



*Department of Health  
and Human Services*

*Maine People Living  
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives*

*John E. Baldacci, Governor*

*Brenda M. Harvey, Commissioner*

**Office of the Commissioner**

**Employment Policy for Individuals Served**

Policy # DHHS-CS-01-10

**I. SUBJECT**

Employment Policy for Individuals Served

**II. POLICY STATEMENT**

The Department of Health and Human Services shall support career development and meaningful employment for all working aged individuals receiving services through the Department. Employment is part of the natural course of adult life and provides opportunities for economic gain, personal growth and contributing to one's community. The development of a skilled and motivated workforce is essential to meeting the needs of Maine businesses.

**III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Implementation of the DHHS Employment Policy will be driven by continuing quality improvement, quality assurance and service accountability consistent with the following tenets:

1. All individuals shall be presumed able and have the opportunity to work.
2. Career planning will result from a strength based approach identifying the individuals' interests, capabilities and supports needed for successful employment.
3. Employment support will emphasize the development and use of natural connections such as co-workers, supervisors, friends and family.
4. Employment shall be in integrated businesses and offer compensation that is fair and equitable.
5. Employment services shall be culturally and linguistically appropriate.
6. Efforts to increase employment will be coordinated in partnership with other State and Private agencies working toward a strong, diversified Maine workforce.

**IV. PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

This Departmental Policy provides the framework for employment practice guidelines within each participating Division/Office of DHHS. Those practice guidelines will adhere to and support this Employment Policy.

## V. POLICY DEVELOPMENT

This policy was developed by the DHHS Employment Policy Workgroup (Offices of Adult Mental Health Services, Adults with Cognitive and Physical Disability Services, Child and Family Services, Elder Services, Integrated Access and Support, MaineCare Services and Substance Abuse in collaboration with the Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services in September, 2010 and approved by the Integrated Management Team on October 7, 2010.

## VI. BACKGROUND

This policy replaces the DHHS/BDS Vocational Policy #01-CS-110 issued October 18, 2000. That first departmental *Vocational Policy* assisted the then Department of Behavioral and Developmental Services with moving toward a system that supports integrated, community based employment. The Policy was instrumental in promoting the conversion of sheltered workshops in Maine, and ending all state funding of segregated employment in July, 2008. The Policy was also instrumental in better coordinating services within the Department to increase the numbers of individuals working for real wages at real jobs in Maine.

This 2010 DHHS Employment Policy builds upon and expands the scope of this policy direction by addressing the employment needs of people served by DHHS who experience barriers to employment. It will ensure that supporting an individual's employment goals will continue to be an integral part of the work that the Department does in supporting Maine people to lead productive lives in their communities.

## VII. DEFINITIONS

**Integrated:** "Integrated Community Setting (business) with respect to an employment outcome means a setting typically found in the community in which applicants or eligible individuals interact with non-disabled individuals, other than non-disabled individuals who are providing services to those applicants or eligible individuals, to the same extent that non-disabled individuals in comparable positions interact with other persons."

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/rsa/tac-06-01.doc>

**Fair and Equitable Compensation:** Individuals employed at a business are compensated in an even and fair method by the employer as outlined in the Fair Labor Standards Act.

<http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/wages/index.htm>

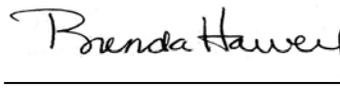
**Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate:** Support is provided that meets the National Standards of Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services.

<http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=2&lvlID=15>

November 15, 2010

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Effective Date



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Brenda M. Harvey  
Commissioner