- ▶ You can control the audio broadcast via the audio broadcast panel
- ▶ If you accidentally close the panel, you can re-open it from the top menu item: Communicate > Join Audio Broadcast



LISTENING TO THE WEBINAR, *CONTINUED*

If you do not have sound capabilities on your computer or prefer to listen by phone, dial:

1-415-655-0001

1-855-749-4750
(Toll-Free Number)

Meeting Code:
662 874 757

You do not need to enter an attendee ID.



CAPTIONING

- ▶ Real-time captioning is provided during this webinar.
- ▶ The captions can be found in Media Viewer panel, which appears in the lower-right corner of the webinar platform.
- ▶ If you want to make the Media Viewer panel larger, you can minimize other panels like *Chat*, *Q&A*, and/or *Participants*.



SUBMITTING QUESTIONS

For Q&A: Please use the chat box or Q&A box to send any questions you have during the webinar to **Nakia Matthews** or **Elizabeth Jennings** and we will direct the questions accordingly during the Q&A portion.

- ▶ If you are listening by phone and not logged in to the webinar, you may also ask questions by emailing questions to ejennings@ndi-inc.org.

Please note: This webinar is being recorded and the materials will be placed on the LEAD Center website at <http://www.leadcenter.org/webinars/nawdp-webinar-improving-services-all-job-seekers-improving-services-customers-disabilities>



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- ▶ If you experience any technical difficulties during the webinar, please use the chat box to send a message to the host **Nakia Matthews**, or you may also email nmatthews@ndi-inc.org.



NAWDP WELCOME

Bridget Brown

Executive Director

National Association of Workforce Development Professionals

www.nawdp.org



AGENDA

- ▶ Overview of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
- ▶ New Opportunities
 - ▶ Universal Design strategies to successfully serve a diverse range of jobseekers
 - ▶ Partnering with the Disability Community
 - ▶ Outreach to the Disability Community
 - ▶ Jobseeker education
- ▶ Resources, strategies and products that promote success and represent best practices.
- ▶ Questions

Portions of this webinar were adapted from the DOL WIOA Listening Sessions.



WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (2014)

PUBLIC LAW 113-128



OVERVIEW OF THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

- ▶ President Barack Obama signed WIOA into law on July 22, 2014.
- ▶ 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.
- ▶ Promotes accountability and transparency of programs.
- ▶ Fosters regional collaboration to meet the needs of regional economies.
- ▶ Streamlines and strengthens the strategic roles of workforce development boards.
- ▶ Enhances services provided to job seekers and employers through the American Job Center system.
- ▶ Improves services to employers and promotes work-based training.



HIGHLIGHTS OF REFORMS TO THE PUBLIC WORKFORCE SYSTEM UNDER THE ACT

- ▶ Provides access to high quality training.
- ▶ Enhances workforce services for the unemployed and other job seekers.
- ▶ Improves services to individuals with disabilities.
- ▶ Makes key investments in serving disconnected youth and other vulnerable populations, including Native Americans and Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers.
- ▶ Increases the performance and quality of the Job Corps program.
- ▶ Reinforces connections with Registered Apprenticeship.



PROVISIONS RELATED TO DISABILITY

- ▶ *WIOA increases individuals with disabilities' access to high quality workforce services and prepares them for competitive integrated employment.*
 - ▶ One-Stop career centers will provide physical and programmatic accessibility to employment and training services for individuals with disabilities and implement new 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.
 - ▶ Includes Office of Disability Employment Policy, Wage and Hour Division, and ETA.



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/rsa/wioa-reauthorization.html>
- ▶ LEAD Center
 - ▶ Stay up to date - www.leadcenter.org



NEW OPPORTUNITIES

- ▶ Universal Design
- ▶ Partnership development
- ▶ Outreach and pro-active recruitment
- ▶ Jobseeker education



DOL DEFINITION OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN

- ▶ The use of common strategies that reinforce the concept of an inclusive setting that welcomes diversity, including products and environments that are accessible to and useable by all.
 - ▶ The use of universal design strategies enables workforce staff to provide easier access, a welcoming atmosphere, and better customer service.
 - ▶ Universal design strengthens practices to serve better persons with disabilities and other challenges to employment (e.g., people with a wide range of learning styles, languages, educational levels, intelligences, experiences, and abilities).
 - ▶ Universal Design provides multiple and flexible methods to ensure that the learners acquire the information and knowledge they need.



WHAT IS UNIVERSAL DESIGN?

- ▶ Universal Design is a strategy for making products, environments, operational systems and services welcoming and usable to the most diverse range of people possible.
- ▶ Its key principles are simplicity, flexibility, ease of access and efficiency.
- ▶ It is a lens through which all aspects of interaction can be viewed, and can be applied to products, services, physical environments, communications, technology, policies and practices.

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/media/newsroom/universal.htm>



WHAT IS UNIVERSAL DESIGN (UD)?

- ▶ UD is a proactive approach that anticipates barriers people might face regardless of the cause and creates approaches to overcome or accommodate them.
- ▶ Developing services that are accessible to the largest number of people reduces the need for:
 - ▶ specialized assistance,
 - ▶ individualized accommodation requests, and
 - ▶ delays while accommodations are put into place.



EXAMPLES OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN

- ▶ Open/closed captioning
- ▶ Availability of screen readers
- ▶ Increasing font size on documents
- ▶ Curb cuts
- ▶ Voice activated applications
- ▶ Door handles that don't require grasping, use push-bars, and/or have automatic or electronic door openers



WHY IS UNIVERSAL DESIGN IMPORTANT TO THE WORKFORCE SYSTEM?

- ▶ 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.



UNIVERSAL ACCESS INCLUDES:

- ▶ The use of strategies for making products, environments, operational systems and services welcoming and usable to the most diverse range of people possible (definition of UD).
- ▶ Reasonable efforts and appropriate steps to ensure that recruitment, outreach and targeting efforts are accessible and promote the inclusion of people with disabilities (and others) in programs and activities.
- ▶ All activities being offered in the most integrated setting appropriate.
- ▶ Workforce professionals providing reasonable accommodations in the registration for and provision of aid, benefits, services and/or training.



UNIVERSAL ACCESS ALSO INCLUDES:

- ▶ An obligation to communicate effectively, with generalized actions for anyone and the availability of specific support to meet an individual's needs.
- ▶ Architectural accessibility.
- ▶ Programmatic accessibility (e.g., the provision or redesign of equipment, design of classes, provision of assistive technology, use of alternative career assessments, provision of someone to assist, etc.)

All complying with most integrated setting requirements.



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 SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

- ▶ Eliminate unnecessary complexity and/or contacts
- ▶ Offer accommodations to everyone for literacy and language needs (e.g., include graphics, color-coding, larger print, etc.)
- ▶ Create on-line or video-taped versions of forms and materials, including orientation information



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

- ▶ Conduct periodic “Secret Shopper” projects.
- ▶ Create universal design staff roles/teams.
- ▶ Require that partners use UD practices in formal partnership agreements (MOUs, contracts, etc.).
- ▶ Identify and implement cross-training opportunities with partners and people with disabilities (e.g., VR, CILs, DD, MH, etc.).
- ▶ Identify internal “experts” who can provide assistance and creative problem-solving support as challenges arise.



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

- ▶ 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.
- ▶ Pursue Customized Employment in the AJC partners.
- ▶ 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.



PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ A renewed focus on the inclusion of people with disabilities across workforce services offers a new opportunity to engage the disability service system.
- ▶ Employment is a critical component of disability services – partnerships to leverage the disability services system will benefit both systems and the job seeker.



STATE/LOCAL DISABILITY SERVICE SYSTEM

- ▶ Vocational Rehabilitation
- ▶ Division of Blind Services
- ▶ American Job Centers' partners
- ▶ Work Incentive Planning & Assistance (WIPA) Grantees
- ▶ Developmental Disabilities Councils and State agencies
- ▶ Departments of Mental/Behavioral Health
- ▶ State Medicaid
- ▶ Independent Living Centers
- ▶ Protection and Advocacy Services
- ▶ Community Based Providers - Disability Services
- ▶ Disability Advocacy organizations



OUTREACH AND PRO-ACTIVE RECRUITMENT

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



JOBSEEKER EDUCATION

- ▶ Educating job seekers with disabilities and inviting them to self-identify will help clarify the rights of the individual and the employers 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 a reasonable accommodation.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ▶ DOL Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)
<http://www.dol.gov/odep/>
- ▶ DEI Technical Assistance Project <http://www.dei-ideas.org/>
- ▶ Disability and Employment Community of Practice provides disability and employment resources for the public workforce system, including promising practices to promote the positive employment outcomes of persons with disabilities.
<http://disability.workforce3one.org>
 - ▶ For background information on the DEI:
https://disability.workforce3one.org/page/tag/dei_project
 - ▶ For the American Job Center Access Guide:
<https://disability.workforce3one.org/command/view.aspx?look=2001405840432475887&mode=info&pparam>
 - ▶ For the American Job Center Access 30-Second Training Series:
<https://disability.workforce3one.org/view/1001403833465878171/info>



QUESTIONS?



THANK YOU

Rebecca Salon

LEAD Center

Project Director

rsalon@ndi-inc.org

Elizabeth Jennings

LEAD Center

Assistant Project Director

ejennings@ndi-inc.org

