



What is Employment First?

Employment First encompasses the belief that community-based, integrated employment should be the primary day activity for working age youth and adults with disabilities.

It supports an overarching goal that eligible persons with disabilities will have access to integrated work settings most appropriate for them, including the supports necessary to help them succeed in the workplace.

Employment First does not mean employment only and does not deny individual choice.

Employment First does not eliminate service options currently available but is intended to increase employment opportunities.

What is Integrated Employment?

Work in a community setting where individuals with disabilities interact with others without disabilities to the same extent as anyone working in that setting.

This may include:

- ★ **Competitive Employment**
Employment in the community, full or part-time, with wages and benefits equal to that of anyone doing the same job.
- ★ **Customized Employment**
A flexible process based on an individual match between the strengths, conditions, and interests of a job candidate and the identified business needs of an employer.
- ★ **Self-Employment**
An employment setting in which an individual works in a chosen occupation, for profit or fee, in his or her own small business, with control and responsibility for decisions affecting the conduct of the business.
- ★ **Supported Employment**
Employment in the community that includes the provision of ongoing supports for job success.

Want More Information?

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Why Employment First in Arizona?

- In 2014, only 22% of people in the DDD system receiving day services were in integrated employment.
- In 2014, only 14% of DDD funding spent on day and employment services went to integrated employment.
- People who work have a higher quality of life, greater community participation, and are more likely to make their own choices in life.
- New regulations from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, Department of Justice and the Department of Labor are requiring states to prioritize integrated services for everyone with a disability.



Who is Involved in Arizona Employment First?

- Advocates
- Educators
- Employers
- Employment Service Provider Agencies
- Family Members
- State Agencies:
 - Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System
 - Arizona Department of Education/
Exceptional Student Services
 - Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
 - Division of Developmental Disabilities
 - Rehabilitation Services Administration/ Vocational Rehabilitation
- University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities
- Youth and Young Adults