

Employment First Georgia



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Georgians with disabilities want jobs and careers.

But our current system de-incentivizes employment.

As a result, most Georgians with disabilities who want to work are unemployed.

Employment First is the way forward.

Employment First means employment should be the first and preferred option for all people, regardless of their disability.

Under an Employment First policy, employment in the general workforce at or above minimum wage is the first & preferred option for all working age citizens with disabilities.

In fall of 2015, the House Study Committee on Postsecondary Education and Employment Options for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, led by Chairwoman Katie Dempsey, studied this issue extensively.

The 2015 House Study Committee recommended the creation of Georgia's Employment First Council.



D.W. received employment support services and now has a full time job at \$11 an hour with benefits.



Paula Clark of Tift County enhances her employer's efficiency.

Carlotta Booker of Savannah uses technology to make her dream job in retail a reality.



All people have valuable talents that can be put to use in the workforce.

Under an Employment First approach, our disability system will have a new focus on identifying talents of people with disabilities & supporting them in jobs that use their talents.



When Chad Roberts of Cherokee County was a child, almost everyone thought his future was grim. Chad has multiple disabilities and **most people, including experts, never imagined that Chad would work.**

Chad's mother, Kellie, clung to the few stories she heard about other people with significant disabilities who had careers. Kellie and Chad never stopped believing that he would have one too.

Today, Chad has four jobs and a ministry at his church. Work is one of his favorite things to do.

32 states, including Florida & Tennessee, have adopted Employment First.

Georgia 13%

Washington State 86%

Percent of people with intellectual/developmental disabilities getting daytime state-funded services who are either working or preparing to enter the general workforce.¹ Washington State has the oldest Employment First policy in the country.

\$3,120

Average annual savings for Georgia taxpayers when a person with an intellectual disability gets employment services from vocational rehabilitation. That's because when people work, they pay taxes, and they generally need less money from the state for other support services.²

Employment First is the way forward.

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¹ Statedata.info, accessed January 2016.

² Robert E. Cimera (2010) National Cost Efficiency of Supported Employees With Intellectual Disabilities: 2002 to 2007. American Journal on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.