OPWDD EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
Directors’ Meeting
March 2023

Innovations in Employment Supports
Welcome!

Please stay muted during the presentation.

Participants registered prior to entering the training site, do not need to put their name in the chat box.

Cameras will be off because of the number of people attending the meeting.

Participants will receive Innovations credits (3).

We will address questions briefly. Please write your questions in the chat box.
OPWDD Employment Services Directors Meeting

1. Welcome
2. Poll – Effective Hiring Resources
3. OPWDD Strategic Plan & Initiatives
4. Department of Labor – SCION Updates
5. NY Employment Services System (NYESS Updates – WINS)
6. Employment Training Program Updates
7. SEMP Quarterly Report – New Web Application
8. Enrollment & CCO Updates
10. Innovations in Employment Supports Updates
Poll

Choose from the selection, which job applicant resource has yields the most new hires?
OPWDD Workforce Initiatives

• OPWDD partnership with the NY Alliance for Inclusion and the McSilver Institute for Poverty, Policy and Research at New York University
  o Organizational and Direct Support Professional assessments/surveys
  o Tools and resources
  o Regional Centers for Workforce Transformation
OPWDD Workforce Initiatives

• Other OPWDD Partnerships to address the workforce crisis:
  o National Alliance for DSP’s (NADSP) credential and tiered bonuses.
  o DSP training and certification programs at the high school/BOCES level.
  o State University of New York (SUNY) develop career pathways for DSPs.

• Additional American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funded initiatives in process to strengthen workforce recruitment, retention, training, & evaluation.
OPWDD State of the State Initiatives

- State of the State 2022 Updates
- NEON (National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network) Technical Assistance Grant
OPWDD State of the State Updates

- Culture/Business Model Change
- Career-Specific Vocational Training for I/DD
- Policy and Reg Revisions
- Increasing Employment and Community Engagement
- Development of DSP Trainings
Culture/Business Model Change

• Offering a full continuum of services will provide the ability for individuals to explore job development skills and discovery.

• Forums for Provider Executive Leadership Teams will begin late 2023 and continue in 2024 and 2025
Career Specific Vocational Training

• RFA issued and 8 Tentative Awards were made on 2-17-23

• Available funds were awarded

• Each region has at least one Career Specific Vocational Training (CSVT) Program
Policy and Reg Revisions

• The initial policy and regulation revisions are targeting the immediate ability for services to be more personalized and individualized

• Regulations and ADM are being revised by the Provider Work Group to alleviate administrative burden
Increasing Community Engagement Activities & Employment Opportunities

• Pilot innovative program models that offer more choice for people

• Program reforms with increased flexibility including Supported Employment Pathway to Employment, Prevocational Services, and Day Habilitation
Development of Trainings for DSPs

• Development of trainings for direct care staff (focused on day habilitation) in person-centered services, community engagement and education on the OPWDD available services

• Through these trainings staff will be able to better assist individuals transition to other services
Background

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) ODEP's National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network (NEON) new initiative is to improve employment outcomes within their statewide systems that serve individuals with disabilities.

States selected as NEON Core States will be offered intensive policy consulting, capacity building support, and ongoing mentoring to support the strategic aims of their efforts to increase competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities in their state.
New York Preliminary Objectives

• Develop a statewide cross-agency Employment First set of principles. The state agencies will agree and clearly articulate an Employment First vision for New York that could become an Executive Order or at a minimum be adopted by each agency.

• Create a matrix of agency responsibilities related to competitive integrated employment. This matrix may in the future be adapted for use by the people we serve, families and providers.

• Develop MOU’s or Operating Agreements between state agencies as it relates to serving people with competitive integrated employment. Currently there are existing MOU’s that are outdated and do not reflect current services.
## NEON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT

### State Partners in NEON Technical Assistance Grant

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lynne</td>
<td>Thibdeau</td>
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<td>NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities</td>
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<td>Alan</td>
<td>Gallagher</td>
<td>Workforce Programs Specialist - DEI State Lead</td>
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<td>Kimberly</td>
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<td>NYS Chief Disability Officer</td>
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<td>Belinda</td>
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<td>Andy</td>
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<td>Director of NYESS Employment Policy</td>
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NY DOL SCION Updates

New York Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network (NY SCION)
NYSDOL Special Populations Disability Unit
Alan Gallagher – Supervisor
NYESS Work Incentives Network (WIN)

- Work Incentives Network Specialist (WINS)
- Directory of statewide benefits advisement resources
- Work Incentives Practitioner certification opportunities
- WIP training through the NYESS partnership with Cornell University’s Yang Tan Institute.
- Resource for job seekers and their families
- Inclusion on the NYESS Locator Map
New York Employment Services System (NYESS)

• If you are a Certified Work Incentive Practitioner, join the network by clicking https://employment1st.com/WIN/NYESS_WINS_Data_Sheet.html.

• If you are not a Certified Work Incentive Practitioner or Benefits Advisor but would like to become one at no cost, please reach out to the NYESS team for more information. https://nyess.ny.gov/contact.php or 518-474-2338
People served as trainees, interns, or in Discovery

Placement rate for adults recommended for job development

People employed completed Discovery
Employment Training Program (ETP) Updates

Employment Training Supervisors (ETPS) provide agencies with services and resources to complete:

- Discovery
- Career planning – what are next steps?
- Job development
- Offer paid internships or traineeships for students
- People gain community, integrated employment
- Approve billing for services
Employment Training Program (ETP) Updates

• **New:** Employment Training Supervisors (ETPS) provide agencies with services to complete Discovery/career planning, then determine next steps

• Employment Training Supervisors (ETPS) assist agencies/schools in addressing the gaps in services for individuals

• ETPS create connections with agencies to further the full continuum of services

• ETPS connect agencies Central Office staff to troubleshoot challenges, share positive outcomes, and add new or expanding services
Improving the ETP Process

• Streamlined the ETP application process (Discovery First – 2 page application)
• Aligned Discovery/career planning documents across all services (ETP, Pathway to Employment and CBPV)
• Created more consistency and linkage between all forms (Monthly Updates)
• Reduced forms (Pre-placement/placement combined)
• Developed a new ETP Guide for SEMP Providers
  • Step-by-step process to follow for providing ETP services
  • Designed for Supported Employment (SEMP) agency directors, managers, job developers, job coaches, self-directed staff, etc.
  • Assists with cross-training staff from other vocational and day services who are needed to provide ETP services or learn about the process
ETP in the Schools

• Expanding ETP outreach with school districts.

• Informing educators that ETP is a useful tool to keep students engaged and in school until they age out aiding in a smoother transition to adult services.

• Increasing the number of schools that provide ETP traineeships which results in an increase in referrals to adult agencies with ETP programs.
OPWDD Supported Employment Outcomes

Workshop Transformation 2014-2021

- Pathway to Employment
- Community Prevocational
- SEMP Redesign

COVID Pandemic 2020
Expanded Discovery & Career Planning Activities 2022

Yearly Outcomes:
- 2014: 7,361
- 2015: 7,443
- 2016: 7,958
- 2017: 8,300
- 2018: 8,495
- 2019: 8,823
- 2022: 7,910
SEMP Employment Tracking System

We are pleased to announce that OPWDD is in the process of developing a streamlined web application for SEMP providers to submit SEMP Quarterly Status Reports.

The new application, the SEMP Employment Tracking System will be located in the same web portal as the SEMP Fee System used to submit billing state-funded SEMP billing.

- SEMP providers will no longer need to manually add or remove individuals to their SEMP Quarterly Status Reports. Information will auto populate through CHOICES.
- Improvements to format and functionality that make inputting changes to the SEMP Quarterly Status reports easier.
- Access to reports that help measure an agency’s status and progress.
- The discontinued practice of submitting SEMP Quarterly Status reports via e-mail.
SEMP Employment Tracking System

• Additional announcements occur this Spring.
• OPWDD will offer training for SEMP managers and staff.
• In the interim, OPWDD will be working with SEMP providers to gain access to the new SEMP Employment Tracking System.
• December 2022 Quarterly SEMP Report data will be uploaded into the system so it is important to make sure the reports are complete and accurate.
• Agencies must identify at least 2 SEMP managers and/or staff per agency to complete the SEMP Quarterly Status Reports and access the reports available within the application.
• Instructions will be provided to gain access to the system if you are not already registered with a SEMP Fee System Application User ID and Password.
Service Authorization and Enrollment

• OPWDD has launched several new initiatives to examine and improve upon critical aspects of agency programs and operations, including service authorization and enrollment.

• Challenges that result in timely linkage to services have been identified and are being addressed collaboratively by various units with Central Office, including the EMCA unit.

• The EMCA unit is engaged in discussion with ACCES-VR to improve linkage to OPWDD SEMP.
Service Authorization and Enrollment

• ETP Supervisors, Regional Office Employment Coordinators and other Regional Office leads function as liaisons to the EMCA unit to address service authorization and enrollment issues as they arise.

• SEMP agencies should continue to assist Care Managers with the completion of service requests and may request to be copied when Care Managers submit service requests to the Regional Office for review.

• Agencies may e-mail the technical assistance mailbox for assistance, employment.vocational.services@opwdd.ny.gov.
CCO Related Updates – Training

• Eleversity is offering the Care Manager Training for OPWDD Employment & Vocational Services on Wed., April 5th from 1:00pm – 4:00pm

• Topics will include:
  • What It Takes to Be Employed
  • Key Ingredients for Competitive Employment
  • Introduction to OPWDD Employment Services
  • Care Manager Role/Other Considerations
  • Authorization and Enrollment
  • Required Documentation

• The training is full and we will continue to offer several times per year.
CCO Related Updates – Face to Face Meetings

• OPWDD has lifted restrictions on programs and programs should plan accordingly for visitors and planning meetings.

• In-person contact is the best practice. Remote contact is an option only when beneficial to and preferred by the person receiving services.

• There should not be blanket policies that providers are not attending meetings in-person or allowing in-person interaction at a program.

• This applies to CCO’s and provider agencies.

• Regional Office Directors and Central Office will support concerns as they arise.
CCO Related Updates – SEMP in the Life Plan

• Ongoing questions regarding how SEMP total units should be listed in Section IV of the Life Plan.

• Since the NOD.09 does not indicate authorized units for SEMP on the NOD.09, OPWDD is meeting with CCO’s to standardize the response in Section IV under units.

• Central Office will relay updated guidance.

• There is no SEMP or Life Plan requirement indicating that SEMP total units must be indicated in Section IV of the Life Plan. This field is simply for discussion and planning purposes. The absence of SEMP total units in Section IV of the Life Plan does not present an audit risk.

• SEMP total units are not be listed on the RSA, SARF or NOD.09.
Sneak Peek at the updated Pathway to Employment Career Plan & Workbook
## Summary of Pathway to Employment Guide Changes

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<tr>
<td>Guidance and Instructions included</td>
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<tr>
<td>Table of Contents to navigate and link to sections/pages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Color coding to help synthesis foundational skills</td>
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<td>In-depth Activity Plan to prepare for services</td>
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<td>Job Readiness and Career Exploration resources/tools</td>
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<td>O*Net Career Research after assessments</td>
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<td>Guided agenda for career planning meeting</td>
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<td>Transition to next steps guidance</td>
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<td>Links to the Appendix for resources</td>
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INNOVATIONS
TRAININGS

• Tell staff why they’re going to training
• Make sure staff read the class descriptions
• New staff should take Series 1 classes first
SERIES 1- TAKE THESE FIRST
- Vocational Services: Then and Now
- Roles and Responsibility of a Vocational Support Professional
- Career Assessment: Foundations of Discovery
- Foundations for Vocational Success

ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING
- Career Assessment: Informed Choice
- Career Assessment: Skills to Complete Discovery Activities
- Vocational Assessment
- A Case Study in Discovery
- The Vocational Development Plan
- Effective Job Coaching

SKILLS FOR MANAGERS
- Management Skills
- Supervision Skills for SEMP Leaders
- Hiring and Onboarding Skills for SEMP Leaders

BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS
- Basics of Business Engagement
- Job Development
- Demonstrating the Benefits of SEMP to Businesses

PROGRAMS/SERVICES
- Community Based Prevocational Services
- ETP 101

ADDITIONAL COURSES
- Technology for Virtual Vocational Services
- Public Benefits and Financial Literacy: What do you need to know?
Questions

Web: www.opwdd.ny.gov

Technical Assistance Email:

employment.technical.assistance.questions@opwdd.ny.gov

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