

Benefits and Support to Arizona's  
State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) 2015 Membership

- Provides monthly on-line meetings with all member states—every call includes relevant updates of national significance, state agency reports and discussions on key strategies, activities, research, and implementation activities related to employment.
- Provides the opportunity to become more intimately involved on issue-specific task forces and work groups. DDD has been an active participant in the following specialty groups:
  - The Role of the Case Manager in Employment Services
  - The Role of Families and Caregivers in Building Successful Employment Outcomes
  - The Data-Users Workgroup
  - The Community-Based Non-Work Supports Discussion Group
- Provides DDD and others with the opportunity to work with and reach out to colleagues in other states who are working on similar employment initiatives or who might have already worked through some of what Arizona is processing currently. Arizona can learn from success and failures as the state moves forward.
- Provides wealth of information from the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI), University of Massachusetts, Boston is available through this membership. Not only are the on-line resources available but also direct access to the researchers and other staff from ICI that support SELN activities. They were extremely helpful as DDD revised employment service specifications, revised rates for those services and looked at outcome measures to be considered in future service system changes. ICI maintains vast data resources on evidence-based practice, promising practice, outcomes, trends, system change and other employment related initiatives.
- DDD participates in the ICI Survey of State IDD Agency Day and Employment Services which provides Arizona with comparative performance data against peers in other states (service utilization and expenditure data compilations are done).
- SELN and ICI staff will provide supportive sounding board relative to Arizona's Employment First initiative.
- Provides a wealth of information from work with other states involved in Employment First initiatives.
- Provided input to Arizona's strategic plan considerations.
- Developed and presented a PowerPoint for the Employment First Webinar.
- Will provide assistance with developing a follow-up survey to the first Webinar participants to help gather input to structure the community forums and provide considerations for strategic planning.
- Developed the Employment First Report for the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council: *Employment First: A Review of Successful State Strategies for Improving Employment Outcomes among People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.*
- Provide use of resources of the SELN "on the ground" in the provision of training and technical assistance to promote our Employment First efforts, including generating support within the Division and its leadership.
- DDD (Linda Tasco) has participated in the presentation of two SELN webinars promoting Arizona's practice:
  1. The Role of Professionals in Supporting Families and Caregivers
  2. Secondary Transition and Inclusive Practice
- Linda Tasco also presented on the benefits of a dedicated employment lead and regional DDD staff dedicated to employment initiatives.



## **SELN Participation Parameters**

The State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) is a multi-state collaborative furnishing support and technical assistance to state developmental disabilities (DD) agencies that are committed to improving the employment outcomes achieved by adolescents and adults receiving publicly financed support. State DD agencies electing to join the SELN can expect to receive a wide range of assistance and support in expanding and improving their employment support systems. To achieve the full benefits of the project, however, participating states must be prepared to commit financial and staff resources to carrying out project-related activities. This document describes the benefits of participating in SELN, as well as the commitments participating states should be prepared to make to derive the greatest advantage from their involvement.

### ***National Project Staff Support to Participating States***

The National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS) and the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) at the University of Massachusetts/Boston are co-sponsoring SELN and form the Project Team. To support participating states' efforts to expand and improve integrated employment outcomes the Project Team will:

- ✓ Provide ongoing project management support and coaching at regular intervals during the membership year to help member states stay motivated and on track. The Team will also provide access to resources through emails, phone calls, listserv notices and a members' only website so information is available when it is useful to each state;
- ✓ Assist the new or continuing member states in completing the State Strategic Employment Assessment designed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each state's existing DD employment support policies, practices and infrastructure. The aim of the Assessment process is to help participating states pinpoint weaknesses in their existing employment support capabilities as well as identify positive features that can contribute toward building a stronger system of supports.
- ✓ Facilitate an onsite visit to review the Assessment information and discuss the current employment system infrastructure, as well as possible goals for improvement.
- ✓ Summarize the Assessment and onsite visit results in a Findings and Observations report. The report will identify issues the state should consider focusing on to improve

employment outcomes, as well as topics of common concern that should be the focus of Network attention (see discussion of Network Teleconferences and Issue Papers below).

- ✓ Assist the states in preparing strategic employment workplans. Informed by the results of the onsite visit and State Strategic Assessment, each participating state will be asked to develop a work plan outlining specific employment goals it intends to accomplish. The SELN Project Team will be available to assist state officials in preparing a plan and identifying the near and longer term implementation strategies that are necessary to accomplish the desired employment outcomes. These plans will also indicate the types of outside consultation and assistance likely to be required to assist the particular state in achieving its employment improvement goals.
- ✓ Assist with improving Data Reporting Systems. Member states with existing data collection efforts have access to the resources to develop an employment data reporting and display system tailored to its particular needs and interests. The resulting information management system will be designed to give participating states the capability to track the progress of employment on a state-wide basis and provide data to make administrative and program decisions to enhance employment options and outcomes for individuals served by the agency. ICI will be responsible for warehousing and displaying the employment-related data and preparing regularly-scheduled summary reports. Additionally, SELN/ICI staff will work with each state in organizing its existing data so that it can impact operations and inform stakeholders of employment trends at multiple levels. Member states not currently collecting data will be urged to consider prioritizing this need as a key action goal for the membership year.
- ✓ Provide state-specific Technical Assistance and Consultation. Upon identifying the major employment goal areas for the membership year the participating state will be able to access 40 hours of consultation and technical assistance either from the SELN Project Team and/or through other identified consultants. Additional technical assistance will be made available at cost to the requesting state. Assistance will be provided either on or off site, depending on the desires of the requesting state.
- ✓ Provide Network Products and Events. After identifying issues of common concern to states, the SELN Project Team will: 1) organize relevant and timely discussions with member states, 2) prepare written documents summarizing the work to share with states, and 3) tap other employment experts in the field. Members will be invited to participate in web-conferences and conference calls to explore topics or learn more about an area of analysis or research to inform state-level work and identify new approaches to addressing key barriers or adopting innovative solutions to expanding and improving employment supports.

## ***Basic State Participation Parameters***

Each participating state will be expected to:

- ✓ **Designate a senior agency staff member to manage the state's participation in the project.** This individual will serve as the state's main contact, coordinating all state activities in connection with the project, including the activities described below.
- ✓ **Support an existing statewide stakeholder employment workgroup or recruit such a group to assist with the systems change efforts.** An existing or newly formed state employment team or statewide workgroup can benefit the state's efforts to improve employment outcomes through stakeholder representation and buy-in.
- ✓ **Complete the State Strategic Employment Assessment** of the provision of employment supports reflecting the existing infrastructure for carrying out such policies and practices. This Assessment, to be conducted with the assistance of the SELN Project Team, will assist the state with creating an employment goals workplan.
- ✓ **Define the state's top employment-related priorities to be addressed with the SELN for the current membership year and develop the state's workplan.** The workplan will outline goals, objectives and activities in a format recommended by the SELN Project Team or in a format already in use by the state team. The state's work plan is fundamental to organizing the types of technical assistance needed by the state team to accomplish the goals and objectives.
- ✓ **Engage in teleconferences at regularly scheduled intervals** (e.g., every four to six weeks) with the SELN Project Team in support of implementation of top priorities from the state's work plan.
- ✓ **Carry out activities identified in the state's work plan.** Improvements in employment outcomes for persons with developmental disabilities will hinge largely on a state's ability to mobilize the resources necessary – both from within and outside of state government -- to implement the priority activities outlined in its statewide action plan.
- ✓ **Participate actively in Network-sponsored activities,** including arranging to have appropriate agency representatives attend meetings and participate in SELN-initiated surveys, teleconferences, Communities of Practice, ad hoc task forces and problem-solving exercises.
- ✓ **Disseminate information about project activities and outcomes** to personnel in other, related state agencies as well as private sector partners in the employment initiative.

## ***Costs of Participation***

### **A. State Financial Contribution.**

- ✓ Each participating state will share in the cost of financing core project operations. The annual participation fee for FY 2014-15 is \$35,000 per state. These funds will cover the expenses incurred by SELN project staff and consultants in carrying out project activities during the course of the fiscal year. Membership fee will also cover the full cost of one state representative to participate at the Annual Membership Meeting

The cost of participation in future fiscal years could increase or decrease depending on the overall scope of the activities as identified by the members. The project staff anticipates that the annual participation fee will remain fairly constant over time and will manage the program in a cost effective and efficient manner.

**B. Other State Costs.**

The costs that a participating state incurs over and above its financial contribution to core project expenses will depend on a number of variables related to the scope and intensity of the tasks outlined in its work plan for improving employment outcomes. The more ambitious the plan, the more financial and human resources a state will be required to invest in its implementation.

The principal operational costs that states can expect to incur are related to staff time. While the role of project coordinator will not be a full-time position, it is not unreasonable to expect that the participation in the project could consume the time of one to two full-time equivalent staff positions, taking into account all tasks.

Payment of dues confirms your commitment to this agreement.