

2020–2022 SELN ACCOMPLISHMENTS MASSACHUSETTS

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

The Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services (DDS) continued its focus and engagement in capacity-building initiatives at multiple levels. During the 2021–2022 membership year, we have engaged in a collaborative process with our state vocational rehabilitation agency, the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, to update eligibility and promote coordinated transition of competitive integrated employment supports across agencies. This process involves revising the memorandum of understanding between our agencies and the development of implementation guidance and resources to support effective communication, joint planning, and service delivery at the local level to create a seamless and integrated experience for individuals.

We specifically focus on:

- ❖ youth transitioning from school to adult services
- ❖ alignment with recent changes in the implementation of pre-employment transition services
- ❖ increased clarity in the delivery and funding of ongoing employment support services

DDS continues our investment in:

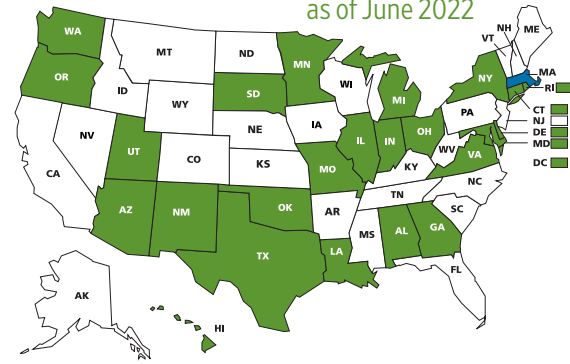
- ❖ building capacity for Community-Based Day Services (CBDS) and employment services within provider organizations
- ❖ enhancing expertise of staff through offering comprehensive training opportunities

DDS collaborated with representatives from the Association of Developmental Disability Providers (ADDP), The Arc of Massachusetts, employment and day service providers, and family members to develop the Blueprint for Success 2.0 Moving Forward Together. We collectively developed this Blueprint to promote the continued evolution and expansion of employment opportunities and meaningful community engagement. The Blueprint serves as a roadmap to build on the momentum of Massachusetts’s Employment First initiatives, system changes, and outcomes that occurred because of the original publication.

In the winter and spring of 2021, we held virtual forums with Supported Employment providers, CBDS providers, DDS Service Coordinators, and individuals who receive services in partnership with Massachusetts Advocates Standing Strong (MASS). We collected input from family members through an online survey that received 742 responses, along with several virtual forums and individual interviews specifically focused on reaching family members from diverse communities.

A key benchmark in the upcoming blueprint is to end subminimum wage use through the Department of Labor 14c certificates by 2024 and expanded CBDS “Without Walls” model. This model of support is delivered in small groups exclusively in the community. Without Walls doesn’t use a licensed program center as a base or provider storefronts as hubs for transportation. DDS is dedicated to supporting return-to-work efforts through strong partnerships and collaboration with individuals, families, businesses, provider agencies, community organizations, and partner administrations.

SELN member states
as of June 2022



Employment for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

State Snapshot



1,750 total number of people in individual supported jobs



54 average hours worked over 4 weeks



\$759 average wages earned over 4 weeks

Data Source: The 2021 Statewide Employment Snapshot, MA Department of Developmental Services



State Employment Leadership Network



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.