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Health and Human  
Services

# **HHSC Employment Services**

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## **Employment First: It's About Work!**

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# Topics for Today

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## What is Employment First?

- Employment Services Offered through HHSC Waiver Programs
  - Employment Assistance (EA)
  - Supported Employment (SE)



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## What is “Employment First”?

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- Is a declaration of both philosophy and policy
- An approach to facilitating the **full inclusion** of individuals with disabilities in the workplace
- Integrated, competitive employment is the **first and preferred option** for working age youth and adults with disabilities



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## What is Competitive, Integrated Employment?

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- Competitive, integrated employment pays an individual at or above the greater of:
  - The applicable minimum wage; or
  - The prevailing wage paid to individuals without disabilities performing the same or similar work
- Competitive, integrated employment is at a work site where the individual routinely interacts with co-workers without disabilities, with customers and or the general public



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## Employment First in Texas and Across the Nation

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- SB 1226 passed by the 83rd Texas Legislature (2013)
  - Established Employment First Policy for Texas
  - Created Employment First Task Force
- More than 46 states now have an initiative focusing on Employment First
- Thirty-two states have an Employment First Policy

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Title search: HHSC Employment Services

Also available as part of the eCourse

[2019 Special Needs Trusts eConference](#)

First appeared as part of the conference materials for the  
15<sup>th</sup> Annual Changes and Trends Affecting Special Needs Trusts session  
"The Working Medicaid Waiver Recipient (CLASS)"