

REFERENCE TITLE: **Employment First; disabilities**

State of Arizona
Senate
Fifty-sixth Legislature
First Regular Session
2023

SCR 1012

Introduced by
Senator Kaiser

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

**SUPPORTING EMPLOYMENT FIRST AND GREATER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.**

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Whereas, every Arizonan should have the opportunity to participate
2 in the workforce, including those who have disabilities; and

3 Whereas, all Arizona citizens deserve the dignity and respect of
4 work as well as the freedom to choose their own path based on their
5 interests, talents and unique skills; and

6 Whereas, work provides individuals with not only a source of income
7 but also a source of pride, a sense of accomplishment and opportunities
8 for social interaction; and

9 Whereas, in 2019, 74% of Arizonans without a disability were
10 employed, while only 39% of Arizonans with a disability and 29% of
11 Arizonans with a cognitive disability were employed; and

12 Whereas, only 29% of vocational rehabilitation case closures for
13 participants with intellectual disabilities resulted in employment; and

14 Whereas, in 2018, only 16% of funding that supported individuals
15 with developmental disabilities was spent on integrated employment
16 services; and

17 Whereas, in 2018, only 21% of working age Arizonans receiving
18 services from the Division of Developmental Disabilities were
19 participating in competitive, integrated employment; and

20 Whereas, Executive Order 2017-08 established Arizona as an
21 Employment First state; and

22 Whereas, Employment First means that competitive, integrated
23 employment should be the first and preferred choice available to
24 individuals with disabilities who receive assistance from publicly funded
25 systems; and

26 Whereas, competitive, integrated employment is work that is
27 performed on a full-time or part-time basis and for which an individual:

- 28 • Is compensated at or above minimum wage and comparable to
29 the rate paid to employees without disabilities who
30 perform similar duties and with similar training and
31 experience.
- 32 • Receives the same level of benefits provided to other
33 employees without disabilities in similar positions.
- 34 • Is at a location where the employee interacts with other
35 individuals without disabilities.
- 36 • Is presented with opportunities for advancement similar
37 to other employees without disabilities in similar
38 positions; and

39 Whereas, opportunities for individuals with disabilities to have
40 meaningful and competitive employment will improve their quality of life,
41 increase their community participation and empower them to make their own
42 choices in life; and

43 Whereas, Arizona seeks to improve and coordinate efforts to increase
44 competitive, integrated employment opportunities for Arizonans who have
45 disabilities.

1 Therefore

2 Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Arizona, the House of
3 Representatives concurring:

4 That the Members of the Legislature affirm their support for
5 Employment First, for the provision of services and support to persons who
6 have disabilities and for strengthening efforts to collaborate and
7 increase employment opportunities for these individuals.