



COMMISSIONER
Jon Weizenbaum

November 16, 2015

To: Community Living Assistance and Support Services Providers (CLASS)
Deaf Blind with Multiple Disabilities Providers (DBMD)
Home and Community Based Services Program Providers (HCBS)
Local Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authorities (LIDDAs)
Medically Dependent Children Program Providers (MDCP)
State of Texas Access Reform Providers (STAR+PLUS)
State Supported Living Centers (SSLCs)
Texas Home Living Program Providers (TxHmL)

Subject: Information Letter No. 15-72
Employment Recruitment Coordinator Role and Activities

The purpose of this information letter (IL) is to introduce HCBS providers, TxHmL providers, CLASS providers, STAR+PLUS program providers, MDCP providers, DBMD providers, SSLC and LIDDAs to the role of the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) Employment Recruitment Coordinator (ERC).

The role of ERC is to work statewide in building awareness with employers of the value that employing persons with disabilities can add to a business. The ERC will also provide information concerning the project with LIDDAs, providers and individuals served. Further, the ERC will share educational information with employers on Employment First principles, and communicate employment opportunities to providers and SSLCs. The larger scale objective will be to build relationships with employers who have a statewide presence in adopting philosophies to employ persons with disabilities. Activities will not be in contrast to activities performed by other agencies, but will compliment other agencies. Ultimately, the groundwork laid by the ERC and the network established between providers and employers will support compliance with HCBS rule changes and promote Employment First principles across the state.

Goals:

- pursue employment opportunities in support of individuals with disabilities who are pursuing integrated employment;
- establish ongoing relationships with businesses / employers and serve as a point of contact for those entities;
- network and establish community and civic organization relationships to promote employment for persons with disabilities;
- work with other agencies for common interest projects related to promoting employment for persons with disabilities;
- secure job descriptions and key skills needed for specific job descriptions from employers to share with providers in building those skills with persons served;
- increase the number of persons with developmental disabilities in integrated employment; and
- assist with other DADS Money Follows the Person (MFP) employment initiatives towards the overall goal of assisting persons with developmental disabilities pursuing employment.

701 W. 51st St. ★ P.O. Box 149030 Austin, Texas 78714-9030 ★ (512) 438-3011 ★ www.dads.state.tx.us

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As the project progresses, the ERC will utilize various communication mechanisms to share employer information, job descriptions from employers, and key skills needed for job descriptions with providers and LIDDAs, in an effort to assist providers as they work with individuals pursuing employment and building key skills. Future information may be shared via Information Letters to target audiences or may be shared via direct communication to specific local authorities and providers if job information is specific to an employer in a certain area of the state.

An email address of erc@dads.state.tx.us has been established for the ERC. Direct communications from the ERC concerning employment information sharing may be sent from the noted email address. All inquiries and communications for the ERC should be sent to erc@dads.state.tx.us.

Questions about this IL may be emailed to erc@dads.state.tx.us. Please use "Information Letter No. 15-72" in the subject line.

Sincerely,

[signature on file]

S. Michelle Martin
Interim Director
Center for Policy and Innovation

[signature on file]

Elisa J. Garza
Assistant Commissioner
Access and Intake