**Employment First Oversight Commission**

**Goals and Objectives - 2013**

**2013 Goals and Objectives for State Agencies to Ensure Effective Fully Implementation of the Employment First Initiative:**

**Employment First: the Law in Kansas and the First Law of its Kind in the United States –**

In 2011, the Kansas Legislature became the first state in the nation to pass an Employment First policy into law. KSA 44-1136 requires competitive and integrated employment as the first option for services for people with disabilities. The law sets up a five member Employment First Oversight Commission, tasked to establish the measurable Goals and Objectives for state agencies to follow that will ensure effective implementation of the Act.

**The Four Key Requirements in the Employment First Law:**

* **Competitive and Integrated Employment is the First Option –** Competitive, integrated employment must be the first option when providing services or supports to people with disabilities. This requirement is often called by the term “Employment First” (meaning that programs and services start with competitive, integrated employment as the FIRST option).
	+ “It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state of Kansas that competitive and integrated employment shall be considered its first option when serving persons with disabilities who are of working age to obtain employment.”
* **Policy is Effectively Implemented in all Programs and Services –** All state agencies must follow Employment First and ensure it is effectively implemented in all programs and services.
	+ “All state agencies shall follow this policy and ensure that it is effectively implemented in their programs and services.”
* **State Programs, Policies, Procedures and Funding Support Competitive and Integrated Employment –** All state agencies must coordinate efforts and collaborate to ensure that all state programs, policies, procedures and funding support competitive and integrated employment of individuals with disabilities.
	+ “All state agencies shall coordinate efforts and shall collaborate within and among such agencies to ensure that state programs, policies, procedures and funding support competitive and integrated employment of individuals with disabilities.”
* **Data Sharing –** All state agencies share data and information across systems in order to better track outcomes and success under Employment First.
	+ “All state agencies shall, whenever feasible, share data and information across systems in order to track progress toward full implementation of the act.”

**2013 Goals with Objectives for Kansas on Employment First**

***Organized Under Each of the Four Key Requirements***

***Competitive and Integrated Employment is the First Option (Key Requirement)***

**Goal 1:** Kansas’ relevant state agencies successfully execute specific strategies to fully implement the Employment First law and to ensure competitive and integrated employment of people with disabilities is fully supported in their programs, policies, procedures and funding.

Objectives for Goal 1:

Objective 1.1 – 100% of relevant state agencies will plan for and begin the execution of strategies under this goal, as indicated by reporting such to the Commission by April 8, 2013. The relevant state agencies that provided data and information to the Commission specific to this Objective during 2012 can update this information as appropriate. The remaining agencies that did not provide data and information for this 2012 report can compile and submit this information before April 8, 2013.

Objective 1.2 – Kansas will score at least a four (4) on the following standard of the Kansas Scorecard document by December 31, 2013: “Kansas relevant state agencies successfully execute specific strategies to fully implement the Employment First law and to ensure competitive and integrated employment of people with disabilities is fully supported in their programs, policies, procedures and funding.” (Kansas Scorecard, Standard #4)

***Policy is Effectively Implemented in all Programs and Services (Key Requirement)***

**Goal 2:** Each relevant state agency has a strong and effective policy detailing how it will implement the Employment First law.

Objectives for Goal 2:

Objective 2.1 – 100% of relevant state agencies will develop an effective, publicly-available, written policy detailing how it will implement the law by April 8, 2013 (over 21 months the law went into effect). This policy will detail how each relevant state agency is fully implementing the four key requirements of the Employment First law (see page one of this document for listing). For example, for all impacted programs or services within the relevant state agency, how are they ensuring and tracking that competitive, integrated employment is always offered as the first option to people with disabilities of working age. The state agencies that have provided the Commission their policy in 2012 can update the policy as appropriate. The other state agencies that did not provide their policy can do so prior to April 8, 2013.

Objective 2.2 – Kansas will score a four (4) on the following standard of the Kansas Scorecard document by December 31, 2013: “Each relevant state agency has a strong and effective policy detailing how it will implement the Employment First law.” (Kansas Scorecard, Standard #2)

Objective 2.3 – Kansas will score at least a three (3) on the following standard of the Kansas Scorecard document by December 31, 2013: “Relevant state agencies will enter into formal interagency agreements to successfully implement, track and support the Employment First policy and competitive and integrated employment.” (Kansas Scorecard, Standard #6)

***State Programs, Policies, Procedures and Funding Support Competitive and Integrated Employment (Key Requirement)***

**Goal 3:** Kansas has measurable annual performance goals and outcomes with clear and meaningful benchmarks that track a number of key indicators to prove full support of competitive and integrated employment as well as effective implementation of the Employment First initiative. This includes outcomes and goals for the numbers and percentages of persons with disabilities in competitive and integrated employment.

Objectives for Goal 3:

Objective 3.1 – 100% of relevant state agencies will provide to the Employment First Oversight Commission any data or information related to the current goals, benchmarks, or outcomes they current use for employment, as well as any suggestions of which goals, benchmarks or outcomes should be established for the future by June 3, 2013. The Commission will use this information and establish the measurable goals, benchmarks and outcomes for state agencies Employment First (target date for draft version is by October 1, 2013, final version is due by December 31, 2013).

Objective 3.2 –Kansas will score at least a four (4) on the following standard of the Kansas Scorecard document by December 31, 2013: “Kansas has measurable annual performance goals and outcomes with clear and meaningful benchmarks that track a number of key indicators to prove full support of competitive and integrated employment and effective implementation of the Employment First initiative, including outcomes and goals for the numbers and percentages of persons with disabilities in competitive and integrated employment.” (Kansas Scorecard, Standard #1)

Objective 3.3 – Kansas will score at least a five (5) on the following standard of the Kansas Scorecard by December 31, 2013: “Kansas’ relevant state agencies aggressively pursue resources to support innovation in competitive/integrated employment services and to better advance and implement the Employment First initiative.” (Kansas Scorecard, Standard #7)

Objective 3.4 – Kansas will score at least a four (4) on the following standard of the Kansas Scorecard by December 31, 2013: “Kansas has effective strategies for supporting Kansans with disabilities to achieve economic self-sufficiency as direct part of supporting competitive and integrated employment.” (Kansas Scorecard, Standard #9)

 Objective 3.5 – Kansas will score at least a four (4) on the following standard of the Kansas scorecard by December 31, 2013: “Adequate resources are readily available to Kansas transition-age students, individuals waiting for services and their families, and individuals currently served in non-integrated and non-competitive settings in order to encourage them to choose competitive integrated employment over other options.” (Kansas Scorecard, Standard #8)

**Goal 4:** Kansas has effective, meaningful, and productive collaborations among stakeholder groups and between these stakeholders and state government to support the Employment First policy and competitive and integrated employment of people with disabilities.

Objectives for Goal 4:

Objective 4.1 – 100% of relevant state agencies will have effective collaborations with stakeholder groups, including self-advocates and consumers, as indicated by reporting to the Commission by June 3, 2013. The agencies that reported this to the Commission in 2012 can update it as appropriate. The agencies that did not can report such by this date. Indicators of success toward this objective may include but not be limited to:

* Appointment of at least one lead agency staff member to a collaboration workgroup, made up of relevant state agencies and representatives of stakeholder groups
* Regular meetings of this collaboration workgroup with regular attendance by state agency designees
* Effectively utilizing this collaboration workgroup to discuss meaningful topics, vet important Employment First issues, and create engagement opportunities
* Using this collaboration workgroup as a conduit to discuss the success of the past two Employment First statewide conferences and how the State can build on this success in the future
* 80% of stakeholders indicating overall satisfaction with the meaningfulness of their participation as well as the participation by relevant state agency in the collaboration workgroup through an independent survey conducted by the Employment First Oversight Commission.

Objective 4.2 – Kansas will score at least a three (3) on the following standard of the Kansas Scorecard document by December 31, 2013: “Kansas has effective, meaningful and productive collaborations among stakeholder groups and between these stakeholders and state government to support the Employment First policy and competitive and integrated employment of people with disabilities.” (Kansas Scorecard, Standard #5)

***Data Sharing (Key Requirement)***

**Goal 5:** Kansas has an effective method for collecting and publishing outcomes data involving competitive and integrated employment for people with disabilities. This method tracks a variety of data, including, but not limited to competitive and integrated employment data. These data are used to engage stakeholders and inform strategy and policy decisions.

Objectives for Goal 5:

Objective 5.1 – 100% of relevant state agencies will collect and regularly publish outcomes data *specific* to *competitive and integrated employment* under this Goal by September 1, 2013. The agencies that reported such information in 2012 can update their data and information specifically in regards to competitive and integrated employment data. The agencies that did not report this in 2012 can report such information. The Commission will make a recommendation regarding publishing and collecting outcomes data involving competitive and integrated employment by December 31, 2013.

Objective 5.2 – 100% of relevant state agencies will use these data to engage stakeholders and is effectively integrated into making better strategy and policy decisions by state agencies, as indicated by reporting such to the Commission by September 1, 2013. The agencies that reported this information in 2012 can update their information accordingly. The agencies that did not report this in 2012 can report such information by this date.

Objective 5.3 –Kansas will score at least a three (3) on the following standard of the Kansas Scorecard document by December 31, 2013: “Kansas has an effective method for collecting and publishing outcomes data involving competitive and integrated employment for people with disabilities. This method tracks a variety of data, including but not limited to competitive and integrated employment data. These data are used to engage stakeholders and inform strategy and policy decisions.” (Standard #3)

Objective 5.4 – The Disability Subcabinet will take a leadership role to bring together a cross-agency data working group (or some other appropriate method) to examine how to better share data across agencies and systems, as well as examining opportunities to have a more integrated data system to ensure implementation of the data sharing requirements of the law and better sharing of data. KCDC, as the agency appointed by the Governor to work directly with and staff the Commission, will facilitate discussions and facilitate a report back to the Commission on this Objective by October 1, 2013.

*Further explanation about the above goals and how they tie back to the four key requirements of the law –*

*For each of the above goals, the Commission list one of the four key requirements that it believes is the most directly applicable to the goal. However, most of the goals are tied to more than one of the four key requirements. For ease of reference, this report simply lists the key requirement that is most closely tied to the goal. Additionally, the law has other requirements of State agencies and the Employment First Oversight Commission above and beyond the four key requirements listed. These other requirements provide additional context and justification.*

*Note: As used in this document, the term “relevant state agency” means those state agencies services, functions or support impacted by the act. This includes, but is not limited to, services and supports such as job placement, supported employment, vocational rehabilitation, workforce centers, job coaching, transition services for youth in special education and related services, etc. The law requires “all state agencies” to comply with the law. However, many state agencies do not have applicable services, supports or functions for people with disabilities. At this time, the Employment First Oversight Commission believes that the relevant state agencies include at least the following:*

* *Kansas Department for Children and Families (formerly Kansas Dept. of Social and Rehabilitation Services)*
* *Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (formerly Kansas Dept. on Aging)*
* *Kansas Department of Health and Environment*
* *Kansas Department of Commerce*
* *Kansas State Department of Education*
* *Kansas Department on Administration*

# Employment First Oversight Commission

**2013 Barriers, Effective Strategies and Policies Regarding Employment First**

*The law requires that the Employment First Commission “shall identify barriers to achieving the outcomes along with the effective strategies and policies that can help realize the Employment First initiative.”*

These barriers and strategies are across all disabilities. While these barriers and strategies may not represent every one that possibly exists, they represent the majority of barriers and corresponding strategies.

*Competitive and Integrated Employment is the First Option (Key Requirement)*

**Goal 1:** Kansas’ relevant state agencies successfully execute specific strategies to fully implement the Employment First law and to ensure competitive and integrated employment of people with disabilities is fully supported in their programs, policies, procedures and funding.

Examples of Barriers include:

* Competing priorities within and between current systems
* Disincentives to integrated employment
* Lack of capacity for implementation (multiple elements)
* Lack of access to effective, professional, supported employment services statewide.
* Misperceived focus on developmental disabilities only and not all disability groups.

Examples of Strategies include:

* Identify and address competing priorities within and between current systems
* Increase the use of existing incentives and develop new incentives
* Invest in broad-based training and technical assistance for all stakeholders.
* Establish a qualified workforce of employment support professionals.
* Promote grass-roots participation and active involvement of all disability groups, including those with the most severe disabilities through outreach, dissemination, education, and peer mentoring.

*Policy is Effectively Implemented in all Programs and Services (Key Requirement)*

**Goal 2:** Each relevant state agency has a strong and effective policy detailing how it will implement the Employment First law.

Examples of Barriers include:

* Lack of information to agencies about Employment First Law
* Policies not fully in sync with Employment First Law within agencies.
* Mechanism not in place to assure congruency in policy across different service systems.
* Confusion among state agencies as to their role and responsibilities.
* Logistical challenges associated with liaison appointments and authority.

Examples of Strategies include:

* Educate relevant state agency policy makers about the Employment First Law.
* Provide technical assistance as state agencies review, align, and/or develop, and implement policies for the Employment First Law.
* Implement flexible and fluid policies via collaboration between agencies.
* Facilitate work group networking among state agency liaisons.
* Develop tools to guide planning.

*State Programs, Policies, Procedures and Funding Support Competitive and Integrated Employment (Key Requirement)*

**Goal 3:** Kansas has measurable annual performance goals and outcomes with clear and meaningful benchmarks that track a number of key indicators to prove full support of competitive and integrated employment as well as effective implementation of the Employment First initiative. This includes outcomes and goals for the numbers and percentages of persons with disabilities in competitive and integrated employment.

Examples of Barriers include:

* Transportation is required to get and keep a job. However, this is lacking in most communities.
* Agencies lack clear and meaningful benchmarks to identify and track outcomes related to Employment First.
* Agencies use of minimum compliance to law and program requirements inhibits the effectiveness of services.
* Emphasis on the status quo and not establishing new goals and benchmarks.

Examples of Strategies include:

* Work with policymakers to prioritize public transportation.
* Determine key indicators and share with other agencies for optimal implementation.
* Establish and share expectations for best practices that support Employment First.
* Provide information and resources on evidence-based practices to assist in determining new goals and benchmarks.

**Goal 4:** Kansas has effective, meaningful and productive collaborations among stakeholder groups and between these stakeholders and state government to support the Employment First policy and competitive and integrated employment of people with disabilities.

Examples of Barriers include:

* Stakeholder groups are inconsistently working together in a strategic manner for the purpose of implementing Employment First.
* Not all necessary constituency stakeholders are effectively engaged with state agencies regarding Employment First.
* All stakeholders are not receiving information in a useable and meaningful method and format.

Examples of Strategies include:

* Utilize workgroups to discuss meaningful topics, vet important Employment First issues, and create engagement opportunities.
* Create mechanisms for ongoing customer input and collaboration to the relevant Employment First agencies.
* Conduct outreach and dissemination of all information to stakeholders around the state.

*Data Sharing (Key Requirement)*

**Goal 5:** Kansas has an effective method for collecting and publishing outcomes data involving competitive and integrated employment for people with disabilities. This method tracks a variety of data, including, but not limited to, competitive and integrated employment data. These data are used to engage stakeholders and inform strategy and policy decisions.

Examples of Barriers include:

* No viable method currently exists of consistently and systemically collecting, sharing, and tracking employment outcome data across systems and across relevant state agencies.
* Realignment of state agencies and other issues have made full implementation of the act difficult and limited the ability of all relevant state agencies to show concrete, measurable progress proving successful implementation of the act.
* Depending on the Goal or Objective, upwards of 50% of the relevant state agencies have not provided data or information to the Commission to prove successful implementation of the various Goals and Objectives established pursuant to this law. Until this happens, a significant barrier will exist to fully implementing the Employment First law.

Examples of Strategies include:

* Evaluate current data management systems measuring employment within state agencies.
* Determine gaps that exist in the data systems that are needed to implement Employment First.
* Establish a consistent system for reporting outcomes related to Employment First.