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HHSC Employment Services



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Employment First: It's About Work!

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Topics for Today

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”?

- 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?

- 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

- 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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