



SUPPORTING EMPLOYMENT FIRST AD HOC COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 11, 2020

11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
3839 North 3rd Street, Suite 306, Phoenix, Arizona 85012

An ad hoc committee meeting of the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (ADDPC) was convened virtually September 11, 2020. Notice having been duly given. Present were the following members of the Supporting Employment First Ad Hoc Committee, guests, and staff.

Committee Members Present

Melissa Van Hook, Chair, Telephone
Monica Cooper, Telephone
George Garcia, Telephone
Scott Lindbloom, Telephone

Guests/Staff	Committee Members Absent
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Erica McFadden, Executive Director
Michael Leyva, Contracts/Grants Coordinator
Sarah Ruf, Director of Communications
Jason Snead, Research and Communication Specialist

Traci Gruenberger
Kristen Mackey

A. Welcome & Introductions

Chairperson Melissa Van Hook welcomed everyone to the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (ADDPC or Council) Supporting Employment First Ad Hoc Committee (SEFAHC) meeting. The meeting was called to order at 11:03 a.m. Roll call and participant introductions were completed.

B. Review of February 21, 2020 Committee Meeting Minutes

The Minutes from the February 21, 2020 SEFAHC meeting were reviewed. A motion was made to approve the February 21, 2020 Meeting Minutes by Monica Cooper; seconded by George Garcia. Motion carried.

C. Brief on Postsecondary Education

Mike Leyva shared ADDPC is collecting ideas from stakeholders on what it would take for a student with disabilities to go to college. There is a general lack of awareness of programs and resources available to help increase participation in postsecondary education (PSE) and many families are not able to pay for college for their children which too often creates a barrier to education. The information collected was originally intended to be a writeup on PSE. As the write up progressed, Erica McFadden suggested it should be a brief on PSE and shared with the SEFAHC. *Exploring Options to Increase Opportunities for Postsecondary Education for Students with Disabilities* emphasizes PSE leads to improved employment outcomes, increased opportunities for independence, identifies several funding options, encourages dual enrollment, and includes innovative practices, and recommendations. Discussion centered on if Empowerment Scholarship Accounts (ESA) can be used to help pay for PSE; according to ESA guidelines, families have 4 years to access funds and they can be used for PSE. It was suggested that Mike reach out to Karla Escobar at ADE as she specializes in the ESA program. It was suggested that ADE and VR work in partnership to encourage and promote PSE; ESA guidelines be updated to reflect the way funding is distributed and what PSE categories are allowed; and families should be encouraged to begin the PSE conversation at age 16 or younger, when transition begins. Erica asked if there is a Community of Practice on Transition and if PSE is promoted. There was consensus there is info on PSE, but it is not readily shared, and there should be increased awareness and promotion, resources created and shared on various agency websites, especially highlighting PSE on the Employment First website. A final suggestion was made to modify questions in the brief and release it as a primer on what the current options are. Committee members expressed support for the PSE brief and that it was a good idea to release it.

D. Exploring Partnering with Arizona Behavioral Health Planning Council

Scott Lindbloom is Vice Chair of the Arizona Behavioral Health Planning Council (ABHPC) and expressed interest in exploring how ADDPC, specifically the SEFAHC can work more closely with ABHPC since we share similar missions and there are many critical areas/issues that overlap especially when it comes to competitive integrated employment. Scott wants the committee to see how we can coordinate and integrate services and programming by state agencies and providers that deliver employment services to people with disabilities. Committee members indicated they would consider partnering with ABHPC if the population served includes and is specific to people with disabilities who also have a SMI diagnosis.

E. Review of FY2021 Work Plan

Mike Leyva reviewed the 20201 Work Plan and highlighted activities listed under each of the three objectives.

Objective 1:

- Conduct 1 Employment media campaign in October in partnership with stakeholders. Which includes sharing data from the Comprehensive Review & Analysis, transition study, stories, and apprenticeship fact sheet.
- Create resource materials for individual, families, those that provide support, and employers.
- Collaborate with coalition of stakeholders. Promote leadership and accomplishments of Employment First Coalition.
- Collaborate and complete one Summit/Town Hall with stakeholders, business leaders, agency staff, and parents of youth with I/DD that will provide career exploration activities among young adults with DD.
- Advocate and collaborate with stakeholders for Employment First legislation to establish and operate an Office of Employment First for three years.

Objective 2:

- Evaluate impact of targeting customized employment (VR initiative).
- Oversee awarded model program and Tempe BEST program to strengthen workforce and increase employment rates for PWD. Year 3 renewal funding for BEST program and Year 2 renewal funding for Beacon Encore Project utilizing customized employment.
- Post-secondary education grant (NAU/IHD) Think College Year 2 renewal with planned Year 3 renewal.
- Based on feedback and surveys conducted during FY2020 Job Coach Trainings partner with Sonoran UCEDD to create and administer additional trainings.
- Evaluate employment service models developed and implemented during Covid-19. Convene roundtable with AHCCCS, DDD, Employment First, and VR on what they learned about employment service delivery during the pandemic. Develop joint plan to share and implement lessons learned and best practices.

Objective 3:

- Identify strategies to strengthen employer engagement in AZ.
- Identify new communities for self-employment training based on Yuma pilot project.
- Convene meetings with Arizona Apprenticeship Office and Department of Education to discuss strategies to increase participation of students and young adults with disabilities in apprenticeship Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs.
- Convene stakeholders to strategize on developing a plan to help remove employment barriers for individuals with disabilities that have criminal records.

Melissa Van Hook recommended adding one additional activity to Objective 3. Convening a roundtable on postsecondary education (PSE) to help increase participation of students with disabilities.

F. BEST Project – Year 3 Renewal Application

Mike Leyva shared the Grants and Executive Committee recommended Year 3 funding in the amount of \$124,731 for the City of Tempe’s Building Employment Supports and Training (BEST) program.

G. Job Coach Training Sessions

Melissa Van Hook shared information on the Job Coach Trainings conducted by the Sonoran UCEDD. Sessions were originally intended to be delivered in person in 4 Arizona communities (Tucson, Phoenix, Flagstaff, and Yuma), but due to Covid-19 the trainings were delivered virtually. 102 individuals representing service providers, VR, high school transition specialists, state agencies, advocacy organizations, and independent living centers participated. Training focused on supported and customized employment and provided opportunities for participants to network and share best practices. Melissa said the training was excellent and achieved one of the Employment First Strategic Plan goals to provide professional development in the much-needed area of Job Coaching.

H. National Disabilities Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) Activities

Mike Leyva shared the Employment First and NDEAM media campaign and dissemination strategy. Throughout October, Employment First will be engaging in a variety of activities to educate the Arizona community on disability employment issues and its commitment to an inclusive work culture. Activities include sharing personal employment stories, releasing a new Arizona toolkit for employers to diversify their workforce, acknowledging Governor Ducey’s proclamation and his support for employment for people with disabilities, identifying resources for families, promoting model employment practices, and using Facebook and Twitter to generate awareness, interest and support. The two Employment First videos sponsored by ADDPC will also be featured during the month. A suggestion was made to include Spanish translation and include ASL.

I. Call to the Public

Chairperson Melissa Van Hook issued a Call to the Public. No public members were in attendance.

J. Adjourn

Chairperson Melissa Van Hook called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion was made by Scott Lindbloom; seconded by Monica Cooper. The Motion carried; meeting adjourned at approximately 12:29 p.m.