**Cross Training**

**Overview**

In recent months, the California Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (CCEPD) State Coordination Subcommittee has expressed interest in enhancing cross training for services providers. In general, within the context of the CCEPD’s goals, cross training is the practice of training employees across multiple roles and programs to enhance the service experience for people with disabilities.

Originating from no wrong door (NWD) and co-enrollment discussions, members would like services providers to take a NWD and/or co-enrollment approach to providing services, there must be a level of staff member cross training across programs. Essentially, the type of cross training needed is for service provider staff to learn of each other’s mandates and services, so they can work together to develop policy, procedures, or recommendations for cross training, partnerships, and co-enrollment at the local and regional levels.

Because services providers are often dependent upon varying funding streams and those funding streams create partnerships that are not always consistent or long term, there are few established cross training programs at a state level. Additionally, since many regions have differing needs and capabilities, programs would vary and can not necessarily be replicated the same statewide. That said, cross training components should be encouraged whenever possible.

**Background**

CCEPD staff researched information on cross training programs throughout the state, primarily within workforce services. While it is known there are components of cross training happening within many regions involving statewide partners, there is little information of any consistency or infrastructure with state level coordination.

Most cross training is left to service provider themselves, at the regional level. Because this cross training is often the result of specific initiatives and funding streams received at the regional level, there are large inconsistencies regarding the depth and/or length of cross training programs. For example, based on prior CCEPD meeting presentations, we know there is cross training for benefits planning and workforce services for some staff at the Madera County Workforce Investment Corporation. However, we know this was partially due to the rural population and regions with denser populations typically delegate those services across multiple providers and staff.

As a result of limited and inconsistent statewide cross training information available, the CCEPD changed the approach for this document. This document now provides an overview of the California Department of Aging (CDA) Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) initiative, the most consistent program at a statewide level. Additionally, it now includes overviews of disability related trainings that have been used throughout the state that benefit people with disabilities, while not necessarily training staff across multiple programs.

**Statewide Cross Systems and Programs Training**

On a statewide level, the most consistent form of cross training for people with disabilities is likely done through the California Department of Aging (CDA). The CDA administers programs that serve older adults, adults with disabilities, family caregivers, and residents in long-term care facilities throughout the state. These services are provided locally by contracted agencies. The CDA oversees the [Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) initiative](https://aging.ca.gov/Providers_and_Partners/Aging_and_Disability_Resource_Connection/#pp-po). The ADRC initiative began as a collaborative effort between the State of California, the federal Administration for Community Living (ACL), the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Veterans Administration (VA). The ADRC’s purpose is to provide a single, more coordinated system for people seeking reliable information and access to long-term services and supports (LTSS). This purpose is achieved by building community partnerships, providing services using a person-centered approach, and reducing the number of barriers for accessing services. Cross training between partners is a critical component of the ADRC.

In 2019, California Senate Bill 80 (SB 80) established the ADRC Infrastructure Grants Program. The ADRC program is a collaboration between local Area Agency on Aging (AAA) offices and Independent Living Centers (ILC) working together with a community network of public, private, and non-profit agencies to form NWD systems that assist individuals in navigating the complex system of LTSS. These NWD systems assist individuals of any age, ability, and income level in navigating and accessing the full range of available LTSS options and provide objective and unbiased information, advice, counseling, and assistance. The CDA provides technical assistance and guidance to any AAA and ILC that expresses joint interest in forming an ADRC partnership.

Currently, roughly 50% of California’s counties are part of either designated or emerging ADRC networks. Designated ADRCs are established partnerships of local AAAs and ILCs, and other core partners as applicable. Emerging ADRCs are partnerships that are developing a NWD system to better assist individuals in navigating available services in their communities.

**Disability Related Trainings**

The below information provides overviews of disability related trainings that have been used throughout the state that benefit people with disabilities, while not necessarily training staff across multiple programs.

The Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) [Disability Access Services (DAS)](https://www.dor.ca.gov/Home/DasTrainings) serves as a resource that provides public information, consultation, training and technical assistance to state and local government, consumers, employers, and businesses to help prevent accessibility issues. Trainings they offer include the following:

* Introduction to ADA/FEHA
* Practical Solutions to Reasonable Accommodation
* Hiring And Supervising an Employee with a Disability
* Disability Awareness and Etiquette Training
* Accessible PDF Documents 2.1
* Accessible Microsoft Office Documents

DOR has partnered with the Institute of Community Inclusion (ICI) to provide two trainings as part of the initiative to improve Competitive Integrative Employment (CIE) outcomes for individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities (ID/DD). The courses are titled Career Planning and Self-Determination and are available to DOR employees through the [LMS Blackboard intranet page](https://indor/asd/human-resources-branch/staff-development-and-workforce-succession-planning-and-diversity-section/blackboard-learning-management-system-lms-resources) (please note this link will only work for DOR employees when using DOR computers). Additionally, through the same platform, DOR offers trainings on vocational rehabilitation (VR) services.

In addition to the previously referenced CIE related trainings through DOR, there is a public [CIE Toolkit](https://www.chhs.ca.gov/home/cie/cie-toolkit/) designed to provide tools and resources on CIE services and supports available to individuals with ID/DD and their families. While there are no active or upcoming trainings included, the toolkit’s webpage includes links to numerous prior webinar trainings related to CIE.

The [ADA National Network](https://adata.org/ada-training) provides training on all ADA topics and on all levels from basic to advanced. Trainings are available in-person, webcast, and online.

The [Pacific ADA Center](https://www.adapacific.org/request_pacific-ada-center-training) has extensive knowledge and experience regarding disability laws and best practices. They can provide basic or more advanced training on a range of ADA topics or customize a training to meet the needs of organizations.

Through the U.S. Department of Education’s Rehabilitation Services Administration, states and public or private nonprofit agencies and organizations have access to [Innovative Rehabilitation Training](https://rsa.ed.gov/about/programs/innovative-rehabilitation-training) grants. The program is designed to develop new types of training programs for rehabilitation personnel and to demonstrate the effectiveness of these new types of training programs for rehabilitation personnel in providing rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities.

The Institute for Community Inclusion includes [“IT’S EMPLOYMENT”](https://www.communityinclusion.org/news/2021-08-10_inclusion-illuminated-the-its-employment-approach/#:~:text=ICI%20IT'S%20EMPLOYMENT%20staff%20work,and%20supplement%20training%20course%20content.) staff who develop trainings to assist VR professionals in learning how to meet the needs of job seekers with ID and improve their employment outcomes. These trainings address self-determination, self-advocacy, and informed choice approaches.

**Next Steps and Recommendations**

Due to limited and inconsistent cross training information publicly available, CCEPD staff recommends presentations from DOR and other entities. Members should also identify trainings from other community-based organizations that can be helpful to this conversation.