



South Central Los Angeles Regional Center (SCLARC) BOARD POLICY

Policy Title: EMPLOYMENT FIRST

Date Approved: January 27, 2015

BOARD COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS POLICY:

The Executive Committee

PURPOSE: It is the policy of the state that opportunities for integrated, competitive employment shall be given the highest priority for working age individuals with developmental disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. The Employment First Policy was established “in furtherance of the purposes of this division (the Lanterman Act) to make services and supports available to enable persons with developmental disabilities to approximate the pattern of everyday living available to people without disabilities of the same age, to support the integration of persons with developmental disabilities into the mainstream life of the community, and to bring about more independent, productive, and normal lives...” Section 4869(a)(1)

POLICY:

- 1) ***Integrated employment*** will be the priority option considered for every adult supported by South Central Los Angeles Regional Center.
- 2) **Postsecondary education, technical or vocational training, and internship programs** will be considered as a means to achieve ***integrated competitive employment*** or career advancement.

DEFINITIONS:

Integrated Employment occurs “in work in a setting typically found in the community in which individuals interact with individuals without disabilities other than those who are providing services to those individuals, to the same extent that individuals without disabilities in comparable positions interact with other persons.”

Competitive Employment means “work in the competitive labor market that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis in an integrated setting and for which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the

customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled.”

SCLARC will implement this policy within the regional center in the following ways:

- Service Coordinators will assist consumers and family in identifying community employment resources available.
- Service Coordinators will work with consumers and families to create effective transition planning with the work options being the priority.
- Service Coordinators will educate consumers and families on the benefit of work and provide information so that there is a better understanding of the impact of work on public benefits.
- Community Services Division will emphasize resource development which focuses on employment options in all programs it considers for vendorization.
- Resource developers will assist service providers with developing plans that increase options for employment.
- The Consumer Advocate Committee will present peer presentations regarding job seeking best practices.
- The Community Relations Specialist will maintain outreach to perspective community business partners regarding SCLARC’s Employment First initiatives.

OUTCOMES:

By implementing this policy, it is SCLARC’s goal to significantly increase:

- The number of individuals with developmental disabilities who engage in integrated competitive employment, ***self-employment, or microenterprises***, and volunteer opportunities.
- The number of individuals who earn wages at or above minimum wage
- The number of transition plans which include employment outcomes and services for students with developmental disabilities who are 14 years of age or older.

DEFINITIONS:

Microenterprises are small businesses owned by individuals with developmental disabilities who have control and responsibility for decision-making and overseeing the business, with accompanying business licenses, taxpayer identification numbers other than social security numbers, and separate business bank accounts. Microenterprises may be considered integrated competitive employment.

Self-employment means an employment setting in which an individual works in a chosen occupation, for profit or fee, in his or her own small business, with control and responsibility for decisions affecting the conduct of the business.

South Central Los Angeles Regional Center’s Board of Directors formally adopts this Employment First Policy in support of Assembly Bill 1041 which was signed into law on October 9, 2013.