

CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES (DDS)

Connecticut has focused on system improvements and developing capacity to offer creative opportunities toward competitive integrated employment for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in Connecticut.

Employment Services Strategic Planning

The Connecticut Department of Developmental Services (DDS) collaborated with stakeholders to address the SELN Finding and Observation Report (February 2021). The Employment Services Strategic Planning Committee worked throughout the year to gather information and make further recommendations to strengthen employment services. The Committee is organizing effective, progressive, and efficient ways to address priority items in the SELN report through:

- ❖ Seven sub-committees to reflect the high performing states model, each assigned to a different section of the report. The Employment Services Strategic Planning Committee delivered its first round of recommendations to increase competitive integrated employment opportunities in the first quarter of 2022.
- ❖ Offering the SELN *Supporting a Vision for Employment* eLearning Course to all agency employment staff, case management, and transition advisors. The agency purchased extra slots for the sessions and is committed to the ongoing training and education of staff on person-centered, self-determined employment outcomes.
- ❖ Engaging with stakeholders to create a revised definition of competitive integrated employment

Customized Employment

Connecticut was an innovator in Customized Employment (CE) services launching one of the first online CE certification courses. Three state agencies, the Departments of Education, Developmental Services, and Aging & Disability Service collaborated with the Regional Educational Service Center Alliance to create the training curriculum launched October 2021. The first set of learners graduated in December 2021; the second training session began on January 31, 2022, and learners graduated in May 2022.

At the time the course launched, fewer than five provider staff members in Connecticut had active CE certifications. As of July 2022, there are 57 registered certified CE staff members in Connecticut. The state will continue to offer the course to build capacity for CE services offering four additional sessions between September 2022 and July 2023.

SELN member states as of June 2022



Employment for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

State Snapshot

1,096
individuals are competitively employed with natural supports



5,314
individuals are competitively employed with individual supported employment (ISE) services

Data Source: CT DDS data, January 2022



State Employment Leadership Network

UMass Boston



NASDDDS
National Association of State Directors
Developmental Disabilities Services

CONNECTICUT

Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

Commissioner: Jordan Scheff
SELN Lead Contact: Elisa Velardo
Email: elisa.velardo@ct.gov

The SELN is a joint program of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services.

www.selnhub.org

The Employment Framework

Member states enlist the support of a wide variety of key informants to participate in discussions and workgroups to determine a state's course of action. A direct member benefit is access to guidance that can lead states to a better understanding of priorities while setting that course. The Framework for Employment, developed through extensive experience and research conducted within states, is used to guide the SELN's strategy for system improvements. The elements represent practices and outcomes known to be effective at enabling states to develop and sustain high-performing integrated employment systems.



Elements of a High-Performing Employment System

This graphic demonstrates the factors that, when working together, can lead to better integrated employment outcomes. It is the dynamic interplay of all the elements that can lead to long-term systems change.

Leadership.

Clear and unambiguous commitment to employment in individual community jobs at all levels in the system.

Strategic Goals and Operating Policies.

Employment is supported by program goals and operating practices.

Financing and Contracting Methods.

State resource allocation formulas, reimbursement methods, and rate-setting practices support integrated employment.

Training and Technical Assistance.

Investment in the development and maintenance of a strong, competent workforce.

Interagency Collaboration and Partnership.

Building relationships to remove barriers to employment supports.

Services and Service Innovation.

Service definitions and support strategies are structured and aligned to facilitate the delivery of employment supports.

Performance Measurement and Data Management.

Comprehensive data systems are used to measure progress, benchmark performance, and document outcomes.