

Employment First Update

Date: March 3, 2026
To: Employment Services Partners
From: Allison Enriquez, Statewide Employment First Coordinator
Subject: **Employment First strategic planning next steps**

Oregon's Employment First Advisory Group is requesting feedback from partners on the draft Employment First Strategic Plan. The plan guides Oregon's work to help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) get and maintain jobs and advance in their careers.

This message includes:

- An invitation to review the [draft Employment First Strategic Plan](#).
- An invitation to join the Employment First Workgroup and subcommittees.

Employment First draft strategic plan

Thank you to everyone who already gave us feedback on what the strategic plan should include. We used your ideas to write the [draft Employment First Strategic Plan](#).

Now we invite you to read the plan and tell us what you think.

We would like your feedback on:

- Does the plan have the right goals?

- Is anything missing? If so, what's missing?
- How can Employment First partners work better together?
- Additionally, what goals should be included in Oregon's Combined State Plan to ensure the entire workforce system better serves job seekers with disabilities?

We also ask that Employment First partners and regional Employment First teams share the draft plan broadly with your networks. This will help us get diverse input from around the state.

Please submit your feedback by **Friday, April 10** by email to employment.first@odhs.oregon.gov.

The plan is posted on the [engagement and innovation website](#).

Employment First Advisory Workgroup and subcommittees

We are looking for members to join the Employment First Advisory Workgroup. You can also join subcommittees that focus on parts of the plan. You do not need to join the Advisory Workgroup to participate in a subcommittee.

We are seeking participants for:

- **Statewide Employment First Advisory Workgroup** – Guides statewide efforts to increase jobs for Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Members will work with state partners to create policies and plans. The group meets every other month.
- **State as a Model Employer Subcommittee** – A long-term workgroup to find ways to make government hiring easier for people with disabilities.

- **Benefits Counseling Subcommittee**– A short-term group to help with ideas and plans for making benefits planning and counseling more available.

If you are interested in joining the advisory workgroup or either of the subcommittees, please complete the [interest form](#).

Thank you for working with us to improve employment services for people with I/DD, and move Employment First forward in Oregon.

Oregon is an Employment First state. People with intellectual and developmental disabilities can work in regular jobs, earn fair pay and get benefits just like other employees. All services must support this employment goal. The Oregon Department of Human Services and Oregon Department of Education lead this work.

- About Oregon's [Employment First laws and policy](#)
- About [employment services for people with I/DD](#)
- Sign up for [Employment First updates](#)
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