JANUARY 2021
UPDATE & PROGRESS

EMPLOYMENT FIRST ACT OF 2018
INTERAGENCY PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Interagency Priorities and Recommendations for Employment First Act Implementation and Updates

Act 36 of 2018, the Employment First Act, required the Office of the Governor to submit an initial three-year plan to the General Assembly, outlining specific policies and strategies commonwealth state agencies will adopt to implement the Employment First Act and ensure individuals with disabilities have the opportunity to achieve economic independence through competitive integrated employment. The initial three-year plan was published in August 2019.

The Office of the Governor, in collaboration with the Governor's Cabinet for People with Disabilities, developed the initial three-year plan, which outlines the commonwealth's policy recommendations to implement the Employment First Act and identifies the lead state entity charged with implementing each recommendation. In most cases, the recommendations will be implemented through inter-agency partnerships and in collaboration with Employment First stakeholders.

Act 36 of 2018 also requires the Office of the Governor to submit an annual report to the General Assembly every year by January 30. This second annual report, builds on the initial three-year plan to include specific, measurable performance indicators and the implementation updates of each policy recommendation. These updates are based on progress made between January 2020 and January 2021. These indicators are informed by the feedback and priorities of the Employment First Oversight Commission, and the measurable goals and objectives the Commission published in its annual report in October 2020.

The Wolf Administration has made substantial progress collaborating with the Employment First Oversight Commission and other stakeholders to further develop this comprehensive plan to advance Employment First across the commonwealth and improve employment outcomes for Pennsylvanians with disabilities. The COVID-19 pandemic and public health emergency have created new challenges to expanding competitive integrated employment opportunities for Pennsylvanians with disabilities. Despite these challenges, here are select accomplishments from 2020. The administration looks forward to building on this progress in 2021.

- The PA Department of Human Services (DHS) updated the programs and services offered by the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) and Office of Long Term Living (OLTL) to address the COVID-19 pandemic, including providing retainer payments to providers so Pennsylvanians with disabilities could continue receiving employment services in new settings and through new modes of delivery.

- The PA Department of Labor & Industry (L&I), in partnership with DHS, the PA Department of Education (PDE), and several other agencies created a new website focused on Employment First. The website lists all of the state services available to people with disabilities to help foster connections to education, training, and employment opportunities.

In addition, the website includes background on the PA Employment First Executive Order, Act 36 of 2018, and reports from the Employment First Cabinet and Employment First Oversight Commission. The website is available at: https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Disability-Services/employment-first/Pages/default.aspx.

- The PA Department of Education and L&I Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) continued their work establishing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) that allow the agencies to formally collaborate on improving vocational and career preparation for all Pennsylvania students with disabilities to participate in work based learning, part time jobs, and career planning to pursue competitive integrated employment after graduating from high school.

I. Priority: Review, identify, and change policy and practice to align with the letter and the spirit of the Employment First Act of 2018.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Implementation Progress	Indicators (if applicable)	Measurable Goal
Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement Pennsylvania's Employment First efforts have been shaped by the perspectives, expertise, and input of diverse stakeholders, and meaningful stakeholder engagement should continue to inform implementation efforts. Agencies at the state and local levels will actively seek feedback and ideas from partners representing a variety of sectors and backgrounds, and will prioritize the inclusion of individuals with disabilities within these discussions.	• Governor's Office of Policy and Planning (GPO) • Governor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (OIA)	• The Office of Governor Tom Wolf continues to engage the Employment First Oversight Commission as well as lead the Employment First Cabinet to elevate this initiative. • In 2020, the Governor's Policy Office assumed leadership structure of the Employment First initiative and the Employment First Cabinet. • The Governor's Office has also bolstered support for Employment First by dedicating additional staff members to support Employment First.		

2. Cross-Agency Collaboration and Coordination Individuals with disabilities in Pennsylvania often receive services and supports from a variety of agencies, service providers, and organizations. To ensure these efforts are effective and efficient, coordination of these cross-agency efforts is vital. As part of Employment First efforts, state agencies will continue to meet regularly and identify opportunities to improve the structure of collaboration at the state level, including memorandums of understanding, interagency workgroups, and program/policy guidance.	• Governor's Office of Policy and Planning (GPO) • Governor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (OIA)	• The Office of Governor Tom Wolf continues to connect the Employment First Cabinet with groups such as the Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center, and has involved the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to make the full breadth of advisory commissions under the Governor's jurisdiction available to the cabinet for information-sharing purposes.		
3. Data and Reporting Agencies are tasked with using data more effectively to increase	• Governor's Office of Policy and Planning (GPO)	• The Administration has made significant progress in this area. All commonwealth agencies have signed onto the state's interagency data sharing		

competitive integrated employment opportunities for Pennsylvanians with disabilities. Agencies will use data to identify areas for improvement, establish benchmarks for accountability, and measure progress. In consultation with the Employment First Oversight Commission, state agencies will identify current data collection on education, training, and employment of people with disabilities in Pennsylvania, including opportunities to establish interagency data sharing agreements that better identify short- and long-term outcomes and areas for improvement. An interagency data sharing memorandum of understanding will be executed with all agencies by August 2020 and will	• Governor's Office of Performance through Excellence (OPE)	agreement. • In 2019, the data sharing agreement led the Governor's Office to create a new role within state agencies called an Agency Data Steward. When data is requested from an agency, the data steward will facilitate the data sharing and champion the benefits of data sharing to improve customer service to Pennsylvanians. • The Governor's Office has trainings available and has shared communication with the various agency secretaries and agency chief council personnel to facilitate this data sharing agreement. • The Governor's Office continues to evaluate the agreement to identify short-comings or gaps in the data sharing. Once these gaps have been identified the Governor's Office and the associated agencies will reconvene to establish any new data-sharing agreements. • In 2020, GPO engaged OPE and the OA Open Data Portal to streamline data sharing with the Employment First Oversight Commission. This work will continue into 2021 and aims to		

serve as a basis for enhanced data analysis and reporting.		make data related to the employment of people with disabilities more accessible and user friendly.		
3.a. Labor Participation and Unemployment Labor & Industry will compile labor participation rates and unemployment rates for Pennsylvanians with a disability and share this data with Open Data Portal to be available to the public.	• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA)	• L&I will share this data quarterly beginning in 2021.		
3.b. Early Childhood The Office of Child Development and Early Learning should continue to collect and publish the number of children receiving early intervention services in segregated environments and non-segregated environments.	• Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) • Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE)	**OCDEL:** • OCDEL follows the US Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) reporting requirements that identifies the percent of infants and toddlers with Individualized Family Services Plans (IFSPs) who primarily receive Early Intervention services in the home or community-based settings and the Educational Environments for children ages 3 to 5. • OCDEL publishes data in the annual State Interagency	• Percent of infants and toddlers (0 to 3) receiving EI services in home and community settings; FY 18/19 - 99.92% FY 19/20 99.86% • Percentage of preschool children (age 3 to 5) that have access to Early Childhood Education (ECE) and receive the majority of their services in ECE; FY 18/19 - 64.32%	

		Coordinating Council (SICC) report. Data for preschool Early Intervention is also reported to OSEP. [Here is a link to these reports.](#)	FY 19/20 - 60.98% • Percentage of preschool children that receive the majority of their services in the home; FY 18/19 - 5.63% FY 19/20 8.83% • Percentage of preschool children that receive their services in a specialized • Classroom; FY 18/19 - 30.05% FY 19/20 30.19%	

3.c. Human Services
The Department of Human Services should continue to collect and publish data on all program participants enrolled in any program that provides home and community-based services and:
A. Have employment as a goal in their service plan,
B. Are receiving employment services, and/or
C. Are employed.
	• Department of Human Services' Offices of Long-Term Living (OLTL), Developmental Programs (ODP), and Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS)	**DHS:**
		• OLTL, ODP, and OMHSAS collect data on a regular basis, the data is reviewed by DHS executive staff.
		• ODP publishes a Comprehensive Employment Report that includes the data elements per this recommendation on an annual basis. The reports are distributed to stakeholders and available on ODP's website.
		• OLTL provided the Community HealthChoices managed care organizations
			• Number of individuals aged 18-64 receiving ODP waiver services who have employment as a goal in their service plan;
			  ○ As of 12/31/18 – 13,052
			  ○ As of 12/31/19 – 13,505
			• Number of individuals aged 18-64 receiving ODP waiver services who are receiving employment services
			  ○ Cumulatively across calendar year 2018 – 5,451
				DHS will provide information requested by EFOC on a quarterly basis.

D. The Department of Human Services will determine other important data that should be published, such as hours worked, nature of work, full-time or part-time status, etc.		(CHC-MCOs) a detailed ad-hoc data report regarding employment. Datasets from that report were added to a permanent reporting template: the CHC-MCO Employment Initiative Report Dashboard for Operations Report 22, which was implemented in January of 2020.	o Cumulatively across calendar year 2019 – 5,889 • Number of individuals aged 18-64 receiving ODP waiver services who are employed; o As of 12/31/18 – 6,470, 15% of working age individuals enrolled o 7,136, 17% of working age individuals enrolled • DHS will identify other important datasets that should be published, such as hours worked, nature of work, full-time or part-time status, etc.	
3.d. Work-Based Learning and Paid Work Experience The Departments of Education and Labor & Industry should continue to collect and publish data on work-based learning experiences for students with disabilities, as required under Act 26 of 2016 (Work	• Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	**Multi-Agency Update:** • The Department of Education and OVR are developing a formal data sharing agreement to track work-based learning and paid work experiences for students with disabilities. • The OVR also updated the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) to	• Number of people with disabilities who entered competitive integrated employment and had been students while OVR customers. • Number of students with disabilities and students participating in Pre-	The PDE/OVR MOU is signed and mutual training of staff is planned. The OVR DLI web page tile on Act 26 will continue to update information and SWD work experiences that are performance indicators for both Act 26 and Act 36 Employment 1st using new CWDS data tracking.

Experiences for High School Students with Disabilities Act). Both departments should also continue to analyze and publish information related to how many students with a disability leave secondary education with at least one paid work experience and should work collaboratively with stakeholders to identify any other metrics that may be relevant for improving pathways to competitive integrated employment for young people as they transition out of the K-12 education system.		capture data on paid-work experiences for students with disabilities. • The Department of Education and the OVR are developing an MOU to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each agency when serving students with disabilities, including the roles and responsibilities of a Local Education Agency and OVR counselors. • Schools annually report data to PDE, which OVR then publishes as part of their Act 26 reporting. BSE uses the data to inform practices for its cyclical monitoring process. • In 2020, PDE updated the Act 26 data collection process and shared this information with schools via a Penn Link. PDE will provide training in 2021. Starting in July 2021, PDE will start collecting data answering the following questions:	Employment Transition Services that have at least one paid work experience at graduation. • Percent of students meeting or exceeding the Career Standards Benchmark. • Percent of 12th graders that demonstrate competency on an industry-recognized assessment, earn at least one industry-recognized credential, and/or complete a work-based learning experience. • Percent of 12th graders who participate in at least one rigorous course of study. • Percentage of high school graduates who have enrolled in an institution of higher education, enlisted in the	

		1. Does this student have a transition plan as part of the IEP? 2. Does the student have an outcome goal of competitive integrated employment? 3. Did the student participate in a competitive integrated paid work experience? 4. Did the student participate in individual job coaching services funded by the school in a paid work experience? 5. Upon exiting high school, was the student employed in a competitive integrated setting? • Data is updated annually	military, or entered the workforce within 16 months of receiving a high school diploma. • Enrollment and success of students with disabilities in career and technical education (CTE) programs.	
3.e. Vocational Rehabilitation The Department of Labor & Industry should collect and publish data on the number of individuals referred to the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the number determined	• Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	**L&I:** • OVR continues to publish annual and quarterly data in its annual highlights. • Annually the OVR summary highlights are posted and shared with the stakeholders as part of OVR submission of VR	• The most recent data is available in OVR's Annual Report (2019 OVR Highlights Summary available on the).	

eligible, and the number for whom competitive integrated jobs were secured or maintained. If possible, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should show the number of these individuals who were, at the time of referral, being compensated at subminimum wage.		performance measures to the Rehab Services Administration. OVR and the Dept. Of Labor and Industry Press Office will be posting the most recent OVR Highlights to the publications pages available here: https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Disability-Services/Pages/Publications.aspx		
3.f. Business Assistance The Department of Labor & Industry should collect and publish data on the number of private-sector businesses that request and receive assistance from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation with the hiring or retention of a worker with a disability.	• Department of Labor & Industry (L&I)'s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	**L&I:** • OVR continues to develop a business design tool and ad-hoc reporting capability to collect and publish data on private-sector businesses that receive assistance from OVR. OVR will train staff on these new capabilities. • OVR has updated data collection on business and employer engagement in CWDS 2.0 business design tool to compliment the same data gathered by CareerLink business services staff as an indicated under WIOA. OVR business services staff are being trained on use and will begin providing data in 2021.	• Number of private-sector businesses that request and receive assistance from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation with the hiring or retention of a worker with a disability.	

II. Priority: Raise expectations of employment goals for children with a disability at an early age. Work with parents, families, and publicly funded programs to continue shifting expectations towards this goal.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Implementation Progress	Indicators (if applicable)	Measurable Goal(s)
4. Promote Integrated Settings Serving children and youth in a segregated setting early in life may instill within them and their parents that living and working in typical community-integrated settings is not an outcome they should expect as an adult. The Office of Child Development and Early Learning will continue to promote and encourage the provision of early intervention services for children ages 3-5 in integrated settings. The Office of Child Development and Early Learning will continue to	• Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) • Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE)	**OCDEL:** • OCDEL continues providing trainings on inclusion and has developed modules on best practices. Trainings have included awards and grants to local Early Intervention (EI) programs with the outcome to improve inclusion of children with disabilities and the social and emotional outcomes for these children. • OCDEL continues to focus on reducing the number of children in specialized settings, promoting social and emotional skills and laying a foundation of inclusivity; changes have been made to	• This information is available in 3b.	• Percentage of infants and toddlers receiving EI services in Home and Community Settings (0 to 3) - 99% • Percentage of preschool children (age 3 to 5) that have access to Early Childhood Education (ECE) and receive the majority of their services in ECE – 65% • Percentage of preschool children that receive the majority of their services in the home – 6% • Percentage of preschool children that receive their

build provider capacity to increase the number of children, compared to baseline, receiving Early Intervention services in integrated environments and reduce the number of children receiving Early Intervention services in restrictive settings/special education classes.		professional development training, • parent training, and monitoring of Early Intervention programs. • PDE, through the PaTTAN system, has entered into contract with CAST to provide professional development to facilitate the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and has offered UDL grants to Local Education Agencies (LEAs).		services in a specialized Classroom – 29% • Reduce the number of students moving from more integrated elementary settings into more segregated in middle and high school years.
5. Parent and Family Engagement Training Young adults with significant disabilities whose parents "definitely expected" them to obtain post-school work when their children are in high school are more than five times as likely to have paid, community-based employment within two years after exiting school (Carter, Austin, & Trainor, 2012). The Departments of Education, Labor & Industry and Human	• Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) • Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education (BSE) • Department of Human Services' Office of Developmental Programs	**L&I:** • OVR and the Department of Education are partnering to develop and schedule parent and family graining seminars, and will conduct outreach to school districts and parent teacher organizations (PTOs) COVID-19 mitigation has delayed this initiative and may require transitioning to a virtual format since many LEA's are using remote instruction and telework. • OVR and local school district transition staff will resume back to school night events once staff are approved to resume in school events to provide		

Services should continue collaborating to develop and provide training opportunities for parents of children with significant disabilities no later than high school for the purpose of promoting an expectation that their child will work as an adult.		parents and families with information on Pre-Employment Transition Services and how to access OVR services. All OVR offices are currently in a telework status until approved to resume in offices and community contacts in 2021. **Multi-Agency Update:** • DHS, L&I, and PDE progress includes enhancing parent and family engagement training to achieve the goal of promoting expectations for their children to work as an adult. These efforts include: ODP integrated the Charting the LifeCourse principles and philosophies into its service system at the state, county, and local levels by providing access to resources and trainings. An example of cross-system training includes a 5-part webinar series to be used by		

		transition aged youth, families, and professionals. The LifeCourse framework and philosophies were presented at the Secondary Transition conference annually. In 2020, ODP presented on setting high expectations for competitive integrated employment to more than 250 people at the 2020 Virtual Transition Conference.. • The PA Family Network produced a transition and waiver-specific presentation for parents and families. • The Community of Practice (lead by BSE and OVR) host an annual conference for Secondary Transition. • A webinar series is offered on the topic or Person Driven Planning where families and care givers are in attendance. • Secondary Transition PaTTAN initiative is collaborating with PaTTAN Family		

		Engagement Initiative to build a series for Student Led IEPs • Joint Training plan between OVR and BSE will include opportunities for join parent education programs. • BSE and PaTTAN continue to offer joint training with Parent Education Advocacy Leadership Center (PEAL) and Hispanos Unidos para Niños Excepcionales (HUNE) • Pennsylvania Statewide Family Network (F2MAX) is engaged with PDE to provide supports for parent engagement. • There are family representatives on the OVR MOU development team and part of the training plan. • DHS disability serving program offices all participate in the Community of Practice on Transition, a group of cross-agency stakeholders that includes PDE and OVR.		

		The state plan developed by that group for school year 20/21 is focused on supporting individuals with complex needs. One area of focus is delivering resources to stakeholders on person-centered planning concepts. • The Huntingdon/Mifflin/Juniata joinder is engaging paraprofessionals in schools by offering the Charting the LifeCourse training to educators and paraprofessionals and offering professional credits for attendance. • Early Childhood provided a virtual session with over 400 people in 2020 and the recording will be shared with Early Childhood Home Visitors.		
6. Change Requirements for Vendors Serving Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs	• Department of Health's Bureau of Family Health	**DOH:** • The Department of Health has completed identifying programs within the Bureau of Family Health serving CYSHCN and their	• Prepare language for new grant agreements and obtain internal approval. • Incorporate the language into all new Bureau of Family Health grant agreements	

The Department of Health will require vendors serving children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN) age 14 and older, and their families to promote the expectation that children with disabilities will work as an adult. This language will be phased into new grant agreements serving CYSHCN age 14 and older within the Bureau of Family Health. Vendors will be required to assist clients in identifying and linking to job readiness and employment services and supports when employment is a goal of the client.		families. • The Department of Health has established language to be included in new grant agreements serving CYSHCN age 14 and older. The approved language will be included in all new grant agreements serving CYSHCN age 14 and older and their families by July 1, 2021. In 2020, the Bureau of Family Health incorporated the language into six new grant agreements with vendors serving CYSHCN age 14 and older.	serving CYSHCN age 14 and older. • Measure number of grant agreements that include the language annually. • Provide guidance and technical assistance to grantees in implementing grant requirements. • Monitor grantee implementation of grant requirements through quarterly reporting as well as annual grant monitoring visits. • Continue adding language to new grant agreements until all grants serving CYSHCN age 14 and older within the Bureau of Family Health include the language.

III.   Priority: Prepare young people with a disability to become working adults with a disability.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Implementation Progress	Indicators (if applicable)	Measurable Goal(s)
7. Promoting a Vision and Culture of Employment First in Pennsylvania's Education System The Department of Education should continue to work with partners to provide leadership and support that promotes a vision and culture throughout the K-12 education system that emphasizes the role of education is to help students with a disability transition into a job, not just transition out of school.	• Department of Education (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE)	**PDE:** **Progress Made, Ongoing.** The Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) supports PDE's Bureau of Special Education on a number of initiatives and helps increase capacity of local education agencies (LEAs) to more effectively serve students who receive special education services. The Pennsylvania Community on Transition is a state leadership team comprised of young adults and representatives from PDE, DOH, L&I, DHS, community-based organizations, parent and advocacy groups, and postsecondary education. PDE has a robust training plan for secondary transition that includes resources for students, families, and educators: • A website for students and parents;	• Number of students enrolled in public K-12 schools receiving special education services. • Number of students ages 6-21 receiving special education, disaggregated by type of disability, age, and educational environment. • Number of students between ages of 14-21 exiting special education by reason. • Regular attendance (all students vs. students with disabilities). • Percent of students meeting or exceeding the Career Standards Benchmark. • 4- and 5-year high school graduation rate. • Percent of 12th graders that demonstrate competency on an industry-recognized assessment, earn at least one industry-recognized	

		• Annual professional development for educators focused on the state Career Education and Work (CEW) Standards, career readiness indicators, and PA Employment First; and • Secondary transition coordinators at all 29 IUs who are trained to educate and support schools with implementing the CEW standards and career readiness indicators with students with disabilities. • BSE and PaTTAN offered Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) Grants for Local Education Agencies to build greater access to CIE for student with disabilities in 2019 and 2020. • Community of Practice state plan emphasizes a focus on Person-driven Planning by creating a webinar series on PDP and supportive Family, Professional and youth toolkits. • BSE is updating SecondaryTransition.org Website for greater accessibility.	credential, and/or complete a work-based learning experience. • Percent of 12th graders who participate in at least one rigorous course of study. • Percent of high school graduates who enrolled in an institution of higher education, enlisted in the military, or entered the workforce within 16 months of graduation. • Enrollment and success of students with disabilities in CTE programs. • Number of students with disabilities who have a competitive integrated job, or one lined up, on their last day of high school.	

		• BSE implemented a Train the Trainer for Secondary Transition IU Training & Consulting Specialists for Transition Discoveries, and evidence-based approach to improving transition practices • BSE provided grant stipend opportunities for LEAs to implement Transition Discoveries locally	
8. Effective Use of Transition Funding The Department of Education, in collaboration with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, should implement a pilot project with select school districts to identify thenumber of students with varying degrees of disabilities (i.e., severe cognitive disabilities and/or students with physical disabilities) and examine Individualized Education Program (IEP) expenditures for those students that can be used to develop and distribute recommendations for	• Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I)Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	**PDE:** • This is an ongoing effort. A pilot program has not yet been implemented, in part due to school districts not being ready for such an effort and PDE not having the statutory authority to collect or review individual student IEPs. Instead, BSE has dedicated funding to build awareness of the importance of integrated employment outcomes, with the goal of revisiting the pilot at a future date. **L&I:** • OVR revised the definitions and provider guidance for Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) to align with	• **PDE:** • PDE will identifymeasurable goals when the pilot program is developed and implemented. • **L&I:** • The most recent data is available in OVR and PDE's report. • OVR has convened a Pe-Employment Policy group to create a compressive Pre-ETS policy and guidance for both staff, LEA's and providers. WINTAC has provided technical assistance. The providers handbook has been updated to clarify services during COVID-19 mitigation.	

school districts outlining how to most effectively educate students with a disability to achieve competitive integrated employment outcomes.		clarified guidance from the U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) provided through a continuum of service options by OVR staff and community rehabilitation providers in collaboration with state and local education agencies to students with disabilities who need those services to achieve competitive integrated employment and are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services. • OVR and the Department of Education (PDE) are finalizing a MOU to collect and share data on students with disabilities by school district, and summarize the results in a report.	• The OVR/PDE data sharing MOU will be implemented in 2021.	
9. Paid Work Experience One of the best predictors of whether students with a disability will work as adults is if they get at least one paid work experience before they leave high school. PDE	• Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE) • Department of Labor &	**PDE:** **Progress Made, Ongoing.** • OVR offerd a variety of pre-COIVD-19 Pandemic work-based learning services throughout the year, including the Youth Onsite Learning Opportunities Academy at Camp Kon-O-	• Number and percentage of students who have had at least one paid work experience before their last day in high school. • Number and percentage of students with a disability who transition from secondary education to	

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should develop and promote policies to encourage local educational agencies to increase paid work experiences for students with a disability before leaving high school. As indicated in Executive Order 2016- 03, this is something that should be measured to determine whether progress is being made when implementing Employment First.	Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	Kwee Spencer, the MY Work Initiative in Pittsburgh, the SWEEP Program, etc., that allowed hundreds of students with disabilities to participate in paid, work-based learning experiences. • Since March 2020 all OVR District Offices ceased in person office or community contacts and started telework. Paid work experiences during COVID-19 mitigation restricted many SWD to obtain work. Traditional summer or part time jobs in the food service and hospitality sectors did not hire student help during the current economic downturn and due to restricted openings and services to the public. Where possible OVR will promote and encourage virtual work experiences or telework and share these opportunities with LEA and community provider staff to coordinate with students and their guardians. • PDE also encourages school districts to partner with	adult life with a competitive, integrated job or an integrated postsecondary education or training opportunity. • Number of job referrals made to employers on behalf of students with disabilities while still in high school. • Number of high school students with disabilities working in part-time or summer jobs as a result of referrals made by OVR staff. • Number of high school students with disabilities working in part-time or summer jobs who are receiving job coaching services. • Number of people with disabilities who entered competitive integrated employment and had been students while OVR customers. • Percent of students meeting or exceeding the Career Standards Benchmark. • Percent of 12th graders that demonstrate competency	

		OVR to connect students with paid, work-based learning prior to the March 2020 COVID-19 mitigation efforts . Prior to this BSE hosted a webinar to share the core tenants of legislation and policy specific to secondary transition including: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004), Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services Final Rule (CMS Final Rule), Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act & Section 511 (WIOA), Act 26 of Pennsylvania, and PA 339 (Comprehensive Guidance Plan). The webinar also emphasized the need for LEAs to promote work experiences for students. • Transition Discoveries supports competitive integrated employment outcomes for students. The LEA (Local Educational Agency) collaborates with communities to co-design opportunities for youth, families, and stakeholders	on an industry-recognized assessment, earn at least one industry-recognized credential, and/or complete a work-based learning experience. • Percent of 12th graders who participate in at least one rigorous course of study. • Percent of high school graduates who have enrolled in an institution of higher education, enlisted in the military, or entered the workforce within 16 months of graduating. • Enrollment and success of students with disabilities in CTE programs. • Measurable Goal: Each year, the Commonwealth will steadily increase access to competitive integrated employment for high school students with disabilities with funding and/or support from either OVR or PDE. This can be in the form of a WBLE experience or a job with coaching and/other supports. First year goal 1,500 students; Second year goal ,2000 students;	

		to build on their knowledge, skills and relationships to prepare for life after high school. • The Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) Grant supports LEA's to: 1) improve competitive integrated employment outcomes for youth with disabilities; 2) provide virtual and in-person work experiences, including but not limited to job shadowing, internship/practicum (paid/unpaid), cooperative education programs, apprenticeship, community-based work programs, and service learning (unpaid), with job coaching as appropriate, for youth with disabilities with preference for students at-risk of dropping out and/or youth who have difficulty obtaining employment, independently; 3) establish sites that can serve as models for community-based competitive employment for youth with disabilities; and	third year goal 2,500 students. These goals need to be adjusted due to current COVD-19 mitigation efforts and can resume once post pandemic economic activity and safe work conditions occur.	

		4) actively involve The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), County/Community-Based Behavioral Health, The Office of Intellectual Disabilities, Centers for Independent Living and other disability-specific support organizations during the development and implementation of the grant-related activities.		
10. Self-Advocacy To increase students' confidence, independence, and self-advocacy skills, which can translate into greater chances of success in employment, the Department of Education should promote strategies to materially increase the number of students who lead their own IEP meetings.	• Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE)	**PDE:** **Progress Made, Ongoing.** • PDE's Bureau of Special Education designed a five-part webinar series to help individuals with disabilities think about self-advocacy experiences needed to move ahead in life. Throughout the series, a cross-agency panel, including representatives from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), Office of Developmental Programs (ODP), Pennsylvania Youth Leadership Network (PYLN), and PaTTAN, provided information on what IEP teams and students need to know and do to set a vision for a meaningful life, how to find or develop supports, and discover	• Number of students engaged in training and technical assistance efforts. • Measurable goal: Number of students reported to lead their own IEP meetings by district/county. • Measurable Goal: Year of Age 14-21 measure number. • Measurable Goal: At least one year before graduation, all students will meaningfully participate and self-advocate in their own IEP meeting and identify and if they	

		what it takes for students to live the lives they want to live. More than 50 youths with disabilities attended each session in 2019, the 2020 conference was delivered virtually. • Person Driven Planning is an intentionally designed inclusive process attempting to ensure that individuals take charge of their own transition planning. The Community of Practice on Secondary Transition has designed a four part webinar series to explore Person driven Planning, tools for engaging in the practice , the importance of benefits counseling and promising practices in Pennsylvania. • Transition Discoveries supports building systems driven by youth. The LEA (Local Educational Agency) collaborates with communities to co-design opportunities for youth, families, and stakeholders to build on their knowledge, skills and relationships to prepare for life after high school.	choose, disclose their disability identify (if necessary) what types of accommodations they need to be successful in a job.	

		• The Pennsylvania Youth Leadership Network (PYLN) serves to engage a network that is led and driven by inclusive organizations of youth and young adultswith and without disabilities across Pennsylvania. PYLN promotes advocacy, self-determination, leadership, empowerment, and service learning in the areas of transition, employment, education, and community engagement. PDE through the PaTTAN system formally collaborates and supports the efforts of PYLN by including youth voice in all aspects of planning • The Community of Practice Transition Conference (COP) has a primary purpose to expand the capacity of schools, agencies and communities, in partnership with youth, young adults and families, in promoting the successful transition of youth/young adults with disabilities to post-school outcomes of employment,		

		post-secondary education and training, community participation and healthy lifestyles. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about effective practices to assist youth/young adults with disabilities to explore possibilities, take advantage of their opportunities, and actively advocate for their future.		
11. Professional Training The Department of Education should continue to implement and increase participation in specialized training for special education teachers and transition coordinators to improve competitive integrated employment outcomes.	• Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE)	**PDE:** **Progress Made, Ongoing.** • PDE annually offers professional development for educators on the CEW academic standards, career readiness indicators, and <u>PA Employment First</u> as well as state and federal laws related to employment of students with disabilities. • Secondary transition coordinators have been trained at all 29 IUs to educate and support schools with implementing PA's Career Education and Work Standards and career	• See OVR insert on LEA potential use of no-cost CTI+ underwritten by U.S. Dept. of Ed., OSERS, RSA as an online career exploration and job planning tool. • Number of educators participating in professional development and training. • Percent of students meeting or exceeding the Career Standards Benchmark. • 4- and 5- year high school graduation rate • Percent of 12th graders	

		readiness indicators with students with disabilities. • The Community of Practice Transition Conference has a primary purpose to expand the capacity of schools, agencies and communities, in partnership with youth, young adults and families, in promoting the successful transition of youth/young adults with disabilities to post-school outcomes of employment, post-secondary education and training, community participation and healthy lifestyles. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about effective practices to assist youth/young adults with disabilities to explore possibilities, take advantage of their opportunities, and actively advocate for their future. • The "Transition Tuesday" webinar series is designed to continue the momentum of the 2020 PA Virtual Community on Transition	that demonstrate competency on an industry-recognized assessment, earn at least one industry-recognized credential, and/or complete a work-based learning experience. • Percent of 12th graders who participate in at least one rigorous course of study. • Percentage of high school graduates who have enrolled in an institution of higher education, enlisted in the military, or entered the workforce within 16 months of graduation. • Enrollment and success of students with disabilities in CTE programs.	

		Conference. These sessions were to be offered at the conference, but due to the pandemic, were not. The PA Community of Practice on Transition is featuring the following webinar opportunities designed for youth, families, and professionals in the areas of Employment, Family Engagement, Post-Secondary Education, Youth Engagement, and Social and Emotional Health. • Local Education Agencies are supported in their understanding and practice of secondary transition compliance through the Indicator 13 - Effective Practice for Secondary Transition and Indicator 14 Post School Outcomes via webinars and direct professional development. • Transition Discoveries guide the LEA (Local Educational Agency) in collaborating with communities to co-design opportunities for youth, families, and stakeholders to build on		

| | | their knowledge, skills and relationships to prepare for life after high school.

• The Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) Grant is improves competitive integrated employment outcomes for youth with disabilities; provides virtual and in-person work experiences, including but not limited to job shadowing, internship/practicum (paid/unpaid), cooperative education programs, apprenticeship, community-based work programs, and service learning (unpaid), with job coaching as appropriate, for youth with disabilities with preference for students at-risk of dropping out and/or youth who have difficulty obtaining employment, independently; establishes sites that can serve as models for community-based competitive employment for youth with disabilities; and actively involves The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), | | |

		County/Community-Based Behavioral Health, The Office of Intellectual Disabilities, Centers for Independent Living and other disability-specific support organizations during the development and implementation of the grant-related activities.		
12. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Participation The Department of Education, in collaboration with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, should continue to identify and reduce barriers that exist for vocational rehabilitation counselors to increase the frequency and consistency of participation in students' IEP meetings by vocational rehabilitation counselors.	• Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE) • Department of Labor & Industry's(L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitatio n (OVR)	**PDE:** • OVR tracks IEP meeting attendance quarterly through Act 26. OVR is also working on a project with cyber schools to track and improve cyber school IEP attendance. Since March of 2020 when all OVR staff started tele work, any IEP attendance was via a virtual platform upon invitation to a VR Counselor. • BSE created written guidance through the annotated version of the IEP to assist LEAs in following procedures for inviting agencies, such as OVR, to IEP meetings for students with disabilities. These forms are posted on the website and are widely used.	• OVR will report annual participation as required under PA Act 26 on SwD IEP and 504 meetings when invited by the LEA with guardian and student written consent. Further indictors include: • Number of IEP meetings attended by OVR staff adjusted in 2020 for virtual only attendance. • Number of IEPs that include new or significantly modified goals and steps toward competitive integrated employment • Number of IEP meetings attended by OVR staff	

		• In addition, nearly 100 LEAs receive technical assistance from PaTTAN and Intermediate Units (IUs) related to agency involvement for IEP planning purposes. • This relationship is being clarified in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) • OVR (Office of Vocational Rehabilitation) and Bureau Of Special Education (BSE) have developed a new Memorandum of Understand to streamline the relationship between the two agencies serving to make the process for students, families, schools and agencies a simpler, clearer one. Toolkits to support this MOU are also under construction. • Due to virtual participation, OVR attendance has increased at the virtual conference. • Act 26 Supporting Document To assist the PA Department of Labor and Industry in meeting the data collection requirements of Act 26 and to minimize any redundancy	• Number of IEPs that include new or significantly modified goals and steps toward competitive integrated employment • The number and percentage of all IEP meetings for transition-age students in which an OVR counselors participated. Disaggregated by school district and OVR district office and disaggregated by age of student.	

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L&I:
• OVR continues to work on compliance with Act 36 of 2018 known as the Employment First Act, including publishing quarterly performance reports on. These are available with quarterly updates on the DLI/OVR web page at the following link: https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Disability-Services/Pages/Act-26-Information.aspx</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>13. Decrease Reliance on Sheltered Employment
The Department of Education and partner</td><td>• Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE)</td><td>**Multi-Agency Update:**
• DHS partners with OVR and PDE to produce ongoing trainings and webinars that promote competitive integrated employment as the first consideration and</td><td>• Number of trainings held for school districts on WIOA requirements and CMS requirements. Number of attendees</td><td>DHS:
The number of people that are receiving prevocational services in a facility will decrease</td></tr>
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agencies should exhibit leadership to train school personnel and families of students with a disability about the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA), which prohibits local educational agencies from contracting with entities whose work is compensated at subminimum wage. Personnel should also be trained on the impact the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' 2014 home and community-based services rule which prohibits adult waiver funding from being used to pay for services that tend to isolate and segregate people with a disability from the community of people without disabilities. Public education funding should promote educational programming that leads to competitive integrated employment and reduces the use of, and reliance on, segregated	• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) • Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Developmental Programs (ODP)	preferred outcome for individuals with disabilities. • ODP implemented a policy change to all providers of Community Participation Supports, including those serving individuals in licensed settings where individuals receive subminimum wages. Beginning July 1, 2019, this policy change requires that a participant may not receive those services in a licensed setting for more than 75 percent of their support time, on average, per month. In addition, the provider must offer each participant with opportunities to spend time in the community that are consistent with each participant's preferences, choices, and interests. This policy change promotes increased community participation in alignment with ODP's Everyday Lives philosophy and aligns with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Final Rule. • In addition, PDE-BSE regularly	disaggregated by school district. • Number/percent of individuals age 18 to 64 enrolled with ODP receiving prevocational services; o 4,401, 10.2% received services in a prevocational setting at least one time between October 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019. Data is available by county • Number of people enrolled with ODP transitioning from receiving submimim wage to CIE; o 2017 – 222 • Number of individuals enrolled with ODP receiving 511 counseling o Data not currently available but	annually by a minimum of 10%.

educational programming. The Department of Education should monitor progress in moving away from non-integrated, segregated educational services and programming in IEPs of students with disabilities toward goals and strategies that promote (1) paid work experiences while a student is still in school and (2) transition to post-secondary competitive integrated employment.		reviews federal and state laws impacting secondary transition (IDEA, PA Ch. 339, HCBS Rule, WIOA Section 511, etc.) and provides updates to the field. • OVR and ODP have expanded the MOU on data sharing to track all competitive integrated employment (CIE) outcomes for individuals who receive 511 services from OVR. As of November of 2020, the first data exchange has not yet taken place. The data exchanges are anticipated to begin by July of 2021. presentations. • Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) Grants: improve competitive integrated employment outcomes for youth with disabilities; provide virtual and in-person work experiences, including but not limited to job shadowing, internship/practicum (paid/unpaid), cooperative education programs, apprenticeship, community-based work programs, and service learning (unpaid), with job coaching as appropriate, for youth with disabilities with	will be available in future years	

		preference for students at-risk of dropping out and/or youth who have difficulty obtaining employment, independently; establish sites that can serve as models for community-based competitive employment for youth with disabilities; andactively involve The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), County/Community-Based Behavioral Health, The Office of Intellectual Disabilities, Centers for Independent Living and other disability-specific support organizations during the development and implementation of the grant-related activities. • Transition Discoveries guide schools to collaborate with communities to co-design opportunities for youth, families, and stakeholders to build on their knowledge, skills and relationships to prepare for life after high school. By doing this, everyone will be empowered to identify transition practices that work for them and design new approaches		

		that help young people better reach their goals. • The "Transition Tuesday" webinar series is designed to continue the momentum of the 2020 PA Virtual Community on Transition Conference. These sessions were to be offered at the conference, but due to the pandemic, were not. The PA Community of Practice on Transition is featuring the following webinar opportunities designed for youth, families, and professionals in the areas of Employment, Family Engagement, Post-Secondary Education, Youth Engagement, and Social and Emotional Health. • Person Driven Planning webinar series is an intentionally designed inclusive process attempting to ensure that individuals take charge of their own transition planning. The Community of Practice on Secondary Transition has designed a four part webinar		

		series to explore Person driven Planning, tools for engaging in the practice , the importance of benefits counseling and promising practices in Pennsylvania • Indicator 13 Trainings reviews effective practices for secondary transition. Section 511 of the Work Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) imposes limitations on employers who hold special wage certificates, commonly known as 14(c) certificates, under the FLSA (29 U.S.C. 214(c)) that must be satisfied before the employers may hire youth with disabilities at subminimum wage or continue to employ individuals with disabilities of any age at the subminimum wage level. This is included in the Effective Practices for Secondary Transition training. • Partner with ODP, OVR Through the Community of Practice on Secondary Transition statewide		

		leadership team, Bureau of Special Education collaborates with a variety of state agencies including but not limited to the Office of Long Term Living, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and Office of Developmental Programs. • Recent legislation at the federal and state level has greatly impacted secondary transition requirements. Through a posted webinar, the presenters shared the core tenants of recent legislation and policy specific to secondary transition including: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004), Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services Final Rule (CMS Final Rule), Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act/ & Section 511 (WIOA), Act 26 of Pennsylvania, and PA 339 (Comprehensive Guidance Plan). This recording explores the relevancy of this legislation as it pertains		

		to secondary transition planning within the educational setting.		
14. Increase Pre-Employment Skill Development When students are prepared with skills and competencies that increase the likelihood of success on the job or success in postsecondary education programs that lead to a job, they are more likely to succeed in competitive integrated employment as an adult. The Department of Education, in collaboration with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, should ensure that transition plans in IEPs exist by age 14, and that they include meaningful pre-employment services such as self-advocacy skills, public transportation and travel skills, assistive technology assessments and training,	• Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	**Multi-Agency Update:** • OVR offers these services through our Early Reach Programs which are offered in a virtual setting since start of telework in March 2020. In addition, the PDE Bureau of Special Education reviews and provides updates to educators on federal and state laws impacting secondary transition through PaTTAN, including IDEA, PA Chapter 339 regulations, HCBS rule, WIOA Section 511, etc. PDE also offers professional development annually for educators on the Career Education and Work Standards, career readiness indicators, and PA Employment First. • BSE continues to promote the Career Readiness indicator, Career Ed and Work standards as well as collaboration through OVR for Pre-ETS at the local level		

organizational skills, personal presentation and hygiene competencies, and note-taking skills.		**L&I:** • PDE and OVR are developing a data sharing agreement with school districts to track statewide disaggregated data on students with disabilities and are partnering to advocate for school districts to implement the transition plan competencies for students with disabilities.		
15. Discovery and Customized Employment Discovery is a process that identifies the unique contributions offered by people who, due to the impact of their disabilities, might not compete for jobs as well as others. Customized employment is the process of matching the abilities of an individual with the needs of a business, instead of following the traditional method of hiring people and expecting them to perform job tasks predetermined in a standard job description.	• Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	**PDE:** **Progress Made, Ongoing.** The Department of Education Bureau of Special Education (BSE), through PaTTAN, provided three trainings for school leaders about the use of Discovery, Customized Employment, and Systematic Instruction as vocational tools for youth with significant impact of disability in 2019 prior to telework by all OVR staff in March 2020. Future training's will be virtual until OVR and LEA staff both resume in person contacts. PDE BSE and PaTTAN made video resources available for student support teams, including a session titled "Daring to Dream: Using Discovery in Transition Planning for Students with Dual Sensory	• Number of participants engaged in trainings, disaggregated by demographics and participant type (i.e., educators, parents/family members, etc.). • Measure: Number of customized jobs created annually. • Number of businesses educated about the potential for success with customized employment model. • Comment: OVR will need to need to track and count by occurrence any	

Instead, customized employment enables a worker to emphasize their abilities and interests, thereby increasing the likelihood that they will succeed, while at the same time enabling the business to increase productivity by having the work completed effectively. The Department of Education should promote knowledge and awareness of discovery and customized employment services for IEP team members, including parents, special education professionals, and transition coordinators, to utilize in the development and implementation of IEPs.		Impairment and other Complex Support Needs" video recorded at a fall 2018 statewide conference. This session highlighted using Discovery to build student transition plans with the outcome goal of customized employment upon graduation and highlighted what to look for as the essential elements of Discovery and Customized Employment. The Department of Education and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation are developing a joint training and presentation materials on customized employment for students with disabilities, parents, and families. • 2019 Transition COP Conference provided session on supported employment, customized employment • The Community of Practice Transition Conference has a primary purpose to expand the capacity of schools, agencies and communities, in partnership with youth, young adults and families, in promoting the successful	contacts with businesses by OVR staff on SE or CE models. Presumably these are conversations during job development and discovery phases. CRP agencies may be the primary contacts with employers. OVR may need to add a data reporting requirement of SE or CE venders to track all business contacts in order to measure this.	

		transition of youth/young adults with disabilities to post-school outcomes of employment, post-secondary education and training, community participation and healthy lifestyles. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about effective practices to assist youth/young adults with disabilities to explore possibilities, take advantage of their opportunities, and actively advocate for their future.		
16. Expand Summer Initiatives Over the last decade, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation's Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services has worked with a growing team of partners, including the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network, Salus University, and Penn State University, in providing high school	• Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	**PDE:** **Progress Made, Ongoing.** In response to recommendations in the 2016 interagency report, OVR and PDE-BSE developed and launched the Junior Summer Academy for students in grades 6-8 who are blind or visually impaired. In 2020 OVR summer academies were held virtually. 2021 activities will be evaluated in terms of safety and health needs of students to participate in these.	• Number of Junior Summer Academy participants.	

students and recent graduates with a sample of university life; including a packed curriculum of orientation and mobility, vocational preparation, post-secondary preparation activities, independent daily living activities, assistive technology skill development, adapted recreational activities, and exposure to the overall college campus experience. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education should build on the development of their Junior Summer Academy by expanding access to the weeklong learning experience for more students ages 8-13, preparing students to succeed and thrive as an adult in the workplace.		This year BSE allocated nearly $45,000 for the Junior Summer Academy. Funding covered the full cost of the Academy and three staff members from the PaTTAN system to assist in planning and implementation of the academy in conjunction with Kutztown University. • BSE supports the Summer Academy for Blind students that is held annually at Penn State University. In this partnership, BSE provides extensive personnel during the three weeks of the academy and provides financial support. BSE promotes collaboration during the academy and financially supports the professional development of Teachers of the Visually Impaired, so that they increase their skills while learning in a practical setting with students on the college campus. • Youth were included in the planning and the implementation of the Community of Practice (COP) Conference. Youth also attended the conference in July 2019 and July 2020.		

IV. Priority: Transition students from secondary education to adult life. Given the significant investment of public resources preparing young people with a disability to be productive adults, all state agencies must be committed to employment outcomes, innovation, and seamlessness when students with a disability transition from school to work.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Implementation Progress	Indicators (if applicable)	Measurable Goal
17. Community-Integrated Programming For students eligible to stay in school from age 18 through age 21 under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and state law, the Department of Education should continue to partner with other agencies and stakeholders to adopt policies and promote practices emphasizing educational programming that is based in the community, and prepares the student to work and function in a community setting.	• Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE)	**PDE:** **Progress Made, Ongoing.** According to the Department of Education Bureau of Special Education, nearly 5,500 students with disabilities between the age of 18-21 remain in school. Training and technical assistance provided to LEAs emphasize the importance of IEPs being grounded in practices that provide community opportunities, work-based opportunities, and independent living, with the least amount of supports necessary for success. Nearly 150 LEAs engaged in this type of professional development and have improved practices in this area. • The Competitive Integrated	• Number of LEAs reached through training and technical assistance, and estimated number of enrolled students reached indirectly through those programs. • Postsecondary readiness measures (work-based learning experiences, graduation rates, postsecondary outcomes, etc.) – *see earlier in document for examples.*	

		Employment (CIE) Grant's purpose is to improve competitive integrated employment outcomes for youth with disabilities; provide virtual and in-person work experiences, including but not limited to job shadowing, internship/practicum (paid/unpaid), cooperative education programs, apprenticeship, community-based work programs, and service learning (unpaid), with job coaching as appropriate, for youth with disabilities with preference for students at-risk of dropping out and/or youth who have difficulty obtaining employment, independently; establish sites that can serve as models for community-based competitive		

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employment for youth with disabilities; and actively involve The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), County/Community-Based Behavioral Health, The Office of Intellectual Disabilities, Centers for Independent Living and other disability-specific support organizations during the development and implementation of the grant-related activities.

- Sessions at COP on Secondary Transition conference included topics on community integrated programming. Workshops from the conferences were recorded and posted on the PaTTAN YouTube channel.
- Over 1400 transition stakeholders including parents, students, teachers, administrators, and
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		agencies attended the 2020 Conference.		

18. Case Information Sharing
State agencies should continue to work collaboratively to enable and promote the ability of individual student/adult case information to be accessible by, and shared between, local educational agencies, county mental health and developmental service agencies, and district Office of Vocational Rehabilitation offices. Appropriate confidentiality protections must be considered.
 	
State agencies should review data and outcomes from a pilot conducted in Allegheny County to promote consistent data collection and sharing that created a local agreement template for use by
	•Governor's Office of Performance Through Excellence (OPE)
	•Governor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (OIA)
	•Department of Human Services (DHS)
	•Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)
	• Department of Education's PDE Bureau of Special Education (BSE)
		Multi-Agency Update:
		State agencies developed and executed data sharing agreements to improve availability of information, service delivery, and outcomes for individuals with disabilities. These efforts include:
		• State agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction signed a comprehensive data sharing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishing a framework for improving data and information sharing across agencies, sectors, and programs.
		• OVR signed an MOU with ODP allowing data sharing quarterly.
		• Through an MOU, ODP granted access in the Home and Community Services Information System (HCSIS) to OVR staff to assist them with maintaining contact
			• Number of OVR counselors that have access to ODP participant information in Home and Community Services Information System.
			  o 2018/2019 – 0
			  o 2020 - 4
			• Number of ODP Supports Coordinators that have access to OVR participant information in Commonwealth Workforce Development System.
			  o No ODP Supports Coordinators have been given access to CWDS at this time
			• Number of IEPs that include new or significantly modified goals and steps toward competitive integrated employment.
				DHS: 100% of all OVR staff with a need for access to HCSIS will have access to HCSIS.

school districts, district Office of Vocational Rehabilitation offices, and the county mental health/intellectual disability (MH/ID) offices to encourage adoption in other areas.		with individuals as required under section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act during the COVID-19 Pandemic. • OVR signed an MOU with OLTL on 8/4/20 DHS: The department conducted a data sharing pilot in Allegheny County using a local agreement template created for use by school districts, the OVR district office, and the local county Mental Health and Intellectual Disability (MH/ID) office to enable consistent data collection and sharing at the case level. Schools across the state can also apply for school-based mental health grants through the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) to set up services on-site, which allows students to receive both support and educational programming while at school. These grants are available through PDE's federal discretionary Individuals with Disabilities		

		Education Act (IDEA) funds.		
19. Career and Technical Education Programs Career and technical education programs, including those provided through career and technical centers, are valuable resources for students with disabilities. As part of Pennsylvania's State Plan requirements under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V), the Department of Education and partner agencies, including Labor & Industry and the PA Workforce Development Board, should explore opportunities to improve outcomes for students with disabilities, both within academic and technical programs as well as in postsecondary endeavors.	• Governor's Office of Policy and Planning (GPO) • Department of Education's (PDE) Bureaus of Career and Technical Education and Special Education (BSE) • PA State Board of Education • Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) • PA Workforce Developme nt Board (PA WDB)	**PDE:** • PDE has started implementing Perkins V. • In 2020, PDE submitted its state plan for to the U.S. Department of Education for how Perkins funding will be used by the state and schools for career and technical education over the next four years. • The Federal Perkins Act (Perkins V) establishes numerous performance metrics for states and programs, as well as requires that states identify additional performance metrics within their plans related to the academic success of student populations. • The state's revised WIOA Combined State Plan was also be submitted in 2020, and includes requirements around performance outcomes for	• Examples from federal laws (Perkins V and WIOA): labor market data; high school graduation rate; academic proficiency; postsecondary outcomes (education/training, military, service, workforce); percent graduating with industry-recognized credential; percent graduating with postsecondary credits (dual enrollment or advanced coursework); percent graduating with work-based learning experiences; percent of CTE concentrators in CTE programs and programs of study that lead to non-traditional fields. • Number of students with disabilities enrolled in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs.	L&I • The commonwealth will track the number of youth with disabilities placed in work-based learning experiences and the number of youth with disabilities served who obtain competitive, integrated employment.

		programs, many of which overlap with areas covered in Perkins V. • Both the Perkins V and WIOA plans were approved by the federal government. L&I • The Workforce Development Board has set goals for career and technical education programs in the WIOA Combined State Plan.	• Number of students with disabilities who complete CTE programs and graduate with a competitive integrated job. L&I * The Workforce Development Board set the following goal in the WIOA Combined State Plan: • The commonwealth will support youth with disabilities in the attainment of competitive, integrated employment by increasing paid work experience opportunities and other career exposure experiences, such as job shadowing, mentoring, and employer mock interviews, in addition to supported employment services. OVR, within L&I, will collaborate with Local	

			Education Agencies to achieve this goal.	
20. Supports Coordination and Waiver Access for Graduating Students The Department of Human Services should continue its efforts to make supports coordination available to all transition age students with an intellectual disability and/or autism, and make waiver capacity available to students with an intellectual disability and/or autism upon graduation to ensure there is a seamless transition from school to adult life, avoiding gaps in service that could disrupt a student's job.	• Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) • Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE)	**Multi-Agency Update:** • Since September 2016, ODP and PDE have worked collaboratively to progress on this recommendation. As a result of the Graduate Wait List Initiative, waiver services are available to graduating seniors (age 21) if they are found eligible. Graduating seniors can begin receiving waiver services immediately upon graduation. In addition, schools are required to make students aware of available services when they exit and are encouraged to connect students to services long before graduation. Postsecondary transition is part of a student's IEP. • Sessions were provided at Conference 2019 – 20 Archived on PaTTAN YouTube Channel Workshops from the conferences were recorded and posted on the PaTTAN YouTube channel.		DHS: 100% of individuals with intellectual disability/autism age 21 and graduating will be given the opportunity to access waiver services.

21. Comprehensive Transition Programs In recent years, states – including Pennsylvania – have worked to increase the availability of Comprehensive Transition Programs, one- or two-year college-based certificate and credential programs for young adults with intellectual or other developmental disabilities who are not otherwise able to meet eligibility criteria to enroll in a traditional postsecondary degree program. The commonwealth should continue to work to strengthen access to Comprehensive Transition Programs for adults with an intellectual disability and/or autism.	• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) • Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE) and Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education • Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Developmental Programs (ODP)	**DHS:** • In 2016, ODP developed a "Braided Funding" document to promote postsecondary education as a pathway to employment, including Comprehensive Transition Programs (CTPs). • ODP offers Education Support services to the extent they are not available under a program funded by IDEA or available for funding by OVR. Education Support provides payment up to $35,000 towards tuition of post-secondary education, including CTPs.		
21.a. Expanding Access to	• Department of Education's	**PDE:** • In 2015, Millersville University (a PASSHE	• Number of CTPs available statewide	

Comprehensive Transition Programs	(PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE)	university) received federal funding to collaborate with PSU Harrisburg and Mercyhurst University and others to build the PA Inclusive Higher Education Consortium to serve young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.	(currently 8 programs).	
The Department of Education and partners, including the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education and other postsecondary institutions, should work together to promote Comprehensive Transition Programs and other innovative programs that expand access to rigorous coursework by helping K-12 and postsecondary education institutions collaborate and expand access based on successful models.	• Department of Education's (PDE) Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education • Other postsecondary partners including the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, PA Commission for Community Colleges, and state-related universities.	• PDE will engage other postsecondary partners more intentionally moving forward, including PASSHE, state-related universities, 14 community colleges, and independent colleges and universities (AICUP). This effort is currently underway. **L&I:** • OVR is updating the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) to track the number of OVR Pre-	• Number of students enrolled in CTPs. • Number and percentage of students who complete CTPs and earn a certificate or other credential.	

		Employment Transition Services students participating in one- or two-year college or certificate programs.		
21.b. Provide Financial Assistance for Students in Comprehensive Transition Programs As part of its goal to expand access to rigorous coursework for all students, the Department of Education should encourage the use of available state and federal (Title IV, Part A) funding to cover tuition of students ages 18-21 participating in a Comprehensive Transition Program.	• Department of Education (PDE)	**PDE:** **New Approach, Pending.** • In its Consolidated State Plan under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), PDE identified increasing participation in advanced coursework for all students – including programs that provide students with opportunities to earn postsecondary credentials while in high school – as a priority for state and LEA federal Title IV, Part A funding.	• Number of students, disaggregated by student subgroup, participating in advanced coursework. • Percent of 12th graders who participate in at least one rigorous course of study. • Percentage of high school graduates who have enrolled in an institution of higher education, enlisted in the military, or entered the workforce within 16 months of graduation. • Number of students enrolled in CTPs. • Number and percentage of students who complete CTPs and earn a certificate	

21.c. Identify and Address Barriers				
The Department of Human Services and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should continue to solicit input from Comprehensive Transition Programs, waiver participants, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation customers, and other stakeholders to identify potential barriers facing participants who want to attend and benefit from Comprehensive Transition Programs, and make changes to remove those barriers.	• Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitati on OVR)	**DHS:** In 2016, ODP developed a "Braided Funding" document to promote postsecondary education as a pathway to employment, including CTPs. In accordance with Federal Regulation and guidance from the CMS, payment for CTPs may only be furnished through a Medicaid waiver when it is not available through OVR. In 2019, OVR and ODP worked jointly to make policy changes that allow for individuals in an ODP waiver to receive Education Support services through their waiver, including payment for a CTP, during periods when OVR has a waiting list. • Note: A person who wants to receive Education Support services through their ODP waiver for a CTP must first be referred to OVR since OVR can also assist in the funding for the CTP. ODP will only be able to report on the number of students enrolled in CTPs where the		

		CTP is funded by ODP. Also, ODP does not capture data, and thus will not be able to report on the number of students who complete CTPs and earn a certificate or other credential.		
22. Expanding Innovative Programs Connecting Young People with Disabilities to Workforce Opportunities The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should continue to sustain, improve, and increase access to programs that connect students with disabilities with meaningful workforce opportunities, including customized training initiativesOn site employer customized trainings is an innovative cross-agency program that enables high school seniors with significant	• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	**L&I:** • OVR continues to improve the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) to track the number of OVR Pre-Employment Transition Services students participating in customized training initiatives, early reach services, and paid work experiences. Due to COVID-19 mitigation activities the number of locations and opportunities for employer based customized training and paid work experiences have been limited. Progress in this area will resume once businesses are able to offer access to training and paid work and once OVR and Community Rehabilitation Staff can resume community activities and engagement.	• Number of OVR Pre-Employment Transition Services students participating in customized employer site trainings, , early reach services, and paid work experiences every quarter.	

disabilities to spend their final school year in non-paid training, gaining real-world experiences in hospitals and other non-profit organizations while rotating through various job experiences with a participating employer. Most graduates secure competitive integrated employment following graduation. A. Early Reach is an initiative spearheaded by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation that targets information and outreach to individual students with disabilities and their families to ensure they are aware of vocational rehabilitation services as early as possible, know when the		• These initiatives and more will resume once mitigation measures and OVR staff are able to resume in office and in community encounters with students, LEA staff and employers.		

student will be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, and learn how they can take advantage of educational programming while still in secondary education to prepare the student for competitive integrated employment. B. Developing paid work experiences that offer employer wage reimbursement is an initiative to offset an employer's costs of hiring a young person with a disability and providing on-the-job training. This serves as an			

incentive to the employer to hire young people with a disability and increases the likelihood of retention.				
23. Cross-system Training and Professional Development Multiple state agencies provide critical services to individuals with disabilities across Pennsylvania. The web of program and funding rules is often complex and complicated. Given the importance of interagency coordination and collaboration to the success of an individual with a disability being supported to securing or keeping a job, it is important that professionals within each system know and understand the other systems. The Departments of Education, Labor &	• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitati on (OVR) • Department of Human Services' Office of (DHS) Developme ntal Programs (ODP) • Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE)	**DHS:** • Regional, in-person cross-agency trainings have been held twice across the state that included partners from DHS, PDE, and L&I. The sessions focused on introducing services and supports in each system and how the systems work together. Planning for future cross-system training is underway. • OMHSAS provides trainings as needed and requested. • The Community of Practice Statewide Leadership Team is a leadership team comprised of representatives from PDE, DOH, L&I, DHS and postsecondary education, who work		

Industry, and Human Services should continue to conduct regionalized, in-person trainings for supports coordinators, local special education professionals, and vocational rehabilitation counselors so they can learn together how their respective systems work and services that can support competitive integrated employment outcomes.		collaboratively to ensure appropriate transitions for youth and young adults. Resources from the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) are used to develop a focus area for each school year and a 5-part cross-systems webinar series is planned each school year based on topic. • The Community of Practice (COP) Transition Conference has a primary purpose to expand the capacity of schools, agencies and communities, in partnership with youth, young adults and families, in promoting the successful transition of youth/young adults with disabilities to post-school outcomes of employment, post-secondary education and training, community		

		participation and healthy lifestyles. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about effective practices to assist youth/young adults with disabilities to explore possibilities, take advantage of their opportunities, and actively advocate for their future. • National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) held a virtal capacity building institute. Pennsylvania's team included members from across agencies including the Pennsylvania Youth Leadership Network, Parent Education Advocacy and Leadership as well as a variety of state agencies. • As part of the ongoing work of the Memorandum of		

		Understanding between Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and Bureau of Special Education, a joint training plan will be developed. **L&I:** • OVR is tracking annual cross-system training and professional development for OVR staff. OVR have access to over 279 different trainings offered by OVR or other organizations.		

V. Priority: Assist adults with a disability in getting and keeping a <u>competitive integrated</u> job.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Implementation Progress	Indicators (if applicable)	Measurable Goal(s)
24. Embrace the Future, and Do Not Discount Family Fears Implementation of state and federal laws moving away from segregated	• Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE) • Department of Human Services (DHS)	• This is an ongoing effort from all agencies. • Regular sessions (bi-monthly) are planned between the Parent Education & Advocacy and Leadership (PEAL), Pennsylvania Training and		

settings and towards integrated settings should respect the fact that many families whose adult sons and daughters have relied on certain services for decades may harbor doubts and fears about what the future may hold – such concerns must not be discounted. The departments should communicate frequently to all stakeholders, emphasizing the possibilities, answering questions, and allaying concerns.	• Department of Labor & Industry (L&I)	Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) and various other collaborators. PEAL and Hispanos Unidos Para Nino's Exceptionales (HUNE) collaborate regularly with PaTTAN to develop family resources. • Expansive Family resource center on Pattan Website under Family Engagement. • PaTTAN Family Engagement Initiative collaborates across all PaTTAN initiatives and projects to support the development of family/parent resources. • Indicator 13 (effective practices for secondary transition) training includes a heavy emphasis on family engagement in the transition planning process • The PaTTAN website houses a series of family friendly 1-page documents designed to provide brief, concise overviews of prioritized topics that address what parents and family members should consider when supporting their youth in preparing for post-secondary education,		

		employment, and independent living.		
24.a. Provide Clear Guidance to Local Educational Agencies on Expectations The Department of Education should continue to implement Section 511 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act by providing clear guidance and technical assistance to local educational agencies regarding the prohibition on contracting with entities whose work is compensated at subminimum wage, among other expectations.	• Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education (BSE)	**PDE: Progress Made, Ongoing.** The Department of Education created four publications released statewide to provide guidance on WIOA regulations and practices that would support the concepts inherent to WIOA principles. These include Customized Planning, Entitlement vs. Eligibility, Exploring Options of a Two- or Four-Year College, and Secondary Transition Guide for Deaf-Blindness. These publications have been widely disseminated and are used at IEP meetings.		
24.b. Enhancing Supports for Individuals Receiving Services in Sheltered Workshops to Pursue Competitive	• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	• This is an ongoing effort by the Department of Labor and Industry under Section 511 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. From July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020, 4, 547 individuals in sheltered workshops	• Number of career counseling sessions provided to individuals in sheltered	

Integrated Employment The Department of Labor & Industry should continue to implement Section 511 with creativity and innovation to support individuals receiving services in sheltered workshops who want to pursue competitive integrated employment.		received career counseling sessions from OVR on the benefits of Competitive Integrated Employment and how to utilize OVR services.	workshops from OVR.	
24.c. Enhancing Trainings and Supports for Individuals and Families. The Department of Human Services should continue to implement the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' home and community-based services rule by: A. Providing training and support for families to use Life Course tools, which encourages developing a vision that includes employment;	• Department of Human Services (DHS)	**DHS:** The department is in compliance with the HCBS Final Rule. In addition, DHS-ODP has also worked on the following initiatives: • ODP collaborates with the PA Family Network and Self Advocates United As 1 (SAU1) as part of the Supporting Families initiative. The PA Family Network has 22 Family Advisors across the state helping families to develop their vision and LifeCourse Portfolio, connect with each other, support mentoring relationships, and identify	○ Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, PAFN has held 30 online Family Forums including six which were offered in both English and Spanish. ○ During the initial months of the pandemic in 2020, 12 information web sessions were held for self-advocates. Hosted by	DHS: 100% of individual records monitored during each cycle will be compliant with the requirement that individuals spend at least 25% of their time in a community setting or have a variance for the requirement. DHS: Family engagement for family survey data will remain above 95%.

B. Identifying services that do not support or lead to competitive integrated employment and working to adopt changes to waiver service definitions; C. Placing limits on the amount of time an individual can receive a service in a vocational program or other large-group employment activity; and D. Offering training and/or assisting providers to transform their service models from segregated ones to those supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' home and community-based services rule.		community resources and opportunities. Content for families is centered around envisioning a good life, using LifeCourse tools to plan for all lifestages, understanding the importance of experiences, and using a variety of formal and informal supports and services to make everyday lives happen. • Content for families is free. SAU1 has two teams of Self-Advocates that serve as leaders for the Community of Practice in Pennsylvania. All Supports Coordination Organizations (SCO) enrolled with ODP have had individual trainings for their staff on Charting the LifeCourse, as well as mandatory online webinars for all Supports Coordinators (SC); with some SCOs adopting it as their total organization approach. • ODP placed expectations on the time that	SAU1, these sessions provided touchpoints for self-advocates across the state with ODP regional staff. They were attended by 203 people. o Twenty-three (23) Star Power and Vision workshops have been led by SAU1, including 8 using the online platform, with 346 people across the state attending. The PA Family Network: • In 2020, 15 advisors taught and mentored families on *Charting the LifeCourse*, including 3 bilingual advisors. • 1,424 people were	

| | | individuals spend in the community as part of the Community Participation Service. As of July 1, 2019, it is expected that individuals should spend at least 25% of their time in a community setting to build potential for employment and pursue greater community inclusion that is related to their unique strengths, needs, and interests.
• ODP held provider transformation leadership boot camp sessions in 2016 and 2017. Six providers were selected to receive one-on-one technical assistance from subject matter experts. This was completed in summer 2018.
• OCDEL will continue C2P2 (Competence and Confidence Partners in Policymaking for Families of Children in Early Intervention), P3D (Parents as Partners for Professional Development), SICC | reached directly through outreach activities and workshops throughout Pennsylvania in 2020.
• More than 6000 people were reached indirectly via social media engagements and direct digital mail in 2020.
• 25 workshops in 2020 were delivered in both English and Spanish for individuals and families, presenting an overview of *Charting the LifeCourse.*
• 106 people were touched through individualized mentoring, face-to-face or by phone, addressing | |

| | | Stakeholder Engagement, and review of local programs' yearly family survey results.

• In 2020, in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, ODP requested and received approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to modify the employment services for existing waivers. These modifications include allowing services to be delivered remotely and expanding the service definitions such that providers could assist a person who lost their job with applying for unemployment. In July of 2020, ODP issued retainer payments to Supported Employment providers. Payments were made to 174 providers totalling $10.64 million.

• ODP and OVR did not offer training and technical assistance in 2018, 2019, or 2020. | specific topics.
• 61 Ambassadors across the state and across all stakeholder groups participated in the *Charting the LifeCourse Ambassador* series. Currently, there are an additional 4 people in an Ambassador series.
• Statewide, all but 5 of the 48 Administrative Entities (AEs) have joined the Community of Practice (CoP) on Supporting Families and are working to develop a CoP for ALL through Regional Collaboratives.
• Twenty-seven Regional Collaboratives (individual | |

			counties or joinders, or groups of adjacent counties accounting for all, except two counties and one county joinder), are in various stages of building stakeholder groups and strategies for supporting families in their local communities. During the pandemic, ODP Regional Leads brought their Regional Collaboratives together to revisit and reenergize the work of supporting families with local approaches. • C. Number and percentage of people receiving	

			Community Participation Support that spend at least 25% of their time in a community setting or have a variance.	
			• OCDEL will provide family survey data on families to develop ideas and strategies to help childrne learn on yearly basis (new indicator to the Office of Special Education).	
			o FY 19/20 - 99.57% of families agreed and 97.82% of families of preschoolers agreed	
			• OCDEL will provide the number of individuals trained on C2P2 and P3D.	
			o FY 18/19 - 18 family members	

			- FY 19/20 - 19 family members - FY 20/21 - 21 family members - P3D Initiatives; - Number of Families that participated in EI training 18/19- 34 19/20- 84 20/21- 93 - Number of families that were involved in the planning/deliverly of EI training; 18/19- 167 19/20- 342 20/21- 376(todate) (DATA).	
25. Benefits Counseling People with a disability whose lives are dependent on access to medical care and long-term supports and services often fear getting a job and earning wages because earning too much	Department of Human Services' (DHS) Offices of Developmental Programs (ODP) and Long-Term Living (OLTL)	**DHS:** Benefits counseling is currently a waiver service provided by OLTL and ODP. In addition, DHS provided up-to-date information on Pennsylvania-specific benefits administered by the Office of Income	- The number of qualified providers that can offer Medicaid benefits counseling; - ODP: 7 enrolled providers in 2019. The number of people	

can result in the loss of eligibility for publicly funded services and benefits. There are programs and work incentives that enable a person to earn an income while remaining eligible for life-sustaining services, but few people with a disability are aware of them. The Department of Human Services should continue to make its home and community-based services program participants aware of free benefits counseling available through the Social Security Administration's Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program and should also develop benefits counseling services within its waivers to cover the cost of benefits counseling when free Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program assistance is not readily available. The service should be performed by qualified	• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	Maintenance to the CWICs working within Social Security Administration's WIPA. • In February 2020, ODP expanded the provider qualifications for Benefits Counseling to align with OVR qualifications for this service and build provider capacity. • Pennslyvania WIPA-CWIC'S, are exploring non-SSA benefits counseling, Virginia Commonwealth University Online Training. • OLTL began measuring Benefits Counseling through it's OPS-22 report.	authorized for benefits counseling through ODP & OLTL disaggregated by region. o OLTL- As of Dec. 16,2020 There are 15 BC Providers in 21 service locations in 15 Counties of PA Regions: ▪ SW-8 ▪ SE-3 ▪ LC-3 ▪ NE-1 ▪ Additional Service locations by County: Delaware - 2, Philadelphia – 4 ODP: FY19-20 – Total = 163 • Central = 1 • Northeast = 4 • Southeast = 158 • West = 0	

professionals who hold a Certified Worker Incentive Counseling credential accepted by the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program.			FY18-19 – Total = 100 • Central = 1 • Northeast = 0 • Southeast = 99 • West = 0	
26. Discovery and Customized Employment As discussed in an earlier recommendation, discovery and customized employment are innovative models of service and are particularly effective for individuals with significant disabilities. The Department of Human Services should fund the development of more provider capacity in Pennsylvania for these emerging services and should ensure that they are available to program participants of home and community-based services programs.	• Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Developmental Programs (ODP)	**DHS:** ODP contracts with the Temple Institute on Disabilities to deliver certification in Discovery and Customized Employment. In March2020, the training was moved to an online format to accommodate training needs during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Discovery and Customized Employment are included within the Employment Services offered by OLTL.	• Number of persons who completed certification in Discovery through the ODP/Temple agreement. o FY 19/20 - 37 • Number of persons who completed certification in Customized Employment through the ODP/Temple agreement. o FY 19/20 - 8 • Number of persons who completed certification in Systematic Instruction through the	

			ODP/Temple agreement.	
			o FY 19/20 - 11	
27. State Center Residents

Pennsylvania operates four public Intermediate Care Facilities for People with Intellectual Disabilities (also known as state centers). About 750 Pennsylvanians reside in these state centers and roughly two-thirds are working age. State center resources may be used to support individuals who want to hold competitive integrated jobs in the community outside the state center. The Department of Human Services should continue to make it a priority to increase the number of state center residents who hold competitive integrated jobs in the community. Specifically, it should:

- Train staff in discovery, customized employment and | - Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Developmental Programs (ODP)
- Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) | **DHS:**
Supporting individuals living in state centers to obtain and maintain competitive-integrated employment will continue to be an ongoing priority.

Due to the risk of exposure to COVID-19, individuals living in a State Center have not been working in the community since March 2020.

As of March 2018, at least two staff per state center have been trained and certified in Discovery. State centers continue to collaborate with the OVR and innovate when finding and developing jobs in the community, as well as providing transportation.

State Center staff continue to use professional/personal connections with businesses, as well as chambers of commerce, local chapters of the Arc of PA, etc., to find employment opportunities that are a good | - Number and percentage of state center residents working in competitive-integrated employment in the community.

12/31/18:
21 individuals; 2.8% of all people living in a State Center.

12/31/19:
17 individuals; 2.4% of all people living in a State Center.

- Number of State Center staff trained in Discovery or Customized Employment.

OVR 511 specialist's schedule routine counseling sessions on the benefits of pursuing | |

other supported employment competencies; • Engage the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to make connections between center residents and vocational rehabilitation counselors for career assessment, job development, post-secondary training opportunities, and job coaching services; • Innovate when it comes to finding and developing jobs in the community; • Commit to making reliable transportation to and from a job available for individuals who get and keep jobs in the community; and		match for both the employer and jobseeker. State Center staff have committed to providing reliable transportation to individuals who get and keep jobs in the community. OVR has also offered to send Specialists to present to residents on Section 511. Due to the risk of exposure to COVID-19, individuals living in a State Center have not been working in the community since March 2020.	CIE and how to apply to OVR to receive services to start a career that leads to greater financial independence.	

• Engage non-public employment service providers, if necessary, to achieve the desired outcome.				

28. Provider Qualifications
 	
The Department of Human Services' Offices of Long Term Living and Developmental Programs require staff who provide employment services to waiver participants to obtain either the ACRE Basic or Professional Certificate of Achievement, or the Certified Employment Support Professional certification. The Department of Human Services and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue recruitment efforts for new providers and provide information to staff regarding testing and certification opportunities, including offering providers an online ACRE training course.
	• Department of Human Services' (DHS) Offices of Long Term Living (OLTL) and Developmental Programs (ODP)
	
	• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)
		DHS:
		As of July 1, 2017, ODP raised the provider qualification standards of ID/A Waiver providers of Supported Employment, Small Group Employment, and the prevocational component of Community Participation Support. Staff must have either the Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) Basic or Professional Certificate of Achievement or the Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) Certification by July 1, 2019, or within six months of hire if hired after January 1, 2019. Beginning on July 1, 2019, all newly hired staff must also work under the supervision of an individual who meet these provider qualifications.
			• OLTL - Total number of credentialed providers.
			  • 202 (as of 11.1.20)
			• OLTL-Total number of individuals who obtain recertificatio n.
			  • Six in a month in as of 11.1.20
			• ODP - Percentage of providers of ODP employment services that are compliant with certification /
				DHS: Pennsylvania will remain at second or better nationwide among states for the number of individuals who have CESP Certification.
				
				DHS, OPD: Each year, the percentage of providers monitored during each cycle that are compliant with the certification/credentiali ng requirements will increase.

		ODP and OVR have collaborated to offer and supplement payment for ACRE-approved training. In addition, ODP and OVR developed the College of Employment Services (CES), an online platform that offers the ACRE certification. ODP - Percentage of providers of ODP employment services that are compliant with certification / credentialing requirements during each monitoring year will be available for 2020 after the issuance of this report but will be available in future years. This is a new requirement. OLTL is also engaged with the National Association of People Supporting Employment First (ASPE) on several CES initiatives, including promotion of certification opportunities, training, and a	credentialing requirements during each monitoring year. • Number of persons who receive ACRE certification through the College of Employment Supports o As of 12/12/19, 945 persons have obtained their ACRE certification through the CES.	

		credentialing/career pathway initiative.		
29. Supports Coordination Supports coordinators are the professionals who work directly with participants of publicly funded home and community-based services programs to discuss their needs and goals, and to identify services and supports necessary to meet their needs and achieve their goals. Supports coordinators are foundational to implementing Employment First. The Department of Human Services should provide guidance and continue to invest in sustained training to supports coordinators to ensure that employment is the first consideration and preferred outcome of individualized service planning. This should include tools and discussion guides for supports coordinators to	• Department of Human Services' (DHS) Offices of Long Term Living (OLTL) and Developmental Programs (ODP) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	**DHS:** OLTL and ODP continue to provide support to Service Coordinators through ongoing trainings, communications, and related online resources (webpages, etc.). For OLTL, Dering Consultants provides training on a monthly basis. ODP, with the assistance of the State Employment Leadership Network, developed the Pathways to Employment Tool. The purpose of this tool is to provide guidance to Supports Coordinators (SCs) for engaging in conversations with participants, and their teams, in an effort to help the person become competitively employed. The tool includes helpful conversation starters for SCs to use when planning with a participant, their	• Number and percentage of ODP-enrolled individuals ages 18-64 that have competitive integrated employment, (figures are available by SCO) o As of 12/31/18, 6,470 Individuals o As of 12/31/19, 7,136 Individuals • OLTL- Number of participants who completed training for the year. o 58 OLTL-The average number of participants who took part in the trainings in a year.	

use when discussing employment with program participants. The Office of Long Term Living should focus on working with managed care organizations ahead of the January 2020 Community HealthChoices implementation date to utilize supports coordinators and employment support services.		family, and teams about employment. OLTL also utilizes the tool Guidance on Conversations about Employment and others from PATTAN for youth and young adults.	• 5/month • OLTL-Total number of training participants since 2017. ○ 770	

30. Community HealthChoices
In addition to home and community-based services waivers and state-funded programs, many Pennsylvanians with a disability are receiving or will receive necessary long-term supports through the new managed care program called Community HealthChoices. The Department of Human Services should prioritize competitive integrated employment as an outcome within Community HealthChoices
	• Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Long Term Living (OLTL)	**DHS:**
		As of January 1, 2020, CHC is available statewide. OLTL continues to work with managed care organizations (MCOs) on their employment strategies to expand employment supports for individuals with disabilities. Strategies include:
		• Formation of an OLTL Review Committee to review the employment plans from the MCOs.
		• In-Person meetings that are ongoing with the MCO employment staff in order to discuss employment initiatives.
		• Pay-for-Performance (P4P) Medicaid MCO's will be
			• Employment as a Goal on the PCSP by MCO (participants per 1,000) (7/1/20)
			  ○ AHC – 14
			  ○ PHW – 19.2
			  ○ UPMC – 3.7
			• How many individuals are employed by MCO (participants per 1,000) (7/1/20) .
			  ○ AHC – 9
			  ○ PHW – 1.2
			  ○ UPMC – 5.4
			• How many individuals are participating in CIE by MCO (7/1/20)	

by including necessary service definitions and data collection requirements.		added to the P4P List, projected 2022. OLTL has also partnered with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to provide cross-agency updates and trainings on shared services to promote better collaboration. • The data sharing MOU in development between OLTL and OVR has been signed. • There is also an MOU related to the Order of Selection Closure in development between OLTL and OVR	o AHC – 190 o PHW – 12 o UPMC – 3 • Total employment service authorizations (participants per 1,000) (7/1/20) o AHC – 1.7 o PHW – .5 o UPMC – 6.8	
31. Maximize Federal Funds for Employment The federal Rehabilitation Services Administration makes available to state vocational rehabilitation agencies funding at a 78.7 percent to 21.3 percent federal-to-state ratio. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should continue to submit requests for reallocations to the Rehabilitation	• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) • Governor's Budget Office (GBO) • PA Workforce Development Board (PA WDB)	• This is an ongoing effort. • OVR received generous reimbursement from RSA reallocations and SSA reimbursement. These funds will be used in services to customers in the new PY in 2021. Reallocation requests are submitted annually, availability of funds may change from year to year.	

Services Administration, maximizing any state match available.				
32. Interagency Funding Memorandum of Understanding To promote interagency collaboration and program innovation, and to ensure sufficient staff capacity exists, the Departments of Labor & Industry and Human Services should sustain the interagency funding memorandum of understanding signed in 2015 which annually directs state funds from the Office of Developmental Programs to the Vocational Rehabilitation Fund for the purpose of matching those funds with additional federal vocational rehabilitation funds. The purpose of the new funding is to meet the vocational rehabilitation needs of people with an intellectual disability and/or autism	• Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	**Multi-Agency Update:** • MOU implementation has improved interagency collaboration and program innovation has led to at least one ID/Autism Coordinator per OVR district office. ODP and the ID/A district coordinators participate in regular calls to discuss issues and create solutions on a district and state-wide level. Both agencies will continue to work together to expand collaborative efforts in future years. • Although interagency funding by DHS to OVR has continued, OVR has received sufficient funding to meet all Federal grant match in 2020 and anticipated in 2021.	•	

and promote program innovation and service expansion. New vocational rehabilitation staff specializing in intellectual disabilities and/or autism should be authorized, hired, and trained immediately to eliminate backlogs in eligibility determinations and employment service authorizations.				
33. Enhance Collaboration and Coordination with Pennsylvania's Workforce Development System to Improve Access and Outcomes Many people with a disability simply need assistance securing and retaining employment like their peers without disabilities. The Department of Labor & Industry should direct and train the agencies connected to the workforce development	• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Offices of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and Workforce Development • PA Workforce Development Board (PA WDB)	L&I The PA WDB W has included goals related to collaboration and coordination with PA's Workforce Development system to improve access and outcomes in the WIOA Combined State Plan. PA WDB also serves as a convener of state agencies and workforce stakeholders to collaborate on state workforce development initiatives. OVR seeks ways to collaborate with WF and PA CareerLink(R) (PACL) programs in meeting the talent needs of PA employers. Any individual including those with disabilities can and should seek services from PA CL in		PA WDB • The commonwealth will measure progress by tracking the number of individuals receiving PETS services and the number of these individuals that are provided career awareness education, specifically The Career Index Plus (TCI+) Plus and labor market

system and the vocational rehabilitation system to promote improved collaboration between the two systems. People with a disability who visit their local PA CareerLink® site should be served by that site if possible. PA CareerLink® staff should not automatically refer all people with a disability to the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. In addition, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation staff, in collaboration with local Centers for Independent Living, Assistive Technology Resource Centers, and the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, should continue to participate regularly in on-site reviews of accessibility for PA CareerLink® sites. On-site visits should take place no less frequently than every three years.		addition to PA OVR. PWD not determined to by Most Significantly Disabled (MSD) should seek CL assistance in career training and employment. OVR encourages all OVR customers to be dual enrolled in CL. OVR put on hold all PACL on- site accessibility reviews once COVID-19 mitigation measures became effective in the last week of March. A plan to resume these and to notify the local Center for Independent Living (CILS) of future reviews. L&I The commonwealth will promote Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) for all transition-age youth with disabilities. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, within the Department of Labor & Industry, in partnership with the Departments of Human Services, and Education will collaborate to encourage transition-age youth		information (LMI). • The commonwealth will measure the increase in the number of opportunity youth successfully enrolled for multiple services across programs including, but not limited to, ABE, TANF, and OVR, and the number of ITAs these individuals are provided with.

		to take advantage of opportunities available to them. • The commonwealth will increase co-enrollment of opportunity youth in WIOA Core and partner programs, when relevant, to ensure that appropriate funds are leveraged to provide necessary services to these individuals. The commonwealth will also encourage the use of Individual Training Accounts when serving opportunity youth. All partner agencies will work together to ensure that opportunity youth have access to strategic co-enrollment when it helps support their overall career goals.		
34. Meeting the Needs of Individuals with a Serious Mental Illness Individuals with a serious mental illness have many strengths, talents, and abilities that may be	• Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS)	**Multi-Agency Update:** • OHMSAS and OVR are meeting regularly to develop methods of sharing data to identify individuals who are served by both systems. • OMHSAS added contractual language to its 2021 BHMCO agreements which require		

overlooked, including the desire to be employed in a competitive integrated job. Many individuals with a serious mental illness are capable of working competitively in the community if the right job, work environment, and needed supports are available. Resources that help individuals find and keep jobs that capitalize on individual strengths and skills while accommodating needs with support services should be the goal for this population.	• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	MCO engagement in at least one Value Based Purchasing Model aimed at remediation of a SDOH including employment as an element. This is a new requirement and there are no BHMCOs which have identified employment as the prioritized SDOH to address for their service territory as of 12/21/20. • A one-page document that identifies employment resources that is tailored to individuals with Serious Mental Illness will be made available to the employment system.		
34.a. Increasing Service Capacity through Interagency Coordination The Department of Human Services' Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation have a memorandum of understanding for the purpose of increasing	• Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	**DHS:** OMHSAS currently has two MOUs with OVR: • The first 5-year MOU, which involved Certified Peer Specialists (CPS) sub-specializations for youth, young adults, and older adults, is complete and has been implemented. Related training and curricula were also developed and		

funding for increased service capacity to develop and support employment opportunities for individuals with serious mental illness. State funding from the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services was directed to the Vocational Rehabilitation Fund to draw down additional federal vocational rehabilitation funds at a 78.7 percent (federal) to 21.3 percent (state) ratio. The memorandum of understanding will remain in place until the funds are expended. The Offices of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and Vocational Rehabilitation should continue to collaborate regarding funding priorities moving forward.		implemented through funding from OVR. This MOU is recommended to end as the process for certification for individuals to become peers has been transferred to the Pennsylvania Certification Board (PCB) and is no longer housed within OMHSAS. • The second MOU was focused on the draw-down of federal funds and is also complete and finished in 2017. This MOU was a one-time pilot that allowed for the creation of a limited amount of both state (OMHSAS) and federal funds (OVR) of approximately $235,000. These funds were used to offer Certified Peer Specialist trainings for 137 individuals with an MH diagnosis in 2017 and 2018. There		

		are no plans to add additional funds to this MOU. • Both MOUs have completed their functions; one was to increase the number of CPS and the other was to develop OVR's ongoing involvement in the support and employment of CPS. • The OMHSAS and OVR's second MOU was discontinued in 2019 after in deep analysis of persons served by OVR has consistently included a large part of the total OVR caseload and due to state of RSA federal funding. •		
34.b. Evidence-based Supported Employment Service The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services should continue to focus on data collection and analysis to identify entities providing supported employment to increase the use of	• Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational	**DHS:** • OMHSAS completed an environmental scan in April 2019. OMHSAS reviewed the results and is determining what areas can be replicated and what existing psychiatric rehabilitation services can be enhanced to	• County Mental Health Information requests will become available at the end of the 4th quarter of 2021 • Number of individuals who have received supported employment services that lead to	50% of Counties will respond to the County Mental Health Information request

evidence-based supported employment services.	Rehabilitation (OVR)	increase employment supports to individuals with Serious Mental Illness (SMI). • All current supported employment providers that provide services to those specifically with SMI are funded at the Mental Health county-office level. • OMHSAS is currently developing detailed information requests for the County Mental Health Plan **OVR:** • OVR continues to provide services to individuals recovering from substance abuse disorders. OVR staff have received additional training on opioid disorders, treatment ,and return to work best practices during recovery. •	community integrated employment.	

| 34.c. Tracking and Improving Employment Outcomes for Individuals in the Behavioral Health System

The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services should continue to collect and analyze data on individuals in the behavioral health system who are in competitive integrated jobs for the purpose of identifying and implementing future program and policy improvements. The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should also determine whether a memorandum of understanding would be beneficial for this purpose. | • Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS)
• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) | **DHS:**
• Current data is collected through a series of employment questions that were added to the County Human Services Block Grant planning template.
• OMHSAS participates regularly in data tracking and analysis meetings within DHS.
• OMHSAS will also explore a data sharing agreement with OVR to enhance these ongoing efforts. Efforts to accomplish this in 2020 have been delayed by COVID-19 . | • Agreement developed and implemented between OVR and OMHSAS to share data.
• Data on competitive integrated employment outcomes from county mental health offices. | |

34.d. Update Licensing Regulations The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services should continue to work to amend licensing regulations so that the needs of youth and young adults ages 14-17 can be met by psychiatric rehabilitation services (currently limited to age 18 and older).	• Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS)	**DHS:** • Waiver of current regulations is permitted if a provider wants to include services to individuals under 18; additionally, an update of psychiatric rehabilitation services (PRS) regulations is under review. • As a result of COVID 19, work on this initiative was delayed.	• OMHSAS is updating regulations to include PRS for individuals from 14 to 17; the regulations are anticipated to be completed as early as 2021.	
35. Self-Employment Starting and running one's own business is empowering. Publicly funded programs should assist people with a disability pursue business ownership. The Department of Labor & Industry should continue implementation of its small business policy to support vocational rehabilitation customers who want to be a small business owner and review innovative small business trainings and	• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) • Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) • Department of General Services (DGS)	**DCED:** The agency continues to support and develop entrepreneurial spirit among the Commonwealth's citizens, including those with disabilities. The Pennsylvania Business One-Stop Shop, created by the Wolf Administration, is a valuable tool for anyone interested in creating or expanding their business in PA. The One-Stop Shop continues to evolve and expand its	• ODP -Number of people enrolled with ODP reporting competitive integrated self-employment. o 2018 – 333 o 2019 – 333 o 2020 - 209	

share information with customers. The Department of Human Services should ensure that service definitions in its home and community-based services programs include self-employment support. In addition, Department of General Services' Bureau of Diversity, Inclusion and Small Business Opportunities should continue its efforts to make business owners with a disability and vocational rehabilitation counselors aware that businesses owned by persons with a disability may now be eligible for the Small Diverse Business program. The business must meet "small business" eligibility requirements and must be certified by Disability:IN as a disability-owned business or service-disabled-veteran-owned business.	• Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)	capabilities, and as the needs of entrepreneurs highlight new potential tools and resources, DCED explores and incorporates them into the One-Stop Shop. DCED also provides critical funding to the Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), strategically located across Pennsylvania to provide education and consulting services to entrepreneurs and small business owners on a variety of topics, including but not limited to business planning, marketing, operations, and financial management. This network is available to help those with disabilities turn their dream of business ownership into a reality. DCED also has several funding programs available to existing businesses looking to		

		expand in Pennsylvania. **DHS:** For ODP, Self-employment support is included in both Advanced Supported Employment and Supported Employment offered through the ID/A waivers, as well as the Career Planning and Supported Employment offered through the Adult Autism Waiver. For OLTL, components of Self-Employment are included within the Employment Services of the OLTL waivers. **OVR:** OVR considers on a case by case basis and on the preference of any customer, a reasonable plan for self employment. Criteria for self employment and establishing a small business is set forth buy self employment policy and with the development of a small business plan.		

VI. Priority: Transportation. For individuals to succeed on the job, they need reliable transportation to get to and from work, on time, every time.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Implementation Progress	Indicators (if applicable)	Measurable Goal(s)
36. Establish Baseline Information to Drive Employment-Related Transportation Needs Transportation is frequently cited as a top barrier to employment. Defining the transportation barrier, identifying areas of need, and cataloging current resources available will help inform transportation strategies across agencies. The following items will be created: A. A concrete list of transportation issues that are	• Department of Human Services (DHS) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) • Department of Transportation (PennDOT)	**DHS:** Community Health Choices-Managed Care Organizations (CHC-MCOs) are required in their contractual agreements with the department of offer transportation services if it is identified within a participant's person centered service plan. This may be included in the plan as a result of an employment related transportation need. Individuals enrolled with ODP have access to a Transportation service that can be used to to access services and activities specified in		

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faced by people with disabilities to further define what the "transportation barrier" is, informed by focus groups of individuals with a disability and developed in collaboration with other key stakeholders.

B. Data that will demonstrate the geographical areas that are most in need of transportation options.

C. A list of current transportation resources available.

D. A list of high-volume employment centers by county/region.

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their approved service plan, including competitive integrated employment. The service pays for public transportation, such as bus or train passes, as well as transportation delivered through an enrolled provider.

PennDOT: 36-C.
The Employment first Cabinet recognizes the barriers inherent in rural areas of PA to provide public and persons with disabilities transportation solutions for students with disabilities and persons with disabilities to go to and from school and work.

PennDOT has a list of current public transportation [resources available on its website](#) and specific to each county on the [transportation map](#).

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		• **Goal**: update of the website to be done quarterly. • A graphic with website information has also been posted to the Welcome Centers' digital media boards. L&I: 36 D. A list of employment centers by county or Workforce Development Area can be found on the PA CareerLink(R) website.		
37. Identify and Test Innovation Transportation Strategies Transportation is cited as a barrier for people with a disability in both urban and rural areas across Pennsylvania and requires innovative solutions. Historically, implementation of transportation initiatives h as proven challenging due to the diverse nature of the state and the significant costs often	• Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) • Department of Transportation (PennDOT)	PennDOT: 37- C • Shared Ride Transportation is an example of public transportation service available. While there are barriers in that it does not always operate when and where people want to go, it is still available to the general public and we invest nearly $8 Million per year to	PennDOT: 37- C • Approximately 350,000 trips provided to people with disabilities in FY 18-19. Nearly 50% of those trips were to transport individuals to work. • DHS, PennDOT, and OVR continue to work to determine ways to collect data related to this goal.	

associated with transportation. The commonwealth should utilize thoughtfully designed pilot programs to allow innovative strategies to be tested for feasibility and replicability, including but not limited to the following:
  A. Volunteer networks;
  B. Identifying available vans throughout the state that could be used for transportation initiatives related to employment; and
  C. Researching current promising and innovative practices across the state.
		subsidize trips for persons with disabilities.
		
		DHS:
		The model of transportation available for Community health Choices (CHC) participants if indicated in a PCSP involves regional brokers for each of the CHC-Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) to ensure that there is rider capacity and timely assistance door to door.
		
		OMHSAS added contractual language to its 2021 (Behavioral Health Managed Care Organizations)BHMCO agreements which require MCO engagement in at least one Value-Based Purchasing Model aimed at remediation of a social determinants of health (SDOH) including transportation as an element.		

38. Maximize and Publicize Existing Resources While new and innovative transportation solutions are still needed, there are various state and local transportation options that can be utilized. The Department of Transportation, in collaboration with other state agencies, should develop a communication strategy to publicize programs that make efficient use of, and maximize, existing ride resources and any new resources that are developed. A. Encourage and increase awareness of carpooling and vanpooling opportunities for people with a disability; B. Pursue funding for programs such as FindMyRidePA so	• Department of Human Services (DHS) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) • Department of Transportation (PennDOT)	**PennDOT: 38- A, D** • PennDOT has encouraged transit agencies to continue to provide trips to individuals with disabilities and works to provided needed technical assistance. • The Interactive map is linked to PPTA website. • PennDOT will conduct a webinar with transit agencies to encourage them to communicate successes and share best practices. • PPTA's annual meeting in April 2020 will contain a session that will allow agencies to share best practices on transporting persons with disabilities.	**PennDOT: 38- A, D** • Invitation to the PPTA annual meeting • Catalogue of best practices **38- B, F** • Statewide implementation of FindMyRidePA within two years of the contract award for the RFP	

people with a disability have ready access to information on transit options available to them, including online reservation and tracking; C. Promote PACommute; D. Use PennDOT's interactive map of public transportation services and programs; E. Utilize social media and online resources; F. Encourage transit agencies to act as mobility managers; G. Determine if transit agencies can advertise accessible transportation services at Department of Motor Vehicles centers statewide; and		Someone from Cabinet could present their report. • PennDOT and PPTA have begun to collect personal success stories for use on social media. • PennDOT is working on developing an online eligibility application to make eligibility determinations more streamlined and be the same statewide (Expected 18 month deployment). • PennDOT maintains Park-and-Ride facilities to offer a safe, convenient location for commuters to leave their automobiles and travel to their destinations in		

H. Encourage transit agencies to share best practices as part of the marketing committees of PA Public Transit Association.		carpools, vanpools or buses. The interactive map can be found here.

38- C
The PACommute website is no longer valid. All information has been moved to the Travel in PA website.

38- B, F
• The Central Pennsylvania Transportation Authority has issued an RFP, backed by FTA and PennDOT funding, to improve the existing FindMyRidePA application and expand its use to all transit providers using the statewide paratransit scheduling system.
• The RFP also includes a task for developing media content to inform | | |

		the public as to the availability and workings of the various human service transportation programs available to them. This media will be housed at the same location as FindMyRidePA, which is envisioned to become a "one-stop-shop" internet resource for information on human service transportation in Pennsylvania.		
39. Use Technology to Support and Improve Use of Transportation Options As technology advances, new methods of improving transportation's efficiency and flexibility emerge. State agencies' efforts to expand access to broadband may provide	• Department of Human Services (DHS) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) • Department of Transportation (PennDOT)	**PennDOT: 39- A** Ecolane scheduling software has been fully deployed. The department is working to deploy advanced notifications through an interactive voice response (IVR) service to all Ecolane-using systems that have not opted out. **39-B** PennDOT is allowing this		

individuals with a disability an alternative to commuting. To leverage new technology to meet demands, state agencies will explore and provide implementation updates to the Governor's Cabinet for People with Disabilities and the Employment First Oversight Commission on the following strategies: A. Fully deploy statewide paratransit scheduling software to improve customer service including customer notification of vehicle arrival time the day before and 30 minutes before, customer ability to schedule online, and customer ability to track vehicle location online. B. Investigate innovative payment		to develop locally since the capacity does not currently exist to do this on a statewide level. **39-D** • PIDC in Philadelphia, with support from PennDOT applied for a AV Shuttle Grant from FHWA to study use of AV shuttles at the Navy Yard. There has not been an announcement of the winners of the grant yet. • A wheel-chair user and disabilities advocate has been added to the AV Task Force. • As part of the PA AV Testing Guidance update currently underway, PennDOT has included questions to		

technologies to allow public transportation cus tomers more flexibility in how they pay for service, including copayments. C. Expand and enhance broadband services throughout the commonwealth to allow individuals with a disability the option to work remotely. D. Work with the private sector and universities exploring driverless vehicles in Pennsylvania to ensure that individuals with a disability can participate in pilot studies, if interested.		request information from testers on how they are including or thinking about ADA as part of their testing and development.		

VII. Priority: Lead by example by reducing barriers to Commonwealth employment and improving state contracts.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Implementation Progress	Measurable Goal(s)
40. Pennsylvania will lead by example in reducing barriers to competitive integrated employment. A. State agencies shall make an effort to employ individuals with a disability in no less than 7 percent of the overall state work force. B. State agencies shall review on a biannual basis, the adequacy of hiring, placement, and advancement practices with respect to individuals with a	• Department of General Services (DHS) • Office of Administration (OA)	**OA: 40-A** The Office of Administration (OA) continues its effort to meet the 7 percent hiring goal established by the Employment First Act (Act 36 of 2018). Accomplishments: • OVR Internship Program: Two successful years recruiting people with disabilities to serve internships with Commonwealth agencies. A third year for the program had been planned for 2020 but was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program will be revisited in 2021 pending the status of the pandemic. • Established one employment website for CWOPA, that has been reviewed by OVR to ensure accessibility. Open positions are now posted on this website and applicants no longer need to worry about the distinction between civil service and non-civil service when applying for positions – both application processes are the same. By having just one	• Review hiring data to determine the annual percentage of applicants hired having a disability as identified in the voluntary survey. • Recruit and hire interns to participate in a 2021 OVR Internship Program. • Add language to the commonwealth's employment page that is welcoming of persons with a disability and encouraging them to apply for commonwealth employment. • In 2021 provide disability awareness training to all employees, managers, and supervisors.

disability. C. The Office of Administration shall develop a framework for individuals to self-report a disability.		site to visit and simplifying the application process, individuals have fewer barriers when exploring employment opportunities with the commonwealth. • Ongoing education of managers and employees to raise disability awareness and help ensure a welcoming workplace. The most recent effort was the Disability-Related Training for Managers and Supervisors launched in October 2020, which is required for all commonwealth managers and supervisors. Also, all employees are required to complete the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training that was launched in September 2020. These efforts are not only intended to raise awareness of disability issues within the workplace, but to also contribute to a more welcoming and supportive work environment to help with the retention of persons with a disability. • Traditional multiple-choice CS tests have been almost completely phased-out in favor of vacancy-based hiring	• Develop a Customized Employment Program proposal in partnership with OVR. • Develop a proposal for a voluntary survey of new employees while being onboarded.

		utilizing Experience and Training exams, where applicants apply online and respond to questions intended to draw-out their experience and education. This helps with accessibility by not requiring applicants to travel to distant test locations. Converted nearly 450 written exams to E&T. • As part of the accommodation process, applicants unable to travel for an interview can be interviewed utilizing Skype or other available technology. Other communication options can be explored as needed. **40-B** • The OA's Employment First Steering Committee meets throughout the year to assess its progress in establishing hiring and retention programs that increase the percentage of persons with a disability employed by the commonwealth, to include education efforts for employees about the availability of workplace accommodations. Data obtained by the means	

		described in 40-C will be used to assess progress. • Preliminary effort underway to allow new employees to voluntarily self-identify as having a disability during the onboarding process. **40-C** • Effective November 2020 job applicants may now self-identify as having a disability to help inform and assess the effectiveness of commonwealth recruitment efforts for persons with a disability. • The OA has consolidated and centralized the administration and delivery of ADA accommodation services within OA. This will help ensure a consistent approach to accommodation service delivery and compliance with state and federal laws. This will also facilitate a consistent and thorough approach to training the staff responsible for delivering these services.	

VIII. Priority: Expand public-private partnerships to improve availability of high-quality supports that improve competitive integrated employment outcomes for Pennsylvanians with a disability.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Implementation Progress	Indicators (if applicable)	Measurable Goal(s)
41. Local Employment Coalitions A number of local human service, education, and employment agencies have come together to develop Employment First coalitions. These have proven to be effective at educating professionals across these systems about what other systems have to offer, sharing information and resources, developing positive interagency relationships, enforcing policy, collecting and sharing data, and engaging the business community. However, only a few coalitions exist. The Departments of Human Services, Labor	• Department of Education (PDE) • Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) • PA Workforce Development Board (PA WDB)	**PDE:** **Progress Made, Ongoing.** State agencies have worked together to provide support and strengthen Pennsylvania's current coalitions, as well as create and implement strategies for additional coalitions. There are 27 Employment First coalitions statewide (as of January 2019). State agencies have also engaged employers through regional business/employer roundtables and coordinate to share best practices and enhance employer outreach. PDE also facilitates a quarterly leadership community of practice for secondary transition	• As of 12/16/20, 40 county offices serving persons with intellectual disability or autism (covering 54 geographical counties) have established or participate in an employment coalition. PA WDB • The commonwealth will increase training to all front-line staff on all available program offerings to allow for informed internal and external referrals to additional services and	

& Industry, and Education should provide financial support to develop and sustain additional employment coalitions across Pennsylvania. State agencies should also assist with a survey of all business engagement and education activities, including identifying gaps in geographic areas of the state, with the goal of aligning initiatives and addressing needs.		practices. This allows cross-agency collaboration to have a mechanism to discuss resources, share challenges and solutions to barriers encountered, and create innovative practices that promote employment for students with disabilities. DHS Program Offices continue to participate in cross disability local employment coalitions. ODP's Administrative Entities (AE) are required to create or participate in an already-existing local employment coaltion that includes interagency partners. This requirement has been added to the AE Operating Agreement. • Local Transition Coordination Councils at 29 IUs continue to collaborate with Employment Coalitions	facilitate serving the holistic needs of the customer. The Department of Labor & Industry will work with all partner agencies and programs to track the number of training hours staff receive and the increase in the number and types of trainings available. Staff will also be surveyed to measure increases in job related knowledge and identify where additional training opportunities would be valuable. A workgroup with members from the PA CareerLink® partner programs is developing a series of	

			asynchronous online training modules to support this work.	
42. Single Point of Contact Model Businesses interested in hiring qualified people with a disability to meet their workforce needs can easily become confused and frustrated when it comes to knowing which state or local agency to work with to find talent, get information on accommodations, and identify services to support individuals with a disability. If businesses must work with multiple agencies to find, hire, and support a person with a disability, they may give up or choose not to try in the first place. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation utilizes a "single point of contact" model for businesses to make the process as easy and efficient as possible. The	• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	• This is an ongoing effort by the Department of Labor and Industry to utilize and improve the "single point of contact" model to assist businesses in meeting their hiring goals.		

single point of contact model would be the only person the business works with, while assuming the responsibility of working with county human service agencies, employment providers, and the education system to meet the needs of the business. L&I should continue to support and enhance the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation's single point of contact model and identify ways to improve the number of businesses it assists so more people with a disability can get and keep a job.				
43. Business Services The ability to increase the number of people with a disability employed in a competitive integrated job is directly proportional to the willingness of a business to hire a person with a disability. The Department of Labor & Industry should	• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Offices of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and Workforce Development	• This is an ongoing effort by the Department of Labor & Industry.		

strengthen and publicize the Offices of Vocational Rehabilitation's Business Services & Outreach Division, making it business' "go-to" source for pre-screened qualified applicants with disabilities to meet staffing needs, information on federal tax incentives to hire people with a disability, information on the Americans with Disabilities Act and accommodations, disability etiquette training, customized employment and resources to retain staff who may acquire a disability after being employed for some time.				
44. Provide a Single, Go-To Source of Information for Employment First in Pennsylvania State agencies should collaborate to develop, maintain, and promote a credible "go-to" source of information on disability	• Governor's Office of Policy and Planning (GPO) • Department of Human Services (DHS) • Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	**Multi-Agency Update: New Recommendation, Progress Made.** L&I, in partnership with DHS, PDE, and several other agencies created a new website focused on Employment First. The website lists all of the state services available to	• L&I is in the process of determining the indicators for this goal.	

employment resources, data, success stories, and professional training resources. Targeted users should be people with a disability, families, advocates, businesses, local education agencies, post-secondary education agencies, and public agencies involved in promoting employment.	• Department of Education (PDE)	people with disabilities to help foster connections to education, training, and employment opportunities. In addition, the website includes background on the PA Employment First Executive Order, Act 36 of 2018, and reports from the Employment First Cabinet and Employment First Oversight Commission. The website is available at: https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Disability-Services/employment-first/Pages/default.aspx. L&I launched an Employment First webpage in 2020, with DHS' assistance. The website is available here: https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Disability-Services/employment-first/Pages/default.aspx.		

45. Encourage Businesses to Hire People with a Disability	• Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) • PA Workforce Development Board (PA WDB)	DCED:	PA WDB	PA WDB
The Department of Labor & Industry should develop and implement an aggressive outreach strategy to make businesses aware that people with a disability add value to places of business, but that people with disabilities remain a largely untapped labor pool. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation's Business Services and Outreach Division and single point of contact model should be promoted as a credible, go-to resource for businesses to assist them with identifying talent to meet workforce needs and coordinate disability services and training. The effort should include making connections with local chambers of commerce, manufacturers'		The Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center is an ideas incubator that discusses best practices and real-time solutions to real-time issues facing Pennsylvanians with barriers to employment. To date, the Workforce Command Center has convened roundtable meetings specific to identifying these barriers to employment and other workforce challenges across the commonwealth. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the work of the Command Center was placed on hold, including the goal to host a roundtable discussion of business leaders on employment opportunities for people with disabilities in 2020. The Governor's Office is currently exploring the future of the Command Center in 2021.	• The commonwealth will increase engagement with the business community on issues related to Employment First, accessibility standards, disability talent recruitment, Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines compliance, disability etiquette, and the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, within the Department of Labor & Industry, in partnership with the Department of Community and Economic	• The commonwealth will measure progress in meeting this goal by tracking the number of Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) consultations, no-cost reviews of employer's workplace and public area accessibility, number of employer requests for OVR talent, and the number of disability etiquette trainings.

associations, private recruiters, human resources professional associations, etc.

The Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center shall convene a roundtable of executives that are leaders in employing individuals with disabilities for their support and advice to encourage more businesses throughout the commonwealth to adopt similar practices. | | | Development, will lead efforts on engaging the business community on this priority. | |

IX. Priority: Implement, monitor, and provide accountability for the Employment First Act in Pennsylvania.

Recommendation	State Lead(s)	Implementation Progress	Indicators	Measurable Goal(s)
46. Designation of Employment Champions
State agencies will provide the designation of employment champions, consistent with the designation utilized by the	• Department of Human Services' (DHS) Offices of Long Term Living (OLTL), Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS), and Developmental Programs (ODP)	**DHS:**
For OLTL, now that the Community HealthChoices has been implemented statewide, the current Employment Champions will segue to the Community		

Department of Human Services, to providers of service coordination, case management, and authorization services funded through the state Medicaid program, including home and community-based waiver programs, who demonstrate commitment to Employment First and successfully support the placement and continued placement of individuals with a disability in competitive integrated employment • Employment Champions shall be provided increased technical assistance to further support employment services. • A complete list of employment champions shall be made available on state agencies' websites.		HealthChoices managed care organizations with each MCO designating their own Employment Champion. OMHSAS and ODP are examining ways to identify potential Employment Champions.		

47. Certified Peer Specialist Position Description Update				
The Department of Human Services' Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services should collaborate with the Governor's Office of Administration to update the Civil Service job description for the Certified Peer Specialist position. An updated definition would allow agencies other than the Department of Human Services to hire civil service Certified Peer Specialists. This change would also require civil service Certified Peer Specialists to obtain and maintain certification through the PA Certification Board.	• Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS)	**DHS:** Approval for updates to civil service position for CPS was provided on September 2019. This civil service position can now be used by all state agencies to onboard individuals with SMI.	• Number of CPS hired by state agencies ○ There are six CP positions hired by the common wealth in DHS	