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# Employing Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities and Developmental Disabilities in California

**“Real Work for Real Pay in the Real World”**

May 2017

Prepared by  
California Department of Education  
California Department of Rehabilitation  
California Department of Developmental Services

## **A Note from the Directors**

The California Department of Education, California Department of Rehabilitation, and the California Department of Developmental Services, are pleased to issue the California Competitive Integrated Employment Blueprint. This Blueprint initiative is the result of the commitment between the three departments to provide opportunities for Californians with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, to prepare for and participate in competitive integrated employment.

At the launch of the initiative in December 2014, our goal was to advance competitive integrated employment opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities by identifying and implementing improvements in furtherance of the State's Employment First Policy and other federal and state laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and the Home and Community-Based Services settings rule.

We, the three departments, in consultation and collaboration with Disability Rights California, present this Blueprint to further our efforts in ensuring that all youth and adults with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities who chose competitive integrated employment are provided opportunities to equip them with the skills and knowledge to participate in today's 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce. The Blueprint addresses the following areas to help facilitate these efforts:

- Expanding joint information sharing.
- Coordinating efforts across the three systems to utilize existing resources more effectively.
- Increasing collaboration between departments at the state level, and entities at the local level, to better plan, implement, and evaluate services to increase competitive integrated employment.
- Increasing participation of individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities in the California workforce development system.
- Improving business partner engagement with regard to hiring individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities in both the public and private sectors.
- Offering individuals, their support network, and business partners, information and technical assistance related to competitive integrated employment.

As we look toward the future, through the implementation of the Blueprint we plan to achieve the following impacts:

- Individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities have increased opportunities to receive the services they need across all three systems to achieve competitive integrated employment, especially during the transition years to adulthood.
- The business community is able to better access individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities as a potential workforce.
- Services provided across all three systems are coordinated and prepare individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities for competitive integrated employment.
- Collaborative relationships are developed and maintained between schools/local educational agencies, Department of Rehabilitation districts, and regional centers across the state.

We are dedicated to helping individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities obtain the information, services, and supports they need to achieve their employment goals. Through the implementation of this Blueprint we will work together to support individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities in achieving competitive integrated employment.

Sincerely,

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Director

California Department of Developmental Services

**Kristin Wright**

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# “Real Work for Real Pay in the Real World”

## **Vision**

Providing opportunities for Californians with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities to prepare for and participate in competitive integrated employment.

“...you never know if somebody can run with the ball if you never hand it to them.”

*Business Partner – California CIE Business Partner Forum,  
August 31, 2015*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### California Competitive Integrated Employment Blueprint Overview

A proactive interagency plan, hereafter known as a “Blueprint,” has been created by representatives from the California Department of Education (CDE), California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), and California Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to jointly identify ways to increase competitive integrated employment (CIE) opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities (ID/DD) over a five-year period. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) supports the furtherance of education, employment, and independent living for students transitioning to adulthood. The federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in 2014, seeks to empower individuals with disabilities to maximize employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion and integration into society. Each person’s maximum employment potential and employment goals will be defined through the person-centered planning process. For each individual in CIE, his or her person-centered plan, if so chosen, will include services in settings that are integrated in and support full access to the greater community (pursuant to the federal Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) settings rule).

Utilizing the person-centered planning concept, embraced by all three departments, the Blueprint was developed to describe innovation, what is working, and what is possible in creating an individual’s pathway to CIE.

To build capacity and stimulate policy change, the Blueprint focuses on five fundamental career development pathways to CIE: transition services; adult pathways to employment; post-secondary education (PSE) activities; supported employment services, customized employment and other employment support options; and business partner engagement.

The goals of the Blueprint are to:

- Improve collaboration and coordination between the three departments to prepare and support all individuals with ID/DD who choose CIE.
- Increase opportunities for individuals with ID/DD who choose CIE to prepare for and participate in the California workforce development system and achieve CIE within existing resources.

- Support the ability of individuals with ID/DD to make informed choices, adequately prepare for, transition to, and engage in CIE.

“Together we are better than when we are alone...”  
*Service Provider - California CIE Stakeholder Forum,  
May 15, 2015*

Section One introduces the Blueprint, details its purpose and goals, and discusses the process in which it was developed. In addition, this section explains the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that documents the agreement between the three departments to formally engage in the Blueprint development process.

Section Two provides a brief overview of each department’s service delivery system including their eligibility criteria and the populations they serve. Understanding how each department operates is an essential component to the development and implementation of the Blueprint.

Section Three summarizes current initiatives and collaboration efforts at the local, state, and national level that have proven to be successful in supporting increased opportunities for individuals with ID/DD to prepare for and engage in CIE. The Blueprint describes these existing successes, that will be built upon utilizing available resources, as some of the first exemplary, effective, and emerging (“Triple E”) practices intended for statewide replication.

Section Four describes the “focus for change.” This section outlines the objectives, targeted outcomes, and strategies for each goal. It also lists the actions, divided into phases that will help to achieve each goal.

Section Five introduces next steps for implementation. To successfully meet the Blueprint goals, the three departments are committed to implementing the Blueprint. A committee of representatives from each department will help to identify resources and task forces to assist with the implementation of the Blueprint, and will meet regularly to track implementation progress.



This Blueprint contains the specific recommendations that will guide the departments over the course of the next five years and highlights collaboration at both the state and local levels to support each individual on his or her pathway to CIE.

The departments will track the effectiveness of the specified strategies and actions. Data will be electronically posted on the Employment Data Dashboard and a CIE website annually and will include an evaluation of progress and recommended next steps with stakeholder input.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Purpose

The state of California has taken a historic step towards increasing CIE opportunities for individuals with ID/DD. The CDE, DOR, and DDS have worked together to create a proactive interagency plan utilizing available resources<sup>1</sup> to increase opportunities for individuals with ID/DD to prepare for and engage in CIE, and to reduce reliance upon subminimum wage jobs and segregated work settings. The California CIE Blueprint for Change hereafter referred to as the “Blueprint”, will be used to inform the service delivery system to support the achievement of CIE for individuals with ID/DD. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) supports the furtherance of education, employment, and independent living for students transitioning to adulthood. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, amended by the WIOA, seeks to empower individuals with disabilities to maximize employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion and integration into society. Each person’s maximum employment potential and employment goals will be defined through the person-centered planning process. For each individual in CIE, his or her person-centered plan, if so chosen, will include services in settings that are integrated in and support full access to the greater community (HCBS settings rule).

The Blueprint will be implemented over a five-year period and will be incorporated by reference in departmental MOUs. The Blueprint will outline actions that will foster utilization of existing resources towards implementation of the California Employment First Policy (Welfare and Institutions Code, section 4869(a)(1)). Utilization of well sequenced services will create a collaborative environment at the local level to support individuals as they seek CIE.

The development of the blueprint encourages the departments to collaborate in furtherance of their goals to provide equal opportunities for individuals with ID/DD. The Blueprint is consistent with state and federal law including the United States and California Constitutions regarding equality, the state’s Employment First Policy, the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act (“Lanterman Act”), the Americans with Disabilities Act, IDEA, and the Supreme Court decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.* It will also meet the new federal requirements enacted in the WIOA, and position California to adjust existing services to meet the new requirements specified by the

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<sup>1</sup> If additional resources become available the departments will evaluate what may be utilized to further the goals of this blueprint.

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Guidance for community based services as that guidance becomes final.<sup>2</sup>

The objectives, strategies, and actions within the goals of the Blueprint focus on the following five fundamental career development pathways to CIE: transition services, adult pathways to employment, post-secondary school activities, supported employment services, customized employment and other employment support options, and business partner engagement.

The goals of the Blueprint are to:

- Improve collaboration and coordination between the three departments to prepare and support all individuals with ID/DD who choose CIE.
- Increase opportunities for individuals with ID/DD who choose CIE to prepare for and participate in the California workforce development system and achieve CIE within existing resources.
- Support the ability of individuals with ID/DD to make informed choices, adequately prepare for, transition to, and engage in CIE.

“...work is a place where potential can be maximized.”

*Youth Commissioner - Advisory Commission on Special Education  
Meeting, August 12, 2015*

## **Background**

In December 2014, the CDE, DOR, and DDS signed an MOU with the intent to identify and implement improvements in the coordination and capacity of the service system for individuals with ID/DD resulting in more individuals with ID/DD becoming employed in integrated settings at competitive wages consistent with the state's Employment First Policy and other federal and state laws. The MOU documented the agreement between the three departments to formally engage in the Blueprint development process.

The intent of the Blueprint is to continue and build upon the implementation of new federal requirements including the WIOA and HCBS settings rule related to integrated, competitive employment outcomes, specifically for

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<sup>2</sup> Section 3 of the Blueprint discusses some of these in greater detail.

students, youth, and adults with ID/DD by developing and implementing actions and strategies to improve CIE outcomes. Development of the Blueprint has been guided by the Employment First policy; information learned through several ongoing state and stakeholder projects including the California Community of Practice on Secondary Transition (CoP), California Promoting the Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income (CaPROMISE), California Transition Alliance, and the California Employment Consortium for Youth and Young Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (CECY) and will build on these projects. In addition, the development of the blueprint has been guided by the best thinking and resources of national entities working towards improving CIE outcomes, such as the National Center on Leadership for the Employment and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities, the Office of Disability Employment Policy Community of Practice, the Institute on Community Inclusion, Partnerships In Employment, and Think College.

As stated in the MOU and articulated in this Blueprint, the three departments will work together to increase CIE outcomes. The Institute on Community Inclusion identified seven strategies used by states who have a high rate of, or higher than average growth in the number of individuals with ID/DD in CIE. The actions and strategies outlined in the Blueprint build on the use of these effective strategies.<sup>3</sup> These practices include the following:

1. Clearly defined goals and data collection
2. Strong agency leadership
3. Interagency collaboration
4. Ongoing training and outreach
5. Communication through relationships
6. Local control
7. Flexibility and respect for innovation

To track the effectiveness of the strategies and outcomes, the departments will use the Employment Data Dashboard hosted by the California State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) to track the employment

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<sup>3</sup>High-Performing States in Integrated Employment, Allison Cohen Hall, John Butterworth, Dana Scott Gilmore & Deborah Metzel. Originally published: 2/2003

participation rate of individuals with ID/DD. Additionally, the departments will work with the SCDD to improve the data collected to better measure CIE outcomes as reported in the Employment Data Dashboard.

## **Methodology**

In February 2015, the CDE, DOR and DDS formed the California CIE Interagency Leadership Workgroup consisting of subject matter experts from each department. The workgroup's goal has been to collaborate with community stakeholders to develop a blueprint to improve CIE outcomes for individuals with ID/DD over a five-year period. The workgroup developed the following Blueprint agreed upon by the three departments, in consideration of the stakeholder feedback noted below, which is reflected in proposed changes, goals, recommendations and timelines to attain the desired outcomes.

Stakeholders were informed and engaged throughout the planning process. The interagency workgroup conducted three facilitated teleconferences with stakeholders including consumers, families and advocates, community partners, employers, Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), regional centers, and providers. The representatives from the workgroup also attended an Advisory Commission on Special Education meeting and state level consumer advisory meetings supported by the SCDD, the Association of Regional Center Agencies and DDS to gather consumer stakeholder input. The workgroup also sponsored a conversation with business partners to gather input from business partners who hire individuals with ID/DD. Finally, individuals and organization stakeholders provided written input through the [CaliforniaCIE@dor.ca.gov](mailto:CaliforniaCIE@dor.ca.gov) email. Input from stakeholders will be considered throughout the implementation of the Blueprint.

As part of the Blueprint development process, data from the departments was utilized to recommend targeted outcomes outlined in Section four.

Additionally, the departments will provide guidance to their staff and to LEAs and regional centers, urging the LEAs and regional centers to align their practices consistent with the Blueprint.

## **Terminology**

Because of multiple definitions for similar terms, for purposes of this Blueprint the following terms are defined:

- Action: Action means the process of performing an activity for a specific purpose, e.g., development of joint written guidance to increase collaboration and communication.

- Collaborative Group: An existing or new collaborative group made up of local agency professionals, consumers and families, and other stakeholders as appropriate.
- Community-Based Vocational Education:
  - For CDE this can include unpaid vocational exploration, assessment, or training.
  - For DOR this can include paid and unpaid work experience.
  - For DDS this can include volunteer opportunities, paid and unpaid internships, and adult education and training.
- Competitive Integrated Employment: This term, or CIE, is defined as work that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis (including self-employment) –
  - A. For which an individual:
    - Is compensated at a rate that shall be not less than the higher of the rate specified in section 6 (a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. § 206 (a)(1)) or the rate specified in the applicable state or local minimum wage law; and is not less than the customary rate paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by other employees who are not individuals with disabilities, and who are similarly situated in similar occupations by the same employer and who have similar training, experience, and skills.
    - In the case of an individual who is self-employed, yields an income that is comparable to the income received by other individuals who are not individuals with disabilities, and who are self-employed in similar occupations or on similar tasks and who have similar training, experience, and skills.
    - Is eligible for the level of benefits provided to other employees.
  - B. That is at a location where the employee interacts with other persons who are not individuals with disabilities (not including supervisory personnel or individuals who are providing services to such employee) to the same extent that individuals who are not individuals with disabilities and who are in comparable positions interact with other persons.

C. That, as appropriate, present opportunities for advancement that are similar to those for other employees who are not individuals with disabilities and who have similar positions.<sup>4</sup>

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, amended by WIOA, seeks to empower individuals with disabilities to maximize employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion and integration into society.

- Customized Employment: This term is defined by the WIOA and the U.S Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment policy as “a flexible process designed to personalize the employment relationship between a job candidate and an employer in a way that meets the needs of both. It is based on an individualized match between the strengths, conditions, and interests of a job candidate and the identified business needs of an employer. Customized Employment utilizes an individualized approach to employment planning and job development — one person at a time . . . one employer at a time.”
- Employment Preparation Services: This term, or EPS, refers to a continuum of services that provide guidance and direction to an individual with ID/DD in the development of job search techniques and appropriate work-related behaviors that will enhance the individual’s employability.
- Guidance: The term guidance includes instruction, training, sharing of key regulatory and other related information, and recommended strategies sponsored by the Interagency Leadership Workgroup. The guidance is intended to facilitate collaboration leading to service changes and an increased capacity in employment resources and services resulting in an increase in CIE outcomes.
- Implementation Workgroup: The implementation workgroup will include at a minimum representation from each department including subject matter experts in services, funding, and data. Additional membership will be contingent upon available resources and at a minimum participation may be via phone conference. The workgroup will develop recommendations for review by the Interagency Leadership Workgroup.
- Independent Living Skills: The term is used to reference activities that are related to daily living including, nutrition and meal planning, financial budgeting, social skills, public transportation utilization overview, and overall organizational skills.

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<sup>4</sup> Federal definition of “Competitive Integrated Employment” (Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act, § 7, 29 U.S.C. § 705(5).)

- Individual: The term individual is used to reference an individual with ID/DD including youth (ages 14 through 24), students (ages 16 through 21), and adults (ages 18 and over) who are receiving services or eligible for services by one or more of the departments, and their family and/or representative(s), if any, as appropriate to the individual's circumstance.
- Individualized Education Program: This term, or IEP, is the document prepared by a LEA in collaboration with the IEP team for a child/student who is participating in Special Education.
- Individualized Plan for Employment: This term, or IPE, is the document prepared by the DOR in collaboration with the consumer, who is participating in the vocational rehabilitation program. It includes an employment goal and appropriate services.
- Individual Program Plan: This term, or IPP, is the document prepared by the regional center IPP team, in collaboration with the individual. It describes the needs, preferences, and choices of the individual and family.
- Informed Choice: This term refers to the principle of "informed choice," in which individuals with ID/DD are encouraged to participate in the service process to the maximum extent possible and make meaningful and informed choices.
- Intellectual Disability and Developmental Disability (ID/DD): This term refers to individuals who have been diagnosed with conditions such as autism, traumatic brain injury, intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, seizure disorder, and other developmental disability. Note, for the purposes of the Blueprint data collection, the disability categories for ID/DD currently used by each department vary slightly and are footnoted in the Blueprint.
- Interagency Leadership Workgroup: The Interagency Leadership Workgroup comprised of representatives from CDE, DOR, and DDS developed the Blueprint with stakeholder input, and will oversee implementation.
- Local Educational Agency: This term, or LEA, refers to a school district, a county office of education, a nonprofit charter school participating as a member of a special education local plan area, or a special education local plan area.



- Person-Centered Planning: For the purpose of the Blueprint, person-centered planning is the concept for the development of IEPs, IPEs, and IPPs.
- Post-Secondary Education (PSE): This term refers to education or training that occurs after secondary school (high school).
- Pre-Employment Transition Services: The following five activities for students with disabilities, ages 16 through 21, are provided by local DOR districts, in collaboration with local LEAs:
  1. Job exploration counseling.
  2. Work-based learning experiences.
  3. Counseling related to post-secondary opportunities.
  4. Workplace readiness training.
  5. Self-advocacy training.
- Stakeholders: The term stakeholders refers to individuals representative of all Californians, including individuals with ID/DD, families or representatives as appropriate, staff of CDE, DOR, DDS, regional centers, Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA), LEAs, Family Resource Centers (FRC), service providers, and the California workforce development system, business partners, and any oversight and advisory boards and advocacy agencies.
- Steering Committee: The Steering Committee has provided feedback to the Interagency Leadership Workgroup to help guide the development of the Blueprint. As part of implementation, the committee will meet at least quarterly for the first year and at least semi-annually for the duration of the five-year Blueprint implementation to provide ongoing feedback. Steering Committee representatives include California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHSA), CDE, DOR, DDS and Disability Rights California (DRC).
- Targeted Outcome: Targeted outcome means a desired level of performance measured by available or future data, e.g., a percentage increase in employment rates over time.
- “Triple E” Practices: The term “Triple E” practices refers to exemplary, effective, and emerging practices proven to be successful in supporting increased opportunities for individuals with ID/DD to prepare for and

engage in CIE. “Triple E” practices illustrate successful programs and local agreements through success stories, as applicable, from the consumer, employer, and service perspectives. An example of a “Triple E” practice is well-sequenced provision of services and local partnership agreements. As part of implementation, additional “Triple E” practices, as they evolve, will be identified and shared on the CIE webpage.

- Well-Sequenced Services and Funding: Unique services provided by more than one fund source (LEA, DOR, and regional center) arranged in a manner, and provided in a timeframe, to best support each individual’s employment goals and avoid duplicative services.

An overview of each department’s service delivery system and a summary of current initiatives and collaboration efforts among the three departments are provided in the following Blueprint sections. Recommendations are addressed in Section Four of the Blueprint.

## 2. INTERAGENCY SYSTEM OVERVIEW

This section provides a brief overview of each department’s service delivery system. Understanding how each department operates is an essential component to the development of the Blueprint. In addition, the Blueprint will be implemented within the current requirements and resources of each department to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate material and information.

“Provide maximum opportunity in the community in paid employment or volunteer work...”

*Parent/Vendor – Feedback received through the California CIE  
Inbox, May 18, 2015*

### California Department of Education

The CDE oversees the state's diverse and dynamic public school system, which is responsible for the education of more than seven million children and young adults in more than 9,000 schools. The CDE and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction are responsible for enforcing education law and regulations; and for

continuing to reform and improve public elementary school programs, secondary school programs, adult education, some preschool programs, and child care programs.

The CDE works cooperatively with other state agencies to provide a wide variety of educational supports, from family-centered services for infants and preschool children with disabilities, to planned steps for transition from high school to further education, employment and quality adult life. The CDE responds to consumer complaints and administers the federal IDEA, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), and in 2017 the Every Student Succeeds Act, which will replace NCLB, for students with disabilities in California. For more information on special education see the CDE Special Education web site [CDE Special Education Division](#).

The CDE provides state leadership and policy direction for school district special education programs and services for students who have disabilities, which the CDE defines as newborn through 21 years of age. Special education is defined as specially designed instruction and services, at no cost to parents, to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities.

### **Current Landscape**

During state fiscal year (SFY)<sup>5</sup> 2013/2014, there were approximately **29,000** students, ages 16 through 21, enrolled in state's public school system whose disability category could be considered ID/DD.<sup>6</sup>

### **What are the Special Education Eligibility Criteria?**

A child shall qualify as an individual with exceptional needs if the results of the assessment as required by Education Code section 56320 demonstrate that the degree of the child's impairment requires special education in one or more of the program options authorized by Education Code section 56361. The decision as to whether or not the assessment results demonstrate that the degree of the child's impairment requires special education shall be made by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. "The IEP team shall take into account all the relevant material which is available on the child. No single score or product of scores shall be used as the sole criterion for the decision of the IEP team as to the child's eligibility for special education."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> July 1 through June 30

<sup>6</sup> The disability categories included under ID/DD for the CDE are Intellectual Disability, Autism, and Traumatic Brain Injury.

<sup>7</sup> California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 3030

## What is an IEP?

The CDE provides general supervision, as required by title 34 Code of Federal Regulations section 300.600, to LEAs that develop and implement IEPs for students with disabilities.

Annually, the student's IEP team reviews and revises the IEP. Triennially, the student is reassessed, unless there is agreement that assessment is not necessary.

The IEP is developed by a team that includes: the parents of the student; the regular education teacher of the student (if the student is or may be participating in the regular education environment); the special education teacher (or if appropriate, not less than one special education provider) of the student; an LEA representative, who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of the student and is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum and availability of LEA resources; an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of the assessment results; at the discretion of the parent or the LEA, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the student; and whenever appropriate, the student. This may include, if invited, representatives from regional centers or local DOR staff.

To the extent appropriate, with the consent of the parents or a student who has reached the age of 18, the LEA must invite a representative of any participating agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services.

Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student is 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team, and updated annually thereafter, the IEP must include:

- Appropriate measurable post-secondary goals based upon age-appropriate assessments related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills.
- The transition services, including the course of study, needed to help the student in reaching those goals.
- Beginning not later than one year before the student reaches the age of 18, a statement that the student has been informed that the rights afforded to parents relating to special education will transfer to the student at age 18, unless the student "has been determined to be incompetent under state law."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> 20 United States Code 1415(m)(1), 34 Code of Federal Regulations Section 300.520, and California Code of Education Section 56041.5

Transition services for a student with a disability in a secondary education setting, are a coordinated set of activities that:

- Are designed to be within a results-oriented process that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student with a disability to facilitate the student's movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.
- Are based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's strengths, preferences, and interests.
- Include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and a functional vocational evaluation.

### **California Department of Rehabilitation**

The DOR is authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the 2014 WIOA (29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.), to provide vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to individuals with disabilities, including "youth with disabilities," ages 14 through 24, and high school "students with disabilities," ages 16 through 21. The VR program is intended to maximize opportunities for CIE and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and with informed choice. An employment outcome may include entering or retaining full-time or part-time CIE including but not limited to supported employment or customized employment.

The DOR collaborates with public agencies, including LEAs, colleges, Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs), regional centers, and other stakeholders to provide well-sequenced services to mutual consumers. In an effort to serve as many consumers as possible, the DOR is required to make maximum effort to secure comparable services and benefits. When there are insufficient funds to serve all individuals who are eligible, the DOR operates under an Order of Selection and must determine an individual's priority for VR services. Currently, the DOR is under an Order of Selection but is able to serve individuals with the most significant and significant disabilities. Typically, individuals with ID/DD are considered individuals with the most significant disabilities. A

waiting list is maintained for those for whom the DOR does not have sufficient funds to serve and do not meet the priority of services under the Order of Selection.

There are 104 Vocational Rehabilitation Services Delivery (VRSD) teams at the DOR, which provide VR services to eligible Californians with disabilities. Each VRSD team includes five qualified rehabilitation counselors, two service coordinators, one employment coordinator, two office technicians (general), and a team manager.

### **Current Landscape**

In SFY 2013/2014, the DOR provided VR services to approximately 100,000 eligible Californians with disabilities per year in 13 geographic districts in the Vocational Rehabilitation Employment Division and a statewide Blind Field Services district within the Specialized Services Division. Of those, approximately **1,700** were identified as individuals with ID/DD ages 16 through 21 and **2,900** ages 22 and over.<sup>9</sup>

### **What are the DOR Eligibility Criteria?**

To be eligible for services from the DOR, an individual must:

- Have a physical or mental impairment that creates a substantial impediment to employment.
- Require VR services to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain employment that is consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.
- Be able to benefit from the DOR services in terms of an employment outcome in an integrated setting.

The DOR presumes that individuals with the most significant disabilities can benefit from an employment outcome, and is responsible to provide each individual with an assessment to determine the individual's eligibility and priority for services and VR needs. Prior to determining that an applicant is unable to benefit due to the significance of the individual's vocational barriers related to their disability, the DOR must explore the individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in work situations through the use of trial work experiences with appropriate supports provided by the DOR.

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<sup>9</sup> The disability categories included under ID/DD for the DOR are Intellectual Disability and Autism.

## What is an IPE?

In collaboration with each individual, the DOR qualified rehabilitation counselor performs key functions throughout the VR process, including determination of eligibility priority for services; development of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE); approval of any necessary IPE amendments; IPE review at least annually; and determination of the achievement of an employment outcome and/or case closure.

An employment goal and appropriate VR services, as documented through the IPE, are consistent with the individual's unique strengths, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. The purpose of the IPE is to help an individual with ID/DD prepare for and engage in CIE. Services are provided as appropriate to each individual's unique circumstances and needs, may include but are not limited to vocational counseling and guidance, assessment, assistive technology, benefits advisement, transition services, including pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities, post-secondary training or education, on the job training (OJT), job-related services and supports, such as job coaching, pre-employment transition services, customized employment, and post-employment services.

For specific information on the provision of VR services and the IPE process see the [Consumer Information Handbook](#).

<http://www.dor.ca.gov/Public/Publications-n-Forms.html>

## California Department of Developmental Services

The Lanterman Act (Division 4.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code) establishes, unique to the state of California, a commitment to provide services and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities throughout their lifetime. Services and supports are provided through a combination of federal, state, county, and local government services, private businesses, support groups and volunteers. In 2013, Governor Brown signed into law Assembly Bill 1041 (Chesbro) establishing the Employment First Policy in the Lanterman Act. Specifically, the law provides that:

*“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.” (Welfare and Institutions Code, section 4869(a)(1))*

The DDS is the agency through which the state provides services and supports to individuals with ID/DD. These disabilities include intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism and related conditions. Services are provided through 3 state-operated developmental centers (in the process of being closed) and 1 community facility and through contracts with 21 nonprofit organizations called regional centers. The regional centers serve as a local resource to provide diagnosis and assessment of eligibility and help plan, access, coordinate, and monitor the services and supports that are needed because of a developmental disability. In addition, regional centers help find and access the services and supports available to individuals with ID/DD and their families.

These services include both pre-employment and employment support services. The most common type of pre-employment services funded by regional centers are day program services. Employment supports available through regional centers include referral to the DOR for vocational rehabilitation services, long-term services once placed in an integrated job through the supported employment program, and pre-vocational services.

Today several regional centers are beginning efforts to work with work activity program service providers to change the service delivery to be integrated and focus on achieving CIE opportunities. Additional employment preparation services are available through a new sub code of individualized supports within these services known as Tailored Day Services. In Fiscal Year 2016-17, through the enactment of Chapter 3, Statutes of 2016 (Assembly Bill (AB)x2-1), the legislature has authorized the development of two new programs to increase CIE opportunities. One program will provide paid internship opportunities leading to CIE. The second is an incentive payment program to service providers who assist consumers to achieve CIE and maintain their jobs.

## **Current Landscape**

During SFY 2013/2014, the DDS served approximately **38,000** individuals with ID/DD ages 16 through 21 and **126,000** ages 22 and over.<sup>10</sup>

## **What are the DDS Eligibility Criteria?**

To be eligible for regional center services, an individual must have a disability that begins before their 18th birthday, is expected to continue indefinitely, and presents a substantial disability. As defined by the Director of Developmental Services, in consultation with the Superintendent of Public Instruction, eligible individuals shall

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<sup>10</sup> The disability categories included under ID/DD for the DDS are Intellectual Disability, Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Seizure Disorder, and other Developmental Disability.



include persons with an intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and/or autism. This term shall also include conditions resulting in a disability found to be closely related to intellectual disability or to require treatment similar to that required for individuals with an intellectual disability, but shall not include other handicapping conditions that are solely physical in nature. Eligibility is established through diagnosis and assessment performed by regional centers.

### **What is an IPP?**

Person-centered individual program planning assists persons with developmental disabilities and their families to build their capacities and capabilities. This planning effort is not a single event or meeting, but a series of discussions or interactions among a team of people including the person with a developmental disability, their family (when appropriate), regional center representative(s) and others. The document known as the Individual Program Plan (IPP) is a record of the decisions made by the planning team.

As part of the planning process, this team assists the individual in developing a description that includes: a preferred place to live, favorite people with whom to socialize, and preferred types of daily activities, including preferred jobs. This description is called a preferred future, and is based on the individual's strengths, capabilities, preferences, lifestyle and cultural background.

The planning team decides what needs to be done, by whom, when, and how, if the individual is to begin (or continue) working toward the preferred future.

For specific information on the IPP process see the [Individual Program Plan Resource Manual](http://www.dds.ca.gov/RC/IPPMannual.cfm).  
<http://www.dds.ca.gov/RC/IPPMannual.cfm>

The IPP captures the services and supports and who will provide those services and supports including those funded by entities other than the regional center and those the regional center will fund.

### **3. CURRENT INITIATIVES AND COLLABORATION**

Current initiatives and collaboration efforts that have proven to be successful in supporting increased employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities were built upon as part of the Blueprint. Sharing information about these initiatives and collaborative efforts will provide information to existing service providers who are seeking to

improve their ability to support individuals with ID/DD to achieve CIE. This section identifies these efforts at the local, state and national level. These efforts are foundational to the development and support of “Triple E” practices at the local level.

“...work provides that place to look forward to... a place to achieve goals...”

*Parent – California CIE Stakeholder Forum, May 15, 2015*

## **Local Level**

Local level initiatives and collaborations are foundational to the Blueprint in that they demonstrate existing and potential “Triple E” pathways to CIE in practice. Local level initiatives and collaboration efforts include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Transition Partnership Program (TPP)

The TPP is a joint project of the DOR and CDE. TPP builds partnerships between select LEAs and the local DOR district. The TPP provides vocational services that successfully transition students with disabilities to meaningful employment. These programs provide pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities in accordance with WIOA. From July 1, 2014 through May 31, 2015, there were 17,629 individuals in the TPP. Of those, 994 were individuals with ID/DD.

- College to Career Pilot (C2C)

The C2C pilot program is a partnership between the DOR and select community colleges to serve individuals with ID/DD. Intended as an alternative to traditional supported employment, C2C was designed to provide vocational services and supports for college level vocational training leading to CIE. The program provides vocational instruction, work experiences and internships, and job development and placement services that result in workforce preparation, and placement in CIE with natural supports. There are eight C2C pilot programs, three of which have just been recently approved and have not yet been implemented. Between the five existing pilot programs, 304 individuals with ID/DD were served.

- WorkAbility I  
WorkAbility I is a competitive grant administered by the CDE and implemented by LEAs that provides comprehensive pre-employment training, work experience placement and follow-up for high school students in special education who are making the transition from school to work, independent living, and postsecondary education or training. During 2014/2015 school year, there were 18,689 individuals with ID/DD participating in WorkAbility I, of those 6,100 were in paid work experience. In that year, CDE directed schools to not use WorkAbility I funds for supporting work in subminimum wage settings.

## **State Level**

State level initiatives and collaborations are foundational to the Blueprint in that they create and cultivate environments to support pathways to CIE. Statewide initiatives and collaboration efforts include, but are not limited to, the following:

- California Achieving a Better Life Experience (CalABLE)  
In 2015 Governor Brown signed the California ABLE Act into law. CalABLE allows qualified individuals with disabilities and their families to open tax-free savings accounts without the worry of losing vital government assistance. The law establishes a board that will administer the CalABLE savings program. Both the DOR and DDS Director's are members of the CalABLE Board.  
<http://treasurer.ca.gov/able/index.asp>
- California Community of Practice on Secondary Transition (CoP)  
The CDE, DOR, and DDS are members of the CoP. The CoP consists of students, parents, educators, and business, nonprofit and state agency representatives who meet monthly to coalesce around issues, bringing different perspectives, which affect secondary education transition for students with disabilities. It is the mission of the CoP to ensure seamless transition service delivery that will lead to positive post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. The CDE leads by convening the CoP and maintains the CoP listserv distributing information on the latest initiatives influencing secondary education transition. In 2015, the CoP, partnering with the California Transition Alliance, trained over 1,000 individuals in secondary education transition.

- California Employment Consortium for Youth and Young Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (2011-2016)

The CDE, DOR and DDS work as part of a statewide consortium known as the California Employment Consortium for Youth and Young Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to improve the transition process and outcomes from school to employment and/or post-secondary education for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The CDE, DOR and DDS collaborate with more than 45 representatives from 23 state agencies, regional centers, organizations, families, and self-advocates with responsibilities for the education, transition coordination, rehabilitation, employment, and support of youth with disabilities. This project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to effect policy change supporting CIE outcomes for transition age youth.

- California Employment First Policy

As part of a national systems change, California has taken formal policy actions to increase CIE outcomes for Californian's with significant disabilities. On October 9, 2013, Governor Brown signed Assembly Bill 1041, which established in statute an Employment First Policy (Welfare and Institutions Code, section 4869(a)(1)).

The statute provides 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 signing of the MOU in December 2014 to develop this Blueprint for reform is another step to identify strategies to increase CIE, pursuant to AB 1041 (Welfare and Institutions Code, sections 4868-4869).

- California Foundation for Independent Living Centers

The California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC) is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit Corporation. Its members are the Independent Living Centers of California. The Board of the Directors consists of the Executive Directors of each member ILC. The CFILC provides information, training, and peer support that enable individual centers to improve their effectiveness in creating positive change in their local communities. At the state and federal level, CFILC works to coordinate efforts for positive public policy changes that benefit people with disabilities.

- CaPROMISE (California Promoting the Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income) Grant (2013 – 2018)  
CaPROMISE is the largest of six grants awarded nationally by the U.S. Department of Education led by the DOR in partnership with Employment Development Department, CDE, DDS, Department of Social Services, Department of Health Care Services, and San Diego State University Interwork Institute. The purpose of CaPROMISE is to improve the provision and coordination of services and supports for child Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients and their families in order to achieve improved outcomes, such as completing postsecondary education and job training to obtain CIE that may result in long-term reductions in the child recipient's reliance on SSI. CaPROMISE is designed to increase economic self-sufficiency.  
<https://www.capromise.org/>
- California Transition Alliance  
The California Transition Alliance (CATA) is a nonprofit that convenes the CoP and supports professionals who assist youth and families as they transition from secondary education to adult life. The CDE, DOR, and DDS participate in CATA activities. In close collaboration with its members, the California Transition Alliance develops secondary education transition tools, trainings and resources.  
[www.catransitionalliance.org](http://www.catransitionalliance.org)
- California Workforce Development Board (CWDB)  
The CWDB is responsible for assisting the Governor in performing the duties and responsibilities required by the federal WIOA of 2014. The Board assists the Governor in setting and guiding policy in the area of workforce development. All members of the Board are appointed by the Governor and represent the many facets of workforce development - business, labor, public education, higher education, economic development, youth activities, employment and training, as well as the Legislature. Under the WIOA, the DOR works in close collaboration with its core partners, businesses, and other stakeholders to develop and implement a unified state plan that will identify key workforce regions across the state. These workforce development regions will be targeted by local workforce development areas and America's Job Center of California (AJCC), and will include CIE opportunities for individuals with ID/DD.

- Cooperative Program Action Committee (CPAC)

The DOR established CPAC as a means to provide information and solicit feedback on issues related to all cooperative programs statewide. The committee is comprised of representatives from all types of state and local cooperative partner agencies, including CDE, LEAs, mental health agencies, colleges, and non-profit Community Rehabilitation Programs. CPAC provides input to the DOR which may result in the development or modification of policies and procedures. CPAC promotes the effectiveness of cooperative agreements by improvement of communication and exchange of information. The overall goal of CPAC is to improve the provision of employment services leading to successful employment outcomes for DOR consumers served in cooperative programs.

- DOR/CDE Interagency Agreement

The purpose of the interagency agreement is to create a coordinated system of educational and VR services, which results in an effective and efficient transition from school to post secondary education and employment for eligible secondary school students with disabilities.

- DOR/DDS Interagency Meetings

The DOR and DDS meet regularly for the coordination of training and employment services to mutual regional center consumers. The scope of work for the DOR and DDS interagency meetings includes a roadmap of activities that are consistent with the long-standing collaboration between the departments and clarifies roles and responsibilities to support mutual consumers of DOR and DDS services. This forum allows the departments to provide technical assistance to the local DOR and regional center staffs as barriers and issues are identified.

- Employment Data Dashboard

A joint project of the SCDD, DDS and the California Employment Consortium for Youth and Young Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities has been to create an employment data dashboard hosted on the SCDD's website. This data dashboard uses currently available data to provide a picture of the statewide status of CIE outcomes for individuals with ID/DD. As better data sources become available, the dashboard will be updated and improved.

[http://www.scdd.ca.gov/employment\\_data\\_dashboard.htm](http://www.scdd.ca.gov/employment_data_dashboard.htm)

- State Council on Developmental Disabilities Employment First Committee  
 Representatives from the CDE, DOR, and DDS are members of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) Employment First Committee and participate in the committee's quarterly meetings. Under state statute, the Employment First Committee works to identify roles and responsibilities at the state and local level, and effective strategies. The committee also makes recommendations on data collection and increasing CIE as an outcome for working age individuals with ID\DD. It submits an annual report to the legislature regarding progress in the employment of people with developmental disabilities and recommendations for change.  
[http://www.scdd.ca.gov/Employment\\_First\\_Committee.htm](http://www.scdd.ca.gov/Employment_First_Committee.htm)
- State Independent Living Council  
 The State Independent Living Council (SILC) is a 18-member council, appointed by the Governor, which serves to maximize opportunities for people with disabilities who desire to live independently. The SILC membership represents a cross-section of the independent living movement in California and, by law, the majority of the volunteer council members are people with disabilities.
- Tailored Day Services  
 Tailored Day Services is a service recently developed by DDS and made available to all regional centers statewide that allow individuals with ID/DD to opt out of traditional day program services to receive individualized services to achieve the goal of CIE. The scope, type, and duration of services to be provided are determined through the person-centered planning process and specified in the IPP. Tailored Day Services are designed to encourage opportunities to further the development or maintenance of employment, volunteer activities, and/or pursuit of post-secondary education and to maximize the individual's ability to direct his or her own services. The expected outcome for these services is to increase the individual's ability to lead an integrated and inclusive life. For SFY 2013/2014, 3,299 individuals with ID/DD participated in Tailored Day Services.
- Work Experience Partnership  
 The DDS and the Sacramento City Unified School District Special Education Program (for 18 through 21 year old students) have collaborated to create a work experience program for students interested in possible employment in state government. Students participate in an internship, with support from teachers

and aides, to learn about the state work environment, have an opportunity to sample a variety of tasks typical of state clerical workers, develop soft skills, build their resumes, and are assisted with navigating the state hiring process if they chose to apply for a state job post high-school.

## **National Level**

The national level policy and each department's federal requirements are foundational to the Blueprint in that they establish the primary infrastructure used to develop the Blueprint.

The national policy and federal requirements are as follows:

- Employment First Policy.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in 2014.
- Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, published in 2014.
- Able Act.

### Employment First Policy

The U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities have made significant investments to assist states to create systems change that result in increased competitive integrated employment opportunities for individuals with significant disabilities. This priority reflects growing support for a national movement called Employment First, a framework for systems change that is centered on the premise that all citizens, including individuals with significant disabilities, are capable of full participation in integrated employment and community life.

Under this approach, publicly-financed systems are urged to align policies, service delivery practices, and reimbursement structures to commit to community integrated employment as the priority option with respect to the use of publicly-financed day and employment services for youth and adults with significant disabilities. ODEP has initiated the Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP), a cross-disability, cross-systems change initiative. EFSLMP is providing a platform for multi-disciplinary state teams to focus on implementing the Employment First approach with fidelity through the alignment of policies, coordination of resources, and update of service delivery models to facilitate increased integrated employment options for people with the most



significant disabilities. As of 2015, 46 states, including California, are engaged in Employment First activities, including 32 with formal policy actions.

#### Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

The U.S. Department of Education, under title 34 Code of Federal Regulations section 300.600, requires LEAs to develop and implement IEPs for students with disabilities. The IDEA of 1975 and amended in 2004 is a law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. The IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities. Infants and toddlers with disabilities (birth through age 2) and their families receive early intervention services under IDEA Part C. Children and youth (ages 3 through 21) receive special education and related services under IDEA Part B.

#### Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

On July 22, 2014, President Obama signed the WIOA, which repealed the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and amended the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This federal statute makes significant changes to vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs in California and across the United States.

New requirements under the WIOA that affect vocational rehabilitation services include but, are not limited to:

- Pre-Employment Transition Services - The DOR, in coordination with LEAs, is required to provide five types of pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities, ages 16 through 21, who are either eligible or potentially eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. Fifteen percent of the federal portion of the DOR's VR grant must now be used for pre-employment transition services. Pre-employment transition services also includes nine additional types of services, to the extent that reserved funding remains, and includes efforts coordinating transition by working with other entities.
  - The five required pre-employment transition services activities are:
    1. Job exploration counseling.
    2. Work-based learning experiences.
    3. Counseling related to post-secondary opportunities.
    4. Workplace readiness training.
    5. Self-advocacy training.

- Subminimum Wage – The WIOA prohibits employers from compensating any individual with a disability who is age 24 or younger at subminimum wage unless completion of specific activities is documented. The WIOA specifies subminimum wage as less than federal minimum wage and identifies the specific activities to be documented, which include pre-employment transition services, career counseling, and information and referrals designed to enable the individual to obtain CIE.
- Supported Employment (SE) - For an individual with a most significant disability the WIOA defines SE as CIE, including customized employment, or employment in an integrated work setting in which individuals are working on a short-term (6 to 12 months) basis toward CIE, that is individualized and customized consistent with the strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual. The definition of SE services now includes two new terms: customized employment and competitive integrated employment.
- Supported Employment Services – The DOR may provide ongoing support services, including customized employment, needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in SE for up to 24 months, instead of 18 months, and that period may be extended if necessary to achieve the consumer’s employment outcome.
- Competitive Integrated Employment – The WIOA places significant emphasis on obtaining CIE; therefore, VR services must be designed to maximize the ability of individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities, to achieve CIE through customized employment, supported employment, and other individualized services.

### Home and Community-Based Services Waivers

In January 2014, the federal CMS published final regulations defining what constitutes a home and community-based setting for Medicaid reimbursement purposes. These rules affect 1915(c) waiver programs, 1915(i) State Plan programs, and 1915(k) Community First Choice State Plans for HCBS, provided through Medicaid. The purpose of the regulations is to ensure that individuals receive HCBS in settings that are integrated in and support full access to the greater community.

HCBS settings are no longer defined based on specific locations, geography, or physical characteristics, but rather the nature and quality of the individual's experiences. Specific to the development of the blueprint, the CMS guidance states that “The setting is integrated in and supports full access of individuals receiving Medicaid HCBS to the greater community, including opportunities to seek employment and work in competitive, integrated settings, engage in community life, control personal resources, and receive services in the community, to the

same degree of access as individuals not receiving Medicaid HCBS.” States are allowed up to five years to implement the changes to the home and community-based setting’s requirements for approved waivers. All new waivers have to comply prior to approval and implementation.

The effective date of the regulations was March 17, 2014, with full compliance required by March 2019. As an administrator of the HCBS waiver services, the DDS is working to bring its services into compliance with the new rules, specifically the new requirement concerning the setting (or location) of services. The setting is required to be integrated in and support full access of individuals receiving Medicaid HCBS to the greater community, including opportunities to seek employment and work in competitive, integrated settings, engage in community life, control personal resources, and receive services in the community, to the same degree of access as individuals not receiving Medicaid HCBS.

For additional information about the HCBS waiver rules see this website: <http://www.dds.ca.gov/HCBS/index.cfm>.

#### ABLE Act

The Stephen Beck, Jr., Achieving a Better Life Experience Act<sup>1</sup> (ABLE) Act was signed into law on December 19, 2014. The law allows eligible individuals with disabilities the ability to establish “ABLE accounts” for qualified beneficiaries that resemble the qualified tuition programs, often called “529 accounts”, that have been established under that section of the tax code since 1996. The new ABLE accounts will allow more individual choice and control over spending on qualified disability expenses and limited investment decisions, while protecting eligibility for Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, and other important federal benefits for people with disabilities.

## **4. FOCUS FOR CHANGE**

The focus on CIE services and increasing CIE outcomes for individuals with ID/DD identified in this section is separated out by each Blueprint goal and is divided into the following two phases, as appropriate:

- Phase I – Phase I represents initial actions that can be implemented within existing statutes and regulations, and using current resources. These actions are expected to begin within the first 12 months of the implementation of the Blueprint and continue over the next five years.

- Phase II – Phase II represents a variety of ongoing state administrative processes and strategies used to manage programs long term, beyond the initial implementation of Phase I of the Blueprint.

“...take time to listen to me... I know what I want and need...”  
*Member – ARCA Consumer Advisory Council Meeting, April  
10, 2015*

The objectives, strategies, and actions in this section focus on the following five fundamental career development pathways to CIE:

### 1. Transition Services

Under the IDEA, “children” with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living. For the purposes of the Blueprint, these education services support a pathway to employment based on each youth or student’s individual needs, interests and abilities. The presumption is that all students with disabilities through the departments’ person centered planning processes will have the opportunity to identify their employment goals and, as appropriate, develop their individual career pathway.

New federal requirements under WIOA require DOR staff to participate in IEP meetings to collaborate on the transition process, when invited by the student, parent(s), or IEP team. In addition, WIOA requires development of an MOU between VR and the agency responsible for providing services to individuals with ID/DD (DOR and DDS, respectively, in California). The intent of these changes is to improve collaboration at the local level for youth / students with disabilities in the process of transitioning from school to adult life. For students in California, this would be best supported by coordination of the goals and services outlined in each student’s IEP, IPE and IPP, as appropriate. Each agency, the local school staff, the local DOR staff, and the local regional center staff, have a role to play in the coordination of the student’s transition to adult life. Refer to the joint guidance from the United States Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation (OSERS), A Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students with Disabilities.

WorkAbility I and TPP have been developed in some school districts to improve work experience and other employment preparation opportunities for students with disabilities. Some schools do not have these resources available. The Blueprint will encourage the development of statewide and LEA options to increase opportunities for paid and unpaid work experience while in secondary education. The options may include partnerships with local volunteer organizations, internship opportunities, partnerships between LEAs and adult work service providers to increase opportunities for work trials and assessments, and partnering with the DOR to provide work experience as part of WIOA mandated pre-employment transition services for high school students with disabilities, who are ages 16 through 21.

## 2. Adult Pathways to Employment

Regional centers offer a range of services to consumers to “enable persons with developmental disabilities to approximate the pattern of everyday living available to people of the same age without disabilities” (Welfare and Institutions Code, section 4691(a)). Subsequent to the enactment of the Employment First Policy and the CMS Guidance, more individualized and integrated day services that include employment preparatory activities will be one method to assist individuals, who choose to prepare for and transition into CIE.

Services and supports that enable individuals to plan and make informed choices about the kind of career fields in which they want to pursue CIE are typically provided prior to job placement and on the job support. Services can be provided while in school, post-secondary education, vocational training, and day services. Efforts to effectively sequence the funding of services, career development planning and other prevocational services are designed to prepare individuals for CIE.

Adult pathways to employment include opportunities to learn about an individual’s interests and skills; to job shadow or participate in work trials and internships; and access to information about job services and supports. For individuals who utilize public benefits, benefits’ planning is often necessary to understand how paid work impacts one’s benefits. Adult pathways to employment can be made available in a variety of service systems including education, adult education, America’s Job Center of California (one-stop), and day program settings.

In the spirit of collaboration, regional centers that have adopted an Employment First policy will be encouraged to share their policy with regional centers that have not adopted an Employment First policy. As needed, technical assistance will be provided to regional centers and their boards to complete this work. In addition, regional centers and their boards can provide input to the CIE workgroup regarding changes that would assist them to support individuals to achieve CIE.

### 3. Post-Secondary Education Activities

As a pathway to employment, PSE activities, such as vocational training programs, college programs, internships and adult education programs, assist individuals to prepare for the career of their choice.

The PSE activities can include a wide range of adult education and/or vocational training programs. The path an individual chooses should be tied to the career planning process and support needed to achieve the individual's identified vocational goal. To leverage existing resources local area collaborative groups may consider inviting entities who provide these PSE and training activities to be part of the collaborative groups' planning efforts. The purpose of inviting PSE providers to participate in the local collaborative group would be to identify resources to support individuals with ID/DD to participate in PSE programs leading to CIE outcomes. An example of this type of partnership would be the use of Tailored Day Services to provide supports to an individual enrolled in a community college program.

### 4. Supported Employment Services, Customized Employment, and Other Employment Support Options

Activities to assist consumers to achieve CIE can include the provision of job placement services. This includes negotiation with employers, short-term or on-going job coaching, and development of and transition to natural supports.

There are multiple pathways an individual can take to achieve CIE. Among these are supported employment and customized employment.

- Supported employment is designed for individuals with most significant disabilities for whom CIE has not historically occurred; or for whom CIE has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability. It is intended for individuals who, because of the nature and severity of their disability, need intensive supported employment services and extended services after the transition from DOR to regional center funding in order to perform the work involved. It includes a specific array of services typically funded by the DOR SE program for up to 24 months, and subsequently funded

as extended services by the regional centers' habilitation services program. Services include job placement supports and hourly job coaching. These well-sequenced DOR and regional center services can support a consumer on the job for as long as those services are needed and may also be funded by the regional center if the DOR, as a result of an Order of Selection, is unable to provide these services.

- Customized employment is a relatively recent concept and is defined by the WIOA and the U.S Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment policy as “a flexible process designed to personalize the employment relationship between a job candidate and an employer in a way that meets the needs of both. It is based on an individualized match between the strengths, conditions, and interests of a job candidate and the identified business needs of an employer. Customized Employment utilizes an individualized approach to employment planning and job development — one person at a time . . . one employer at a time.”

Some individuals may achieve and be supported in CIE through other mechanisms as well, including self-employment, internship programs, vocational training programs, and natural supports. Regardless of the path to CIE, coordination, collaboration, and cooperation in local areas will enable multiple entities to work together on behalf of individual job seekers. This will reduce duplication of efforts and maximize existing funding.

##### 5. Business Partner Engagement

Business partner engagement is the development and coordination of linkages and “job-driven” training with the regional and sector jobs in the business community in order to increase meaningful employment opportunities for individuals with ID/DD. Linkages with business partners increase service provider and consumer awareness of the opportunities available and the staffing needs of the businesses. It also increases the awareness of the business community of the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities. Through these linkages, expanded outreach and engagement with business partners is achieved, and training to and by business partners is provided.

## **Goals, Objectives, Targeted Outcomes, and Strategies**

The primary outcome of the Blueprint is to increase the number of individuals who have ID/DD (at least 75% of which are eligible for regional center services) in CIE. Currently, an estimated average 780 individuals with ID/DD participate in CIE per year. Beginning SFY 2017/2018, the collective departments will have a targeted outcome to increase the number of individuals who have ID/DD in CIE by at least 300 and in SFY 2018/2019 by 500.<sup>11</sup> The departments will set progressive targeted outcomes for SFY 2019/2020, SFY 2020/2021, and SFY 2021/2022 as part of the annual report process, which will include stakeholder input. If a targeted outcome is not reached for any given year, the departments will identify barriers and issues to assess how best to move forward to increase CIE outcomes. It is the intent of the departments that an individual's primary source of income is CIE. The primary Blueprint outcome would not include placements of individuals working in CIE augmented by subminimum wage employment.

The objectives, targeted outcomes, and strategies for each goal are identified in the following sections. Included for each strategy, are the corresponding representative actions grouped by Phase I or II. Targeted outcome measures will be jointly published annually on the CIE webpage, which will be accessible to the Legislature, the SCDD, and any other interested stakeholders. This annual report, based on SFY data, will be published by December 31 of each year beginning SFY 2017/2018, the first full implementation year. The annual report will include the targeted outcome measures and progress towards completing the actions identified in the Blueprint. All targeted outcomes will be reevaluated at the end of the first year of full data collection and new targeted outcomes will be included in the annual report, as appropriate. Barriers to achieving the targeted outcomes will be addressed during implementation and in the annual report.

Apart from the implementation of the Blueprint, the departments will continue to participate in the SCDD's committee as mandated in the Lanterman Act. (Welfare and Institutions Code, section 4520 et. seq.)

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<sup>11</sup>The DOR places an average of 780 individuals in CIE per year. The targeted increases will be a combined effort of the three departments.



## **Goal 1 – Improve collaboration and coordination between the three departments to prepare and support all individuals with ID/DD who choose CIE.**

### **1.1 Objectives**

The objectives of Goal 1 are to:

- Expand joint information sharing as permitted by law.
- Coordinate efforts to utilize existing resources effectively.
- Increase collaboration on planning, implementation, and evaluation of CIE.

### **1.2 Targeted Outcomes**

- By the end of the calendar year 2017, the departments will develop and distribute joint written guidance outlining coordination and collaboration at the state and local level.
- By the end of the first quarter of SFY 2017/2018 and each following year of implementation, the departments will post the LPAs, and identify and post “Triple E” practices that were implemented in the prior year on a California CIE webpage.
- By December 31, 2018, and each following year of implementation, the departments will publish a CIE Annual Report.
- By the end of SFY 2017/2018, the departments will jointly enable and encourage the establishment of at least 13 new Local Partnership Agreements (LPAs) between LEAs, DOR districts, and regional centers including linkages to the workforce development system, and other key partners and stakeholders. Currently there are no LPAs between LEAs, DOR districts, and regional centers related to CIE. Over the next five years the goal will be to have LPAs developed between the DOR, regional centers, and 270 LEAs. The 13 LPAs developed in year one will be used as models for the state for subsequent year LPAs. An actual target for each subsequent year will be established at the end of year one.

### **1.3 Strategies**

Strategies for Goal 1 include:

1. Jointly develop and communicate written guidance.
2. Promote local level collaboration and development of LPAs that address CIE.

### 3. Jointly improve data collection and sharing.

#### **Goal 1, Strategy 1:** Jointly develop and communicate written guidance.

Actions to achieve this strategy include:

##### Phase I Actions

- California CIE Website: The departments developed a California CIE website hosted by CHHSA. Each department will link to the website so that local agencies can track the implementation of the Blueprint.
- Employment Data Dashboard: The Employment Data Dashboard, administered by SCDD, will be linked to each of the three department's individual websites.
- Implementation Plan for Written Guidance: The three departments will jointly develop an outline and timeline for an implementation plan. Each department will contribute to the written guidance content as applicable to their respective department. The guidance will include the roles and responsibilities of the LEA staff, DOR VRSD teams, and the regional center staff in an individual's transition process. The guidance documents will be consistent among the departments and will include:
  - Existing regulatory requirements including the roles and responsibilities for the three departments, e.g., HCBS person-centered planning requirements.
  - Recommendations for coordination with local America's Job Center of California (one-stop), consistent with their responsibilities under WIOA.
  - Recommended coordination of mandatory services and documentation for youth and adults related to limitations on subminimum wage employment.
  - Recommended "Triple E" practices to implement regulatory requirements for transition planning and coordination at the local level between the local LEAs and IEP teams; DOR districts and local VRSD teams; and, Regional Center Service Coordinators and IPP teams.
  - Technical assistance resources on transition planning, which may include employment services and options for PSE.
  - Focus areas for Local Partnership Agreements (LPAs) (See Goal 1, Strategy 2).
- Initial Statewide Written Guidance: Each of the three departments will distribute their respective guidance per the Blueprint written guidance implementation plan, including a description of recommended effective strategies.

- State Department / Partner Written Guidance: As a follow-up to the written guidance, the DOR will distribute written WIOA operational implementation requirements to district staff; CDE will revise the WorkAbility I statement of assurances to include direction to enter into LPAs; and, DDS will pursue adding CIE related outcomes, such as establishing LPAs, to regional center performance contracts in partnership with regional centers.
- Stakeholder Meetings and Forums: The departments will convene state meetings and forums to engage key stakeholders and obtain input on the implementation of the Blueprint.
- Information Sharing: The departments will gather, coordinate, and provide consistent information to state agencies. The information gathered will be made available on the CIE website for utilization by other stakeholders through mechanisms such as advisory committee meetings and Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA) Director meetings.
- Local Commitments: The departments will encourage local commitments to support CIE from:
  - State educational entities and LEAs that could implement changes to promote transition from school to CIE.
  - Regional Center Boards and service providers that support Blueprint recommended effective strategies for the 21 regional centers, including but not limited to interagency linkages, and coordination among child, transition, and adult services.
  - DOR districts, service providers, and partners that support Blueprint recommended effective strategies for well-sequenced funding and service provision.

**Goal 1, Strategy 2:** Promote local level collaboration and the development of LPAs that address CIE  
 Actions to achieve this strategy include:

Phase I Actions

- State Level Interagency Agreements Timeline: The departments will develop a timeline to amend current interagency agreements between CDE, DOR and DDS to include an emphasis on CIE, local linkages, and a reference to the California CIE Blueprint for Change.
- Local LPA Template and LPA Focus Areas: The departments will develop an LPA template outline for LEAs, DOR districts and regional centers, in compliance with IDEA, WIOA and CMS guidance, to improve local level collaboration and linkages.

- The local level LPA template will include the following focus areas:
  - Information to guide and structure the development of a plan to expand the capacity of adult pathways to employment to support individuals to achieve CIE including underserved regions and populations.
  - Linkages to statewide resources such as Local Workforce Development Boards, the 14 California WIOA Regional Planning Units, America's Job Center of California<sup>SM</sup> (one-stop), Adult Education Programs, Community Colleges Disability Support Programs & Services (DSPS), Independent Living Centers (ILCs) and community college and adult education consortia (AB 86) to improve pathways to CIE.
  - Linkages to unique regional resources such as College to Career, Project Search, Tailored Day Services, and the future community-based vocational development services (SB 577) services to include conversations around transition, service delivery, and accommodations and supports (including assistive technology as appropriate).
  - Coordination of mandatory services and documentation for youth and adults related to limitations on subminimum wage employment.
- Existing or new leadership teams will participate in ongoing collaboration and monitoring of LPAs. This may include but is not limited to the review of progress on implementation of the LPA and monitoring of outcome measures.
- Local Collaboration: For the purpose of supporting local collaboration, the departments will train select LEA, DOR district, and regional center staff to provide training and tools at the local level. These trainings and tools will assist in the development of local collaborative groups to discuss the written guidance, development of LPAs, and "Triple E" practices.
- Local Area LPAs: The DOR will direct local offices to initiate processes for LPAs with the LEAs and regional centers. The DDS will include information regarding LPA development to regional centers to be included in performance contract goals. The CDE will provide guidance and encouragement to LEAs on working with regional centers and DOR districts to develop and implement LPAs.
- State Level Interagency Agreements: The departments will develop or revise IAs and MOUs according to the Blueprint timeline as well as required state and federal statute and regulations.

- Local Partnership Agreement Tracking: To support the development of additional LPAs, the departments will gather information on the occurrence of LEA, DOR district, and regional center staff local collaboration meetings.
  - Local collaboration meetings will be reported in the CIE Annual Report.
- Jointly Sponsored Training and Technical Assistance: The departments will provide training and technical assistance for the development of LPAs between LEAs, DOR districts, and regional centers.

**Goal 1, Strategy 3:** Jointly improve data collection and sharing.

Actions to achieve this strategy include:

#### Phase I Actions

- Interagency Data Sharing Agreement: The departments will develop and implement an interagency data sharing agreement, including protocols for matching data from the CDE, DOR, DDS, or other sources, as necessary, and aggregating and reporting data.
  - Methodologies and protocols for tracking data such as:
    - Post-school and CIE outcomes for individuals with ID/DD.
    - Unpaid community-based vocational education.
    - Subminimum wage certificates.
  - Guidelines for how the data will be shared and the data sharing frequency.
  - Information Security assurances.
- Research Funding Alternatives: The departments will research funding alternatives to enhance interagency data collection systems and practices for educational services, workforce services, and training programs.

#### Phase II Actions

- Interagency Data Sharing Capacity: The departments will identify barriers that may be addressed through legislative and regulatory authority or policy processes to allow for Employment Development Department (EDD) and Franchise Tax Board (FTB) data sharing of wages and earnings data in support of CIE.

## **Goal 2 – Increase opportunities for individuals with ID/DD who choose CIE to prepare for and participate in the California workforce development system and achieve CIE within existing resources.**

### **2.1 Objectives**

The objectives of Goal 2 are to:

- Increase CIE through participation in work experience, employment preparation services, soft skills training, PSE and training, customized employment, and supported employment individual placements.
- Increase participation of individuals with ID/DD in the California workforce development system, including America’s Job Center of California (one-stop).
- Improve business partner engagement and “job-driven” training with regard to hiring individuals with ID/DD in both the public and private sectors.

### **2.2 Targeted Outcomes**

- By the end of SFY 2017/2018, and as a result of the efforts of the three departments, increase the number of students with ID/DD who participate in paid work experience and/or unpaid community-based vocational education, with supports as needed, by 10% over current WorkAbility I data contingent upon the allocation of additional or redirected funding.<sup>12</sup>
- By the end of SFY 2017/2018, provide information and technical assistance for CIE placements to 100% of SE group providers to help increase individual placements.<sup>13</sup>
- By the end of SFY 2017/2018, increase the number of individuals statewide participating in “Earn and Learn” or On-the-Job Training (OJT) with business partners by at least 25 annually.<sup>14</sup>
- By the end of SFY 2019/2020, 50% of the DOR students with disabilities, ages 16 through 21, who have exited secondary education by the prior year will have either entered CIE or post-secondary training or education, or received vocational rehabilitation services in preparation for CIE.

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<sup>12</sup> This equates to a net increase of 610 students based on the SFY 2014/2015 WorkAbility I data of 6,100 students with ID/DD.

<sup>13</sup> Based on current DDS data, there are 188 SE providers providing individual placements, of which 167 are providing group placements.

<sup>14</sup> Currently there are no known participants with ID/DD in “Earn and Learn” or “On-the-Job Training” as SE has been the primary route to employment.

## 2.3 Strategies

Strategies for Goal 2 include:

1. Jointly identify and improve “Triple E” practices.
2. Determine and encourage statewide SE provider capacity to support CIE.
3. Support transition from school to employment preparation services and CIE.<sup>15</sup>
4. Develop business partner initiatives.
5. Develop tools and resources.

**Goal 2, Strategy 1:** Jointly identify and improve “Triple E” practices.

Actions to achieve this strategy include:

### Phase I Actions

- Strategies on Providing CIE Services: The departments will gather readily available information on “Triple E” practices from programs that have proven successful in achieving CIE outcomes, develop information to be communicated in each agency’s written guidance (See Goal 1, Strategy 1), and identify the steps to replicate the effective strategies and explore methodologies to implement the effective strategies statewide. The departments will utilize national and state technical assistance resources on Employment First. For example, the Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy, the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT), and the State Employment Leadership Network.
- CIE Provider Webinar: The departments will develop and host a webinar on CIE for SE providers on “Triple E” practices that improve CIE outcomes.
- Training Development: The departments will develop training curriculum and informational materials about “Triple E” service models and other options for linkages.

### Phase II Actions

- Alternative Service Models: The departments, as part of the implementation activities of the Implementation Workgroup, will explore and compile models of services that are alternatives to non-integrated employment

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<sup>15</sup> Based on SFY 2013/2014 CDE data, there were 4,468 students exiting high school. DDS data reflects that on June 30, 2014 1,680 twenty-two year olds exiting high school transitioned to Day Programs.

settings, such as work activity programs, in order to increase opportunities for existing providers to support CIE.

**Goal 2, Strategy 2:** Determine and encourage statewide SE provider capacity to support CIE

Actions to achieve this strategy include:

Phase I Actions

- Community Resource Mapping: The departments will, as part of the initial needs assessment, identify the number and location of existing programs such as CRP SE service providers, regional center day programs that provide Tailored Day Services, WorkAbility I, College to Career pilots, Transition Partnership Programs, and the We Can Work pilots in order to inventory current capacity. Information collected will be published to the CIE website by June 30, 2017.
- Adult Work Experience: The departments will build upon well-sequenced services by:
  - Assisting SE group service providers to identify and prepare individuals for transition to CIE by providing adult work experience/employment preparation foundational services.
  - Assisting individuals in non-integrated settings, such as work activity programs, to transition to integrated employment, including adult work experience/employment preparation foundational services.
- Partnership Opportunities for Sequenced Funding: The departments will identify local partnerships between LEAs, DOR, and regional centers and assist them to sequence funding for specific services and supports that lead to CIE. This will also include providers of those additional supports to individuals with ID/DD that are students of the PSE system.
  - For example, the well-sequenced funding mechanisms, such as regional center Tailored Day Services or SB 577 (Pavley) demonstration programs, community college disabled student services and DOR services, to support PSE training leading to CIE will be explored.
- SE and Customized Employment Funding: The departments will explore SE and customized employment funding structures including the following:
  - Current rate structure.
  - Funding models, e.g., outcome-based funding, incentives for CIE, well-sequenced funding, hybrid funding, regional employment networks, etc.



- Well-sequenced services.
- Alternative resources for new or expanded program development, such as public/private partnerships or grants.
- Statewide Needs Assessment: The departments will build upon the Community Resource Mapping, identified in Phase I, to develop a statewide needs assessment of demand for pre-employment and employment services.

## Phase II Actions

- Provider Resources: The departments will identify resources to assist service providers as they transition to support more individuals who choose to move from segregated and/or subminimum wage to CIE. The departments will provide specific information on options to increase support for existing and new programs, such as SE group, Work Activity Programs, and day programs, in relation to integrated and individualized employment models that support consumers to reach CIE.
- Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver: The joint guidance will emphasize the use of the HCBS waiver requirements to promote CIE options through person-centered service delivery.
- Addressing Barriers to CIE: The departments will identify barriers that may need to be addressed through legislative and regulatory authority or policy processes. Potential barriers may include current vendorization requirements and funding structures. Other system barriers such as data sharing agreements will be identified and addressed as part of implementation.
- Effectiveness Testing: The DDS will implement, pending federal approval of the HCBS waiver renewal, required 'effectiveness testing' of community-based vocational development (CBVD) services (Pavley SB 577) within five regional centers, with the goal of ultimately expanding and braiding the CBVD service model statewide with other well-sequenced services.
- Work Activity Program: The DDS will address wages and integration rates in work activity programs per the CMS settings rule requirements.

- Waiver Amendment: The DDS will develop a waiver amendment for the CBVD services (Pavley SB 577) per the CMS timelines.

**Goal 2, Strategy 3:** Support transition from school to employment preparation services and CIE

Actions to achieve this strategy include:

Phase I Actions

- Communication to Facilitate Increases in System Capacity for CIE:
  - Offer information and resources to LEAs for students and parents on transition from school to employment preparation and CIE.
  - Provide information to regional centers and adult Day Program service providers regarding Tailored Day services and other pre-employment preparation services.
  - Provide information to LEAs, students and parents, and regional centers regarding the use of existing resources to assist with understanding the impact of earnings on public benefits and work incentives.
  - Each department will provide ongoing technical assistance to their staff and partner agencies to support CIE.
- Oversight Responsibility: The CDE will continue to exercise its responsibilities for general supervision including monitoring practices related to transition requirements. This includes the requirement that, if a participating agency other than the LEA fails to provide transition services it agreed to provide in the IEP, the LEA shall reconvene the IEP team to identify alternative strategies to meet the student's transition service needs.

**Goal 2, Strategy 4:** Develop business partner initiatives.

Actions to achieve this strategy include:

Phase II Actions

- Business Partner Initiative Workgroup: The departments will develop a Business Partner Initiative Workgroup to develop strategies for outreach and to engage local business partners and meet their workforce development needs with individuals with ID/DD. The workgroup would work to improve collaboration and strengthen career pathways using the Earn and Learn and OJT models. (The Annual CIE Report will provide progress to date and next steps.)

- Capacity Building: The departments will explore ways to support systems including:
  - Strengthening partnerships with the California workforce development system and statewide business communities such as the California Chamber of Commerce to expand the availability of community-based jobs for individuals with ID/DD.
  - Expanding employer collaboration to better coordinate the identification of regional employer needs as well as regional job opportunities in the business community.
  - Provide employers with information about meeting business needs with qualified employees using the tools and resources available in SE and customized employment processes.
  - Expanding the awareness and utilization of state and national level business partnerships to facilitate the placement of individuals in CIE.
- Other Support Options: The departments will explore other support options for CIE such as natural supports in the workplace or employer supported work models.
- Provider Capacity: The departments will identify categories of existing local workforce development resources, such as AJCCs, adult education, and community colleges that have not been traditional sources of services with the goal of increasing provider capacity and expanding capacity in underserved regions and populations.

**Goal 2, Strategy 5:** Develop tools and resources.

Actions to achieve this strategy include:

Phase I Actions

- CIE Resource Virtual Toolbox: The departments will identify existing resources to develop and publish the CIE Resource Toolbox on the CIE website and continue to provide and update as appropriate resources highlighting current adult education, career technical education or community college programs. The toolbox will provide links to national programs such as the Technical Assistance Centers, Project Search, Partnerships in Employment (PIE), the Leadership for the Employment and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities (LEAD) Center, Communities of Practice (CoP), National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS), Self-Employment Resource Network (SERN), and the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD).

## **Goal 3 - Support the ability of individuals with ID/DD to make informed choices, adequately prepare for, transition to, and engage in CIE.**

### **3.1 Objectives**

The objective of Goal 3 is to:

- Offer individuals, their support network, and business partners, information and technical assistance related to CIE.

### **3.2 Targeted Outcomes**

- By July 22, 2016, the DOR and DDS will not place any individual age 24 or younger in a job earning subminimum wage or lower, unless: 1) the individual is, as of July 22, 2016, already employed at subminimum wage by a certified employer; or 2) the individual has received pre-employment transition services, career counseling, and information and referrals designed to enable the individual to obtain CIE and the individual either I) applied for VR services and was found ineligible or II) the individual was determined eligible, has an individualized plan for employment, is working toward an employment outcome, received appropriate supports and services including SE services for a reasonable period of time, without success, resulting in case closure, the individual has been provided career counseling and information and referrals to federal and state programs to help the individual discover, experience, and attain CIE, and the counseling and information was not for employment at subminimum wage. CDE will continue to direct LEAs not to use WorkAbility I funds for supporting work in subminimum wage settings.
- By March 17, 2019, the DOR and DDS will not place any individual in an employment setting that does not meet the Medicaid HCBS regulations found at 42 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 430 et seq.
- By March 17, 2019, the DDS will transition individuals out of settings that do not meet the Medicaid HCBS regulations found at 42 CFR 430 et seq. For individuals transferring out of Work Activity Programs or other day programs that do not meet the HCBS regulations, the DDS, using person-centered planning, will work to transition individuals into CIE, or fundamental career development pathways to CIE, as identified in this Blueprint and consistent with the individual's goals expressed during person-centered planning.

- Of the individuals with ID/DD who say they want a job, work to increase the numbers who have a goal of CIE in their IPP by 10% annually beginning SFY 2017/2018.<sup>16</sup>
- Increase consumer awareness, through the IPP process, of employment preparation services available to support CIE by 10% annually beginning SFY 2017/2018.<sup>17</sup>
- By the end of SFY 2017/2018, the DOR and DDS will provide counseling, information, and referral services regarding CIE opportunities to 400 employed individuals currently working at subminimum wage.<sup>18</sup>

### 3.3 Strategies

Strategies for Goal 3 include:

1. Increase individual awareness of tools and resources available to support the achievement of their career goals toward CIE.
2. Support the development of system knowledge, skill, and ability to deliver CIE.
3. Increase participation in activities that support informed choice leading to CIE.

**Goal 3, Strategy 1:** Increase individual awareness of tools and resources available to support the achievement of their career goals toward CIE.

Actions to achieve this strategy include:

#### Phase I Actions

- Communication Plan: The departments will develop a plan to communicate the availability of tools and resources to individuals.
  - Develop talking points for appropriate LEA, DOR district, and regional center staff.
- CIE Webinar: Develop and host a webinar on CIE for individuals and their families.

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<sup>16</sup> Based on the 2011/2013 National Core Indicators (NCI) survey data, 39% of individuals state they are unemployed and want a job. Of that 39%, 27% have employment as a goal in their IPP.

<sup>17</sup> Based on current DDS data, there are 70,000 working age adults (ages 18 and above) in Work Activity Programs and Day Program services.

<sup>18</sup> Prior to the WIOA requirements regarding subminimum wage, and based on DOR SFY 2013/2014 data, the DOR annually closed the record of services for an average of 700 individuals at subminimum wage.

- Pre-Employment Transition Services: Per the WIOA requirement to provide pre-employment transition services to students with ID/DD ages 16 through 21, the DOR will conduct outreach in partnership with the LEAs to provide students information on CIE or PSE and information about VR services including pre-employment transition services.
- CIE Information: The departments will offer the following:
  - For individuals working for subminimum wage, the DOR will provide individuals with information about Employment First and opportunities to achieve CIE.
  - The CDE will offer technical assistance to LEAs to focus on Employment First and supports to achieve CIE in the IEP process for all students with ID/DD ages 16 and above.
  - The DDS will offer technical assistance to regional centers to focus on Employment First and supports to achieve CIE in the IPP process.
- Transition Services: The CDE will monitor LEA compliance with transition requirements, including that beginning at age 16 the IEP shall include appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments, as well as the transition services necessary to assist the pupil in reaching those goals. Transition services may include, if appropriate, a functional vocational evaluation. For all eligible students who choose to have an IPE, the DOR will provide a vocational assessment as needed as part of the VR process. The IPE is to be completed prior to the exit of high school.
- Accommodations and Supports: Consumers and families will have access to information regarding accommodations and supports including assistive technology, as appropriate.
- Grant and Contract Requirements: The departments will apply the following:
  - The CDE will require, as a condition of the WorkAbility I grant, that grantees provide information to WorkAbility I students with ID/DD ages 16 and above regarding Employment First, opportunities for employment, and supports to achieve CIE.
  - The DOR will require, as a condition of the TPP contracts, that the contractors provide information to TPP students with ID/DD ages 16 and above regarding Employment First, opportunities for employment, and supports to achieve CIE.
  - The DDS will work with regional centers on the inclusion of language in the contract between DDS and regional centers to address the provision of information to consumers regarding Employment First, opportunities for employment, and available supports to achieve CIE. Annually, the DDS will

report the number of regional centers that include employment as an outcome measure in their performance contract.

- Systems Change Funding: Pursuant to the 2016/2017 budget and ABx2- 1, the DDS will offer funding to provider agencies to increase their capacity to support community based integrated services.
- CIE Incentive Funding: The DDS will offer incentive funding to provider agencies for CIE placements. The DDS will also, with input from stakeholders, develop and implement a paid internship program as another pathway to CIE.
- Transition Virtual Tools and Resources: The departments will provide the following tools and resources to help educate individuals and their families or representatives on the transition process and address changes to employment services available to them:
  - A fact sheet and checklist for LEAs and students and their families on CIE and the transition process from school to work.
  - Continue to provide information for the Employment First website hosted by the SCDD.
  - Coordinate with the California Community of Practice on Secondary Transition.
- Career Development Tools and Resources: The departments will develop people first tools and resources in collaboration with the DDS Consumer Advisory Council to provide an overview of existing services for consumers and families.
  - A fact sheet that describes how to access services from each department.
  - A joint roadmap for consumers and families on career development pathways.
- Strategies to Limit Use of Subminimum Wage: The departments will identify strategies to assist individuals who participate in subminimum wage on a long term basis to consider and work towards CIE. These strategies regarding the transition from subminimum wage employment will be person-centered and based on individual strengths and interests.

**Goal 3, Strategy 2:** Support the development of system knowledge, skill, and ability to deliver CIE.  
Actions to achieve this strategy include:

## Phase I Actions

- Staff Development and Training Plan Outline: The departments will develop a training plan outline. The outline will help build knowledge and skills regarding delivering services that lead to CIE, understanding the transition process, benefits advisement, and engaging employers to the following groups:
  - Individuals with ID/DD and their families or representatives as appropriate.
  - LEAs.
  - Community Based Organizations.
  - Employers.
  - Department staff (DOR, CDE, and DDS).
  - Regional center staff.
  - PSE staff.

The training plan outline may include but not be limited to topics such as:

- Person-centered career planning and exploration, including post-secondary opportunities.
- Independent living skills necessary to support CIE.
- Coordination of services across multiple systems.
- Federal and state requirements.
- Subminimum Wage: The departments will work to provide guidance to employers and individuals about both the legal requirements related to the use of subminimum wage and ways to maximize opportunities for CIE, including the documentation and service requirements for youth and students with disabilities.
- Training Plan: The departments will identify learning content, develop curriculum, identify training resources, and offer training per the Blueprint training plan outline.

## Phase II Actions

- Service Provider Training: The DOR and DDS will explore mandatory training for service provider staff regarding services that lead to CIE.

**Goal 3, Strategy 3:** Increase opportunities for individual participation in activities that support informed choices leading to CIE.

Actions to achieve this strategy include:



## Phase I Actions

- Supported Employment Information: The departments will develop and disseminate information to LEAs, DOR district staff, and regional centers to encourage the consideration of CIE, including SE Individual Placement as a first choice. In addition, information will be disseminated regarding the utilization of SE group services as a time-limited bridge to CIE, as opposed to a permanent placement option.
- Time-Limited Service: Consistent with WIOA; the DOR will utilize temporary, short-term integrated SE group placements as part of an individual's career pathway toward CIE. The DDS will, for those who chose individual placement CIE as their employment goal, utilize SE group placements as a time-limited potential pathway toward CIE.
- Service Delivery System Change Task Force: The departments will establish a Service Delivery System Change Task Force, comprised of subject matter experts from each department system, to provide training and technical assistance to key LEA, DOR district, and regional center staff to support development of local capacity to create system change.
- Pre-Employment Opportunities: The departments will offer technical assistance to service provider staff to develop and provide pre-employment foundational skills training to individuals with ID/DD.
- CIE Opportunities within State Service: The departments will develop and promote CIE opportunities for paid internships with state agencies used as an alternative to LEAP, (based on enactment of SB 644 September 2015). Once the data sharing agreement with FTB is obtained, the departments will be able to report out on the number of individuals who are regional center clients that are employed in state service.

## Phase II Actions

- Increasing Local Capacity to Create System Change: The departments will identify key leadership staff, communication strategies, and resources to provide training and technical assistance to key LEA, DOR district, and regional center staff to create changes to local systems such as:
  - DOR / CDE funded Transition Services.
  - DDS funded Day Programs.
  - DDS funded Work Activity Programs.
  - DOR / DDS funded SE Programs.

- Seamless Employment Transition: Explore options to create a seamless transition process for individuals in CIE across all three systems, regardless of age.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This Blueprint contains the specific recommendations that will guide the departments over the course of the next five years and highlights collaboration at both the state and local levels to support each individual on choosing a pathway to CIE.

The departments will track the effectiveness of the specified strategies and actions. Data will be electronically posted on the Employment Data Dashboard and CIE website annually and will include an evaluation of progress and recommended next steps with stakeholder input.

A committee of representatives from each department will help to identify significant staff time and funding resources necessary to accomplish the implementation of the Blueprint. The committee will meet regularly to track the progress of the implementation plan and make modifications to the Blueprint targeted outcomes as appropriate.

“It’s really critical that each community comes together.”

*Vendor - California CIE Stakeholder Forum, March 23, 2015*

## 6. ACRONYMS

<b>Word/Phrase</b>	<b>Acronym</b>
America's Job Center of California	AJCC
Assembly Bill	AB
Association of University Centers on Disabilities	AUCD
California Community of Practice on Secondary Transition	CoP
California Department of Education	CDE
California Disability Services Association	CDSA
California Employment Consortium for Youth and Young Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities	CECY
California Health and Human Services Agency	CHHSA
Ca Promoting the Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income	CaPROMISE
California Rehabilitation Association (now CDSA)	CRA
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services	CMS
Client Development Evaluation Report	CDER
Code of Federal Regulations	CFR
College to Career	C2C
Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities	CARF
Community-Based Vocational Development	CBVD
Community Rehabilitation Program	CRP
Competitive Integrated Employment	CIE
Cooperative Program	COOP
Cooperative Program Advisory Committee	CPAC
Department of Developmental Disabilities	DDS
Department of Rehabilitation	DOR
Disability Rights California	DRC
Employment Development Department	EDD
Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program	EFSLMP

<b>Word/Phrase</b>	<b>Acronym</b>
Employment Preparation Services	EPS
Franchise Tax Board	FTB
Free Appropriate Public Education	FAPE
Home and Community-Based Services	HCBS
Impairment Related Work Experience	IRWE
Independent Living Center	ILC
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	IDEA
Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities and/or Developmental Disabilities	ID/DD
Individualized Education Program	IEP (CDE)
Individual Program Plan	IPP (DDS)
Individualized Plan for Employment	IPE (DOR)
Leadership for the Employment and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities	LEAD
Local Educational Agency	LEA
Local Partnership Agreement	LPA
Memorandum of Understanding	MOU
National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services	NASDDDS
National Technical Assistance Center on Transition	NTACT
No Child Left Behind Act	NCLB
Office of Disability Employment Policy	ODEP
Office of Special Education Programs	OSEP
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services	OSERS
On-the-job-training	OJT
Order of Selection	OOS
Partnerships in Employment	PIE
Post-Secondary Education	PSE
Pre-Employment Transition Services	Pre-ETS
Program for Achieving Self-Support	PASS
Rehabilitation Services Administration	RSA

<b>Word/Phrase</b>	<b>Acronym</b>
Self-Employment Resource Network	SERN
Senate Bill	SB
Special Education Local Plan Areas	SELPAS
State Council on Developmental Disabilities Employment First Committee	SCDD
State Fiscal Year	SFY
Substantial Gainful Activity	SGA
Supported Employment	SE
Transition Partnership Program	TPP
United States Code	U.S.C
Vocational Rehabilitation	VR
Vocational Rehabilitation Service Delivery	VRSD
Work Opportunity Tax Credit	WOTC
WorkAbility I	WAI
WorkAbility II	WAI
WorkAbility III	WAI
WorkAbility IV	WAI
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act	WIOA