

EmploymentFirstMaine

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Employment First Maine Coalition Update

Maine has a strong foundation

- 2000 DHHS Vocational Policy developed
- 2001 DHHS and VR require Employment Staff Certification
- 2000-2008 reduction, then elimination of funding for sheltered workshops by DHHS
- 2006 Legislation to create Section 29 waiver for Developmental Services
- 2010 Employment for All conference sponsored by Maine APSE

Maine foundation

- 2010 DHHS sponsors Employment Summit unveiling updated Employment Policy
- 2010 Maine Business Leadership Network launched
- 2010- ongoing DHHS and DOL BRS meet quarterly focused on employment outcomes for all people with disabilities
- 2011 diverse Maine group attends Alliance for Full Participation Summit in Washington DC

Coming Together!

- 21 people who attend AFP Summit commit to Employment First for Maine
- AFP team presents to Maine APSE annual meeting (Jan 2012)
- EF Maine begins meeting at least monthly to draft a plan for Maine
- Maine submits an application to ODEP in their EF mentoring program (Mar 2012)

The Work Begins!

- A small subcommittee forms to address the legislation and meets in the summer of 2012
- It is a cross-disability effort from the beginning
- Draft EF legislation - prepared and disseminated widely for public comment (Sept-Oct 2012)
- The draft undergoes a number of revisions
- Additional individuals and organizations join the effort

“Employment First Maine Act”

- The Act (LD 1352) defines:
 - Customized Employment
 - First and preferred service or support option
 - Integrated community-based employment
- Processes for program monitoring and quality assurance
- First and preferred service or support option
- Coordination of efforts and information
- Establishes the Employment First Maine Coalition

The Hearing and Work Session

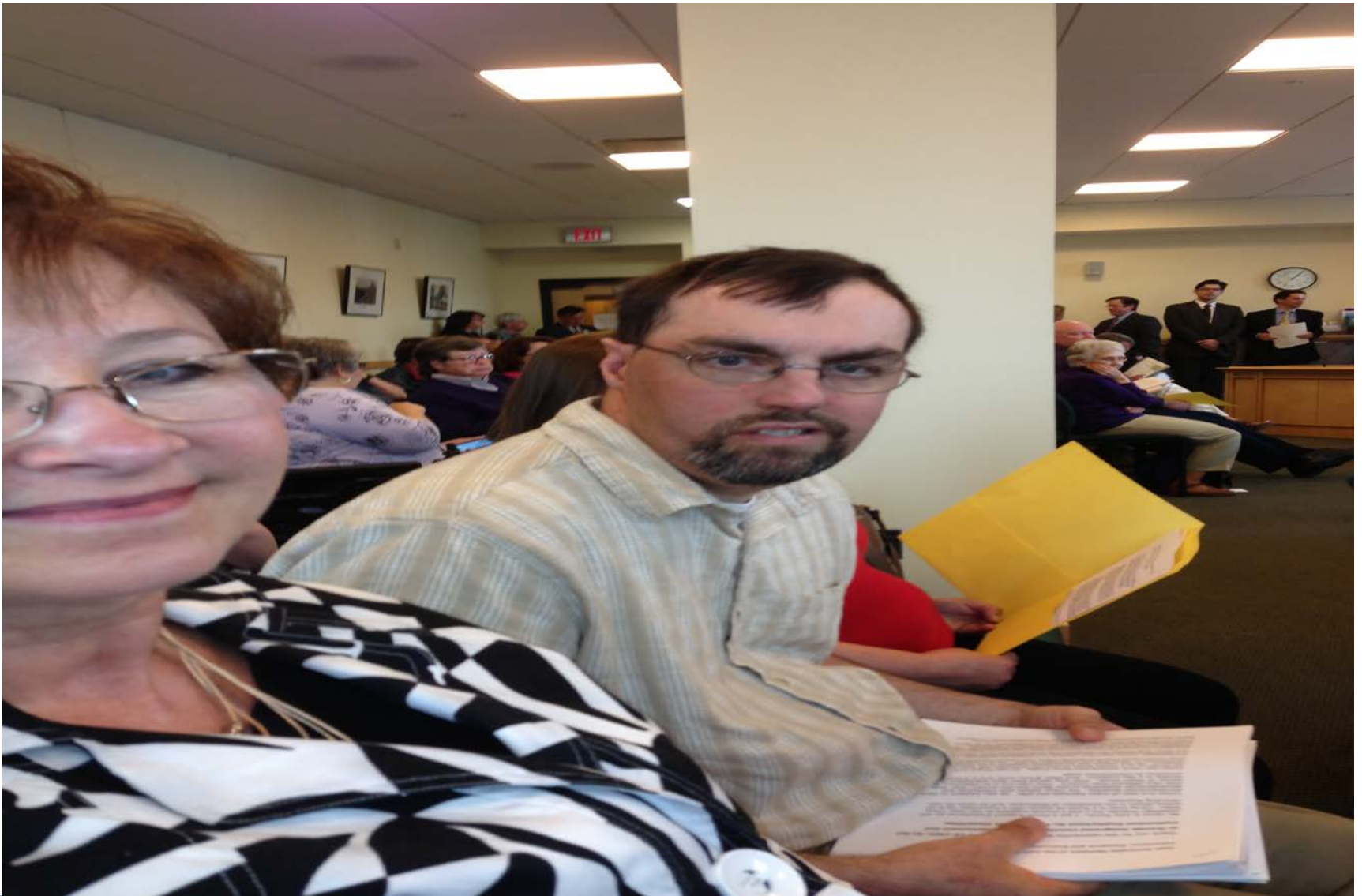
- More than 42 individuals testified in favor and ***no one*** testified in opposition
- 32 were individuals with disabilities
- Work Session – two amendments – change consensus and add a business rep to the coalition – Done!
- Voted unanimously out of the Labor Committee!
- On to the Senate and Appropriations – Passed!

Lunch Time Question

**What do we need to make
“employment first” a true
reality in Maine?**

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Since passage...

- The bill became law on 6/22/13 and went into effect October 9, 2013
- Solidifying the Coalition – expectations of members, meeting dates, and other organizational role coordination
- Outlined specific project plan process
- Wrote and approved by-laws, established work groups and regular meeting schedule
- Elected chair and vice-chair of the Coalition and work group chairs

Who is the Coalition?

- Representatives from :
 - State Agencies, Providers, Advocacy organizations, Individuals with Disabilities, Business Groups, Commissions, Councils, etc.
 - Anyone who has an interest in supporting and promoting the work of the Coalition and EFM

The Coalition Shall..

- Promote coordination and collaboration among state agencies;
- Review state policies, plans, programs and activities in order to determine whether these policies, programs, plans and activities effectively meet the employment needs of persons with disabilities to acquire integrated, community based employment or customized employment;
- Serve as a conduit for information and input to aid in the implementation of the Act for advocacy groups, commissions and councils that focus on issues facing persons with disabilities in Maine;

The Coalition Shall:

- Make recommendations to the Governor, the Legislature and state agencies regarding ways to improve the administration of employment services and employment outcomes for persons with disabilities;
- Review and comment on proposed legislation affecting the employment of persons with disabilities; and,
- Propose and promote rules and policies to state agencies that provide services and supports to persons with disabilities to improve integrated, community based employment and customized employment of persons with disabilities

Coalition Work Groups

- Legislative/Policy
- Data and Outcomes
- Transition of Youth
- Capacity Building/Systems Development
- Business Engagement
- Communication

Legislative Policy Work Group

- Review and make recommendations for changes to rule, regulation and/or statutes that eliminate barriers to integrated, community-based and customized employment
- Propose, support and promote rules to state agencies that provide employment supports to individuals with disabilities
- Review and comment on proposed legislation affecting employment of persons with disabilities

Data Work Group

- To obtain existing data from stakeholders that is aligned with the tenets of the EF Maine charge
- Using data – develop recommendations to improve employment outcomes for persons with disabilities
- Make recommendations for future data outcome elements based on review of current systems and tracking

Transition Work Group

- Determine and address needs of youth, educators, families and others in order to improve better transitions to and outcomes in competitive, integrated employment
- Collaborate with DHHS, DOE and DOL to recommend and support best practices in employment
- Collaborate with other work groups to ensure that youth in transition are accounted for in recommendations that enhance and strengthen outcomes

Capacity Building/Systems Development

- To review systems and make recommendations regarding the professional development and training needs of the provider community in order to realize the goals of EF Maine
 - Provider community includes: CRPs, day and work support providers, educators, individuals/families school personnel, and case managers

Employer Engagement

- Gather information that informs recommendations to expand the engagement of companies and the outcome of employment for people with disabilities
- Include recommendations to strengthen business engagement within DHHS, DOL and DOE by taking the dual customer approach

Communication

- To establish, coordinate and maintain a clear, consistent and accurate message about Employment First Maine and the work of the coalition
- Promote coordination and collaboration among state agencies to advance integrated, community-based employment and customized employment
- Act as a conduit for information and seek input to aid in the implementation of the Act from advocacy groups, commissions and councils that focus on employment, as well as with the general public and other stakeholders, such as schools, state agencies and employers

Initial Recommendations developed by Work Groups

Targeted for Years One through Three

- Develop an Employment First 101 curriculum and widely disseminate
- Establish a Job Coach credential
- Phase out the use of sub-minimum wage certificates (14c in the Fair Labor Standards Act) in Maine
- Submit a 1915 (i) waiver application that includes employment services for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services

Initial Recommendations developed by Work Groups

Targeted for Years One through Three

- Design a mentoring program to support agency leadership in their transformation to employment
- Maine DOE to use the “Discovering Personal Genius”/Career Planning model in transition
- Expand and strengthen Business engagement across Maine
- DHHS, DOL and DOE ensure that individuals with disabilities are on pathways to employment and barriers are addressed in person-centered planning process using quality data indicators

EFM Coalition Meetings

- Began officially October, 2013 – second Friday of the month, DOL, 45 Commerce Drive, Augusta in person or by phone 11:00 – 1:00
- 20-30 people attend and participate monthly
- New participants are always welcome and join regularly- public meetings, agenda and minutes posted on EFM website

Employment First Nationally

- www.apse.org
- More than 40 states have some level of activity related to Employment First (and most of these states are I/DD specific)
- Only Maine and Washington have **both** legislation and policy directives or executive orders
- ONLY Maine has both AND addresses **ALL** individuals with disabilities (Washington is I/DD specific)

National and State Activity Affecting Employment First

- Career Planning/Discovering Personal Genius™ added to MaineCare waivers in Maine
- Revised Rates for Waivers supporting employment outcomes are proposed in Maine
- CMS Technical Assistance Guidance on Employment
- Discussions to eliminate sub-minimum wage on a National level
- Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and reauthorization of the Rehab Act signed into law

QUESTIONS?

Presenter Information:

Betsy Hopkins, Director
DOL Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
45 Commerce Drive
Augusta, Maine 04333
Betsy.Hopkins@Maine.gov

Employment First Maine Information

www.employmentfirstmaine.org

To register for e-mailing list: rlangley@drcme.org

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