

DEI Evaluation Team Bulletin #5

Systems Change



What is systems change?

Systems change is an adjustment in the way a Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) makes decisions about its policies and programs and the allocation of its resources. The purpose of planned systems change is to maximize the LWIA's ability to offer the most people the best services and to improve access and availability of employment-related services by resolving inefficiencies in the system.

Previous United States Department of Labor (DOL) programs designed to improve the employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities through systems change include the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) Work Incentive Grants (WIG), the Disability Program Navigator (DPN) Initiative, and employment service models, such as Office of Disability Employment Policy's (ODEP) Customized Employment, Workforce Action (Olmstead), the START-UP (Self-Employment) Initiative, and State Intermediary Youth grants.

How will systems change be measured?

The systems change analysis will focus on the implementation of the DEI strategies selected by each grantee (state), American Job Center (AJC) accessibility, coordination and integration of services, employer outreach, and dissemination of effective practices. In addition, the structure of the system, including changes in its individual and organizational members and leadership, will be documented. During DEI Evaluation site visits and telephone interviews, information about each of the systems change goals will be collected. The DEI Evaluation Team will also observe the daily operations of DEI AJCs and collect relevant documentation on AJC intake activities, service coordination activities, and the availability of and access to employment-related services and trainings. Observations of meetings at the state, LWIA, and AJC levels will also inform the systems change component of the DEI Evaluation.

Linking systems change to customer outcomes

Information gathered during the DEI Evaluation will be used to assess systems change and to determine if systems change within participating LWIAs influences customer outcomes. It will include data elements that go beyond the scope of the WIASRD and Wagner-Peyser data systems to collect additional demographic, outcome, and service utilization data. Combined, WIASRD, Wagner-Peyser, and the DEI Data Elements (see DEI Evaluation Bulletin #2) will provide important information that will allow the Evaluation Team to determine if individual customers received services that became available or more accessible due to a change in the workforce development system. This information will allow the Evaluation Team to determine if improvements in workforce development systems influence customer outcomes.

What is the DEI systems change framework?

ODEP and the DEI Evaluation Team identified seven systems change goals that reflect the objectives of the DEI. These are as follows:

1

Capacity to achieve positive employment outcomes for customers with disabilities (CWDs)

- The AJC ensures physical and programmatic accessibility, as well as the use of Integrated Resource Teams (IRTs) to leverage resources, access to Ticket to Work networks, inclusive communications, and positive attitudes toward and a good understanding of how to work with customers with disabilities.

2

Coordination/integration of services

- The AJC implements a full integration of services for customers with disabilities with existing workforce development services and public and/or private partnerships. Policies and procedures allow for cross-agency training to facilitate the provision of services to customers with disabilities, and allow for leveraging of resources and outreach to employers.

3

Customer choice

- The AJC offers products and services that are customized to assist customers with disabilities, and input is considered from customers with disabilities regarding the design of products and services and which services they receive.

4

Employer support and employer partnerships

- The AJC has a plan for reaching out to employers in a range of industries, involves employers in planning around workforce development issues, and facilitates the recruitment and hiring of customers with disabilities.

5

Development of new or enhancement of existing practices

- The AJC utilizes the Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC) to identify, develop, and adopt practices and approaches in the use of customized employment, IRTs, leveraging resources, self-employment, asset development programs, and partnerships and collaborations.

6

Dissemination of effective practices and outreach to the disability and employer communities

- The AJC uses effective methods of communication with the disability and employer communities to disseminate and transfer knowledge on best practices to workforce development partners and personnel through regularly updated Web-based and other communication media, and regularly updated trainings.

7

Sustainability

- The AJC has plans for sustainability of systems changes, and those plans have been put into action.