

Fact Sheet: The Case for Real Jobs



Individualized, integrated employment for citizens with disabilities benefits individuals, businesses, communities, and the entire state.

- 1) **Better Health and Lives:** Research has proven that people with disabilities who are employed in integrated jobs have better physical and mental health. Better overall health is not only best for individuals, but also for communities and the state because healthier people utilize fewer health care services and cost state and local municipalities less in both the short and long run.
- 2) **Good Business and Stronger Communities:** Businesses that hire people with disabilities gain additions to their qualified and diversified workforce. Research has shown that people are more likely to patronize and return to businesses that hire people with disabilities. In addition, co-workers of people with disabilities gain greater understanding about the fact that everyone is more alike than different and that people with disabilities make good employees, good co-workers, good citizens, and good friends. Integrated employment brings people from different backgrounds and with various abilities together – helping to unify and strengthen businesses and the community as a whole.
- 3) **Cost-effectiveness:** Evidence of better return on investment when people with disabilities are supported to work at integrated jobs in the community is clear. Using public service dollars to support people to be productive, earn minimum wage or higher, pay taxes, and have more spending power just makes economic sense over options that do not lead to real employment as the outcome.
- 4) **National Policy Trends:** National policy recommendations and mandates to increase integrated community employment numbers are being developed and implemented by the Center for Medicaid Services (CMS), the Department of Labor (DOL), and the Department of Justice (DOJ). Planning for the growth of integrated employment for people with disabilities is part of planning for the future of our state.