

Disability Employment Initiative

Increasing access to educational, training and employment opportunities for adults with disabilities

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) awarded more than \$21 million to nine states under the **Disability Employment Initiative (DEI)** to improve education, training, and employment opportunities and outcomes of youth and adults with disabilities who are unemployed, underemployed, and/or receiving Social Security disability benefits. In Maine, funding from the DEI grant will be used to increase access to these opportunities for adults with disabilities through Maine’s workforce development system.

Program partners include:

- **Maine’s Local Workforce Investment Boards**
 - Region 1 – Aroostook/Washington Workforce Board (Northern Maine Development Corporation) Aroostook and Washington Counties [**Kent DeMerchant, kdemerchant@nmdc.org or 1.800.427.8736**]
 - Region 2 – Tri-County Workforce Board (Eastern Maine Development Corporation) Penobscot, Piscataquis, and Hancock Counties [**Gwen LaPointe, glapointe@emdc.org or 1.888.828.0568**]
- **Maine Department of Labor**
 - Bureau of Employment Services’s (BES) Network of CareerCenters [**Auta Main, Program Manager, auta.m.main@maine.gov or 207.623.7975**]
 - Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) Machias CareerCenter: [**Lori Joy, lorinda.m.joy@maine.gov or 1.800.770.7774** or Bangor CareerCenter: [**Colleen Giblin, colleen.giblin@maine.gov or 1.888.828.0568**]
- **Community-based organizations serving people with disabilities**

Maine’s Grant Award:
\$1.5 million

Grant Term:
October 1, 2010 –
September 30, 2013

Key elements and award requirements:

- Focus on providing services to adults with disabilities
- Staffing includes:
 - One state-level DEI project lead at BES
 - Two Disability Resource Coordinators employed by their local workforce investment boards
 - Two Rehabilitation Counselors employed by BRS
- Assurances that people with disabilities will have programmatic, physical and communications accessibility at CareerCenters

Strategies to be deployed:

- Integrated Resource Team (IRT) coordination of services to meet the needs of a job seeker with a disability.
- Leveraging of resources by utilizing funds from multiple sources to contribute to individual goals.
- Asset development to represent various approaches to enhance long-term economic self-sufficiency.
- Partnerships and collaborations that impact the ability of people with disabilities to participate in education, training and employment opportunities.
- Outreach with employers to promote hiring of people with disabilities.
- Expansion of Social Security Ticket to Work program statewide, through Maine’s CareerCenter network.

For more information visit:
www.maineccarecenter.com/disabilityservices