

Integrated Benefits Planning Policy Recommendations

August 2022

Introduction to Policy Recommendations

The California Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (CCEPD) is proposing a set of policy recommendations to create strategies for effective integrated benefits planning approaches among the various programs serving people with disabilities. The CCEPD submitted a similar policy recommendation in late 2019, however a few months later the global pandemic struck, and further discussions were deferred. The CCEPD has identified a gap in service delivery systems including a lack of consistent cross-system approaches to the provision of benefits planning services, limited access to benefits planners, and underutilization of the Disability Benefits (DB) 101 tool in workforce programs. People with disabilities are served through multiple programs not just the Vocational Rehabilitation program, including workforce and other human service programs.

Although previously submitted, the CCEPD believes that additional strategies are needed to fully integrate DB101 into programs and develop sustaining cross-system approaches to benefits planning. Currently, benefits planning is not integrated into each program for employment, education and training and services for people with disabilities from the beginning. The systems offering benefits planning only offer benefits counseling for their clients, and oftentimes, there are not enough Work Incentives Planners (WIP), navigators, or counselors to serve the entire population of people with disabilities within the system. Therefore, the web-based tool DB101 can assist providers and people with disabilities with a better understanding of how to manage benefits and employment. With current labor shortages and staff turnover, DB101 provides information to clients and offers providers with updated information on the various benefits without additional formal training for staff. It is a tool that can help clients make decisions about their livelihood without the need for an experienced WIP to be involved with each question or scenario. This allows WIPs to prioritize more complicated questions or cases, while allowing other service providers to support clients newly exploring how working will impact their benefits, thus keeping them engaged in employment and training activities.

Considering the continued high unemployment rates and low labor market participation rates for people with disabilities, effective, state-level strategies to coordinate benefits planning services are needed to assist with dispelling myths and incorporating the message that people with disabilities can manage benefits and work. If people with disabilities do not manage their benefits, they risk losing access to health care or long-term services and supports and are at risk of overpayments. Overpayments of benefits must be refunded to the Social Security Administration. Both are tragedies and effectively create long-term financial hardship to people with disabilities. Without the power of information, people with disabilities live in fear and poverty because benefits have been designed to not incorporate employment as essential to a person's well-being, both economically and as a social determinant of health for themselves and their families.

DB101 has been funded by the State of California in the past and is considered the sole source of information to existing professionals in the State of California. Because this existing web-based tool has been updated and used by professionals, the CCEPD believes that it should be fully supported and integrated into programs serving people with disabilities in a more consistent basis. Due to the unique nature and being the only web-based tool used by professionals in California, CCEPD believes the State of California should continue funding the web-based tool. Other states, Hawaii and Washington, have developed online benefit planning tools. Virginia Commonwealth University's WorkWORLD decision support software performs benefits calculations based on work scenarios. But DB101 is unique in providing comprehensive, user-friendly benefits information alongside online tools for service providers and beneficiaries, within an integrated multistate technical infrastructure. To work with another vendor and recreate content would not be an efficient use of public funds.

Although California is the first in the nation to develop this toolkit, DB101, the state of California has never fully integrated DB101 into all programs and services for people with disabilities. The CCEPD believes more integration of the tool will bring a better understanding of how to manage benefits and employment, education, and training for people with disabilities. If California can integrate the use of DB 101 throughout all programs with an employment element or focus, it can empower people with disabilities with the knowledge and tools they need to make sound employment and financial decisions throughout their careers. In addition,

the number of users will increase, helping to demonstrate a return of investment.

CCEPD also believes a state department needs to lead efforts to coordinate and leverage existing resources for benefits planning, oversee DB101 and develop strategies to integrate DB101 into all programs and services. There is no entity that provides oversight for DB101 or strategizes with the various programs to expand the information or assist in leveraging resources for benefits counseling.

The CCEPD recommends the following:

Funding

- Collaboration to fund the web-based tool Disability Benefits (DB)101 among the two agencies. Multiple providers and frontline staff in the following systems: workforce areas, vocational rehabilitation, independent living centers, behavioral health, social services, and regional centers may use the web-based tool. At the state level, six state departments are impacted using DB101, either by having information of their programs for clients or frontline staff or providers using the DB101 to help people with disabilities become employed. Each Department can use DB101 as part of other services and integrated service delivery.
- Recommend having a lead Department that coordinates an integrated approach to benefits planning among multiple systems. The Department can have existing staff provide technical assistance or specific staff that coordinate strategies at state level.

Service Delivery/Capacity Building

- Provide DB101 information to all clients, regardless of whether they are brand-new into the labor market, reentering or switching careers. This information will benefit all people with disabilities in various points of their employment efforts.
- Recommend Departments coordinate ongoing training efforts for frontline staff and providers on use of DB101 and general benefits planning understanding. Several training models can be used such as a “train the trainer” model, use of a learning management system or ongoing virtual training.

- Recommend that benefits planning questions are included as part of the intake process or when requesting services and develop informational sessions to include benefits planning as part of the intake process in all programs.
- Recommend Departments that have transition-age youth or youth programs incorporate usage of DB101 to educate families and youth about community resources and managing benefits. Departments should collaborate with Parent Training Information Centers to provide benefits counseling information to parents and DB101 information.
- Recommend Departments that work with Local Education Agencies, community colleges and higher education to advocate and educate incorporating DB101 in community resources for youth with disabilities.

Individual Departmental Strategies

- Request Employment Development Department and California Workforce Development Board work with the America's Job Centers of California to relay DB101 information to clients receiving services as they are enrolling into employment services and training programs.
- Request DB101 usage for employment efforts within the Department of Developmental Services, as part of the elimination of sub-minimum wage discussions and other employment discussions. Regional Centers should incorporate DB101 knowledge among staff and incorporate benefits planning strategies as part of the elimination of subminimum wage.
- Request Department of Rehabilitation relay DB101 information to clients receiving services as they are enrolling into the vocational rehabilitation program and developing an Individualized Plan for Employment.
- Request Department of Health Care Services incorporate DB101 into behavioral health efforts.
- Request Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission to incorporate DB101 in employment and recovery efforts for people with behavioral health.
- Request Departments that work with CalABLE to incorporate DB101 for information to families.
- Request Department of Social Services (DSS) coordinate with DSS employment program administrators, service providers, and

additional stakeholder communities to share DB101 resource information. Utilization of DB101 can be pivotal in achieving employment goals for people with disabilities. This resource provides access to information that can encourage engagement by demonstrating the impact potential on an individual's disability benefit levels, which has historically been a source of apprehension for potential participants.

Website/Data Collection

- Information on benefits planning and access to DB101 should be placed on state websites.
- Request Departments with programs that do not collect data on benefits planning, both in number of WIPs providing benefits planning services and number of clients who are provided with these services.

Need for Benefits Planning

Benefits planning helps individuals determine how their cash benefits (including SSI and SSDI) and healthcare benefits (such as Medi-Cal, Medicare, and In-Home Supportive Services) or housing benefits may be impacted by earnings from employment. Clear, timely, and accurate benefits planning supports people with disabilities to choose employment over benefits, and plan for their future. The CCEPD believes that benefits planning is just as critical as inclusive employment strategies and educational opportunities. Supporting integrated benefits planning strategies and consistent use helps increase the employment rate of people with disabilities. All in line with the work of the Workforce Innovation and Accountability Act (WIOA) and the goals, objectives, and strategies of WIOA Modified State Plan.

According to the Social Security Administration (SSA), as of 2020 there are 1.9 million Californians receiving SSI and SSDI benefits. Of those, 1,192,888 Californians receive SSI based on disability, blindness, and age, and 709,336 Californians receive SSDI, based on disability. Although SSI and SSDI provide a safety net, income derived solely from benefits assures a life of poverty.

It is difficult to determine the number of clients in all systems receiving benefits planning services because some programs do not collect that data. Although benefits planning is considered an evidence-based practice, it is not considered a core service for some programs, and therefore, data is not

collected. Based on the number of sessions on DB101, there were about 647,583 users in 2021. Based on that figure, an assumption can be made that less than half of all people receiving SSI/SSDI in California can benefit from benefits planning.

There are credentialed WIPs within the Department of Rehabilitation and other entities, and credentialed Community Work Incentives Coordinators in workforce or community-based organizations. However, for some programs service providers or frontline, staff may not be credentialed. Therefore, DB101 provides case managers in multiple programs the support to discuss benefits planning with clients without needing further expertise.

As noted in the WIOA Modified State Plan, the labor force participation rate, an indicator of people not institutionalized who are employed or looking for work, is 21.2% for people with disabilities and continues to remain low when comparing other populations. This rate has remained flat for people with disabilities despite a recovered economy. Labor force participation is one metric that demonstrates the continued, low employment of people with disabilities.

Although benefits planning is mentioned as support services in WIOA Modified State Plan, there is not coordinated state-level strategies to assist with ongoing efforts to integrate the knowledge of benefits planning among frontline staff in multiple systems. From an equity standpoint, benefits planning is an essential service for people with disabilities. Inconsistent and unreliable information can cause hardship for people with disabilities from losing health care or long-term care services and supports to paying overpayments to Social Security Administration. By implementing long-term strategies and considering benefits planning an essential service, the State of California will further encourage the independence and increase the employment rate of people with disabilities.

Use of Benefits Planning

Currently, only three systems (independent living, vocational rehabilitation, and workforce) have expertise in providing people with disabilities benefits planning to assist both in employment efforts and with a social safety net. Other systems, such as mental health or developmental services, do not offer benefits planning in a consistent manner. Each system uses the expertise differently for the populations it serves. At the local level, there

may be systems overlap. However, at the state-level, there is no interaction of state policy across all three systems that can be determined by the CCEPD. The CCEPD believes that more cross-system collaboration can occur to further the training for all professionals collaborating with people with disabilities to educate them on benefits planning and employment. Educating professionals about managing benefits is a needed strategy to help dispel the myths about employment for people with disabilities.

Independent Living Centers (ILCs) are community-driven and offer a variety of services to people with disabilities of any age based on the community needs of the local area. Although the supportive services that ILCs offer can be different, most offer benefits planning. ILCs provide expertise to wrap services around people with disabilities, stabilizing a social safety net with benefits. This creates access to employment when people with disabilities understand their benefits and their interaction with paid work.

Data is not collected from the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) on how many of the ILCs have staff with benefits planning expertise or how many people receive benefits planning services from the ILCs. In this system, benefits planning is not a core service, so there is no data collection. In collaboration with the DOR, a survey was sent to the ILCs to ask about staff with benefits planning expertise, tracking of clients who request benefits planning and if ILCs work with other entities. There were 27 ILC responses.

From the survey, there are seventy staff that have benefits planning as part of their duties and two in training. CCEPD believes that this staff understand the types of services needed and may not be credentialed. At least, 3 ILCs have credentialed staff as WIP and 1 ILC is part of the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) program, administered by the Social Security Administration.

In terms of the number of clients served, the survey did not provide definitive information on the number of clients receiving these services from ILCs. ILCs did work with other entities, depending on the need of the client, and may refer them to DOR for WIP services, or other community-based organizations with expertise, contracted WIP or local WIPA programs in the area. A few ILCs indicated there is no access to WIPA in their regions.

DOR's Vocational Rehabilitation program, provides WIP Services, including information and counseling on benefits planning for SSI/SSDI participants who are in the job-ready and employed statuses of their Individualized Plan for Employment and for students with disabilities, between the ages of 16 and 21 and in a secondary, postsecondary, or other recognized education program. The DOR also receives funds from the Social Security Administration's Cost Reimbursement program for SSI/SSDI consumers who have gained employment.

DOR offers WIP services for students in the Potentially Eligible (PE) and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Case Types, offering benefits planning services to students planning for and participating in a paid work experience who receive SSI or Title II disability benefits (SSDI or Childhood Disability Benefits). DOR Student WIP Services are designed to empower students planning for and participating in a paid work experience to explore competitive integrated employment by mitigating fears about impacts to disability benefits. Services include educating students and their families about benefits planning and financial literacy, explanation of the student's benefits, review of a benefits summary, calculation, and information through the DB101 website, and an overview of how to report earnings.

Since Fiscal Year (FY) 2015/2016, DOR has collected data on the number of clients who have been in the job-ready status. Since Fiscal Year 2015/2016, DOR has provided intensive WIP Services to over 16,000 clients, with an average of 5,240 clients served each year. As of July 2022, there are 33 credentialed WIPs who provide WIP Services throughout California's vocational rehabilitation program. DOR provided WIP Services to 4,703 clients during FY 2021/2022.

In California, 8 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) are Employment Networks, offering Ticket to Work Programs that include connections to benefits planners. Employment Networks are recognized by the Social Security Administration as providers who can assist people with disabilities pursue, enter, and maintain employment. LWDA Ticket to Work Programs are funded on a milestone/outcome basis, only receiving funds for clients who gain and keep employment. These LWDAs have access to benefits planning either through staffing benefits planners or by navigating services within their partnership and referral networks. They have built capacity to assist people with disabilities with employment services, including benefits planning and supportive services through grant programs

such as the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) and Disability Employment Accelerator (DEA). Unlike ILCs and DOR, LWDAs serve the public who are seeking job services, and do not have additional eligibility criteria based on the severity of a disability.

The CCEPD, in collaboration with workforce partners, sent a survey to local workforce areas. The CCEPD believed LWDAs that are Employment Networks would have staff with certification and training for work incentives planning. The survey also included information on referrals, knowledge of DB101 and whether LWDAs would use this tool.

There were twenty-seven responses. Many of the LWDAs did not answer all the questions, so therefore, the information offers a lens and is not conclusive. From the information received, a few LWDAs responded that staff are credentialed WIPs and have from one to three staff with expertise. Others indicated that they referred clients to DOR or had a contract in place for WIP services and referred clients to that organization. Information received indicated that some LWDAs had less than 10 to hundreds of clients that they are assisting with benefits planning. Lastly, staff use DB101 to give general overviews of managing benefits to clients and use the estimators on the web tool. A few LWDAs did not know about DB101, but others used it as part of their processes to either have clients use estimators and provide overviews of how to manage benefits and employment to clients.

There are 21 Regional Centers state-wide offering employment services. Although some of the Regional Centers may offer benefits counseling, it is unknown how consistent the counseling is throughout the system. If Regional Center clients participate in employment efforts and works with DOR, then that individual will receive benefits planning counseling in the job-ready status.

The CCEPD emailed a survey to Employment Specialists to gain a better understanding of the expertise, referrals, use of DB101, and number of clients served. There were 7 responses, which offers a lens and information is not conclusive. Four of the 7 Regional Centers did not have staff with expertise and 3 had a basic working knowledge of benefits planning. Of the responses received, 4 Regional Centers know about DB101 and use it as a resource, provide a link to service providers or work with client to demonstrate tool's feature. The Regional Centers that

responded stated that clients are referred to DOR, a WIPA at local workforce area, or a service provider with WIP services.

The surveys to various systems offered a lens into benefits planning and provided the following insights.

- When staff know about DB101, they use it to provide clients with a general understanding of managing benefits and employment and use DB101 for estimator features.
- It is difficult to determine the level of expertise or credentials of staff without data collection from statewide programs. Some have received credentials and are WIPs or CWICs. Others have a working knowledge through their work with people with disabilities.
- Except for DOR, it is difficult to determine the number of clients served for benefits planning collectively among the programs. LWDA's and a few ILCs keep track of the clients receiving benefits planning because they are part of the Ticket to Work programs. Others offer it as part of the overall services and do not collect data because it is not a core service.
- It is difficult to determine if there are formal agreements to refer clients to experts in each system. In some cases, many local entities have developed partnerships and refer clients to DOR, service providers and LWDA.

Since the 1990s, federal law has instituted WIP that assists people with disabilities to gain employment while managing their benefits. The WIPA program, created by the Social Security Administration, was developed to promote employment for people with disabilities. According to the federal government, the goal of the program is to allow people with disabilities to have financial stability and have gainful employment. There are currently seven WIPA projects in California. These federal law changes have allowed states to have benefits planning for people with disabilities and receive funding when people with disabilities receive employment. If people with disabilities gain employment, the entities (i.e., DOR, ILCs and LWDA's) receive funds from Social Security Administration. Accompanying funding enabled states to expand their work incentives planning programs and allowed nonprofit organizations to receive funds to develop benefits planning programs.

DB101 Website Background

The DB101 website is maintained by the World Institute of Disability (WID). The website offers information on SSI and SSDI, Medi-Cal, In Home Supportive Services, Medicare, work preparation and education, asset building information, and benefits planning/work incentive planning calculators.

In California, the DB101 website offers users the information in English or Spanish. In the last five years, the following chart provides the number of users.

Year	English Site	Spanish Site	Percentage Increase	Total Users
2017	506,093	43,607	28.7%	549,700
2018	609,841	48,724	20.5%	658,565
2019	792,893	55,038	30.0%	847,931
2020	745,865	67,416	-6%	813,281
2021	611,123	36,460	-17.9%	647,583
5-Year Total	3,265,815	251,245		3,517,060

Sessions are the number of times an individual uses the website. WID assumes that those using the website are benefits planning specialists and service providers with knowledge of the online tool, people with disabilities or their families or support network who know of the online tool due to the service providers.

DB101 was first created in California to combat the misinformation and fear among people with disabilities to be employed and manage their benefits. At that time, conversations centered on the need for an online portal that could be accessed by both customers and their families or support network and practitioners working with people with disabilities. A needs assessment was developed to determine usability needs of the online portal.

Launched in 2004, the creation of the online portal has been a public-private creation between the WID, grants from the California Endowment, start-up and research and design grants from the DOR, and funds from the Disability Employment Initiative from the EDD. In 2005, the Social Security Administration awarded a grant to finish designs and launch online calculators for California disability beneficiaries.

In 2020, after securing foundational grants, the WID redesigned the website to streamline the navigation of the tool and make it fully mobile

responsive. Although WID continues to maintain the tool, the State of California currently does not pay for the ongoing maintenance and operation costs. The CCEPD has provided examples of how other states have funded DB101 as well as how other have integrated the usage of DB101 in multiple systems.

WID provides updates and has quality assurance measures embedded to ensure DB101 is accurate. Lastly, WID also receives feedback from users, on issues with website and works to resolve those.

In 2020, as part of understanding how customers are experiencing the site and what the site is used for, WID embedded a survey feature into the site. People with disabilities, their families or caregivers and professionals are using DB101. Of the service professionals, the majority users are service providers, employment specialists and community resource specialists. Many are using DB101 to support their job and clients with information on employment and community resources. As a result of using DB101, many will use community resources to improve their life, take the job offer, look for work and go back to school.

DB101 Financial Needs

The CCEPD requested information from WID on what type of resources are needed to update the DB101 toolkit annually. The CCEPD have estimated costs based on a three-year period with the information provided by WID.

Funds for this initiative would include Departments represented on the CCEPD. The following Departments within Labor and Workforce Development Agency would include California Workforce Development Board, EDD and other state and federal workforce programs within Labor and Development Agency. The following Departments within Health and Human Services Agency would be DOR, Department of Developmental Services, Department of Health Care Services, and Department of Social Services which have workforce programs or programs that provides state and federal social safety net programs.

The CCEPD is also requesting a Department becomes the lead to manage the contract with WID and provide oversight on contractual obligations. The lead Department can also collaborate with other identified Departments to provide subject matter expertise on programs, identify training needs, and

receive technical assistance for both fiscal and program knowledge to ensure strategies are targeted and implemented.

CCEPD believes that there will be staffing costs for the lead Department.

- It can be an Associate Governmental Program Analyst (Analyst) at .25 Quarter Personnel Year (PY) level to just manage contractual obligations, costing \$32,274.
- Or staffing costs can be up to .5 PY at analyst level that will include the development of a workgroup to develop strategies with WID and other Departments to implement training and outreach strategies. In collaboration with WID, staff will oversee a user group to ensure DB101 is accurate, and users can understand the choices. This group will be with external partners, WID and departmental staff. This would cost \$64,548.

The lead Department would have to determine if existing staff can undertake this work or request a Budget Change Proposal for staff.

Funding for this change is needed to ensure that people with disabilities are provided an equitable chance in entering, reentering, or retaining jobs with a better understanding of managing benefits and employment. Benefits planning is a specialized service that people with disabilities need to have ongoing access to not create undue financial hardships.

Maintenance and Operations are \$113,463, which includes:

- Updates to existing benefits based on any legislative or policy changes. This funds a team that works with subject matter experts to understand changes and makes changes to DB101.
- Annually, staff review links and information is accurate.
- Conduct ongoing security and accessibility checks to the website. This occurs monthly.
- Conduct quality assurance checks and resolve any user issues on and ongoing basis.
- Virtual Technical assistance includes ongoing coordination meetings at the cadence of the state; implementation strategies, training support; assistance with infrastructure and funding efforts; coalition building guidance; and future development recommendations.

One-Time Costs are \$45,200, which includes:

- DB101 has partial Spanish translation for some articles and partial translation on others. \$26,897 would be to translate the following articles fully on DB101:
 - Know Your Rights and Responsibilities
 - Start Planning Now
 - Benefits for Young People
 - Finding a Job
 - Employer-Sponsored Coverage
 - Buying Individual Coverage on Covered CA
 - Programs that Support Work
- Part of the \$26,897 would also translate articles that are partially translated into Spanish:
 - SSDI
 - CalWORKs
 - Medicare
 - IHSS

The rest of the funding would be to enhance the Medi-Cal by changing the article from a comprehensive article into easier to understand articles, such as Medical for Low-Income, Medicaid for People with Disabilities, and Medicaid Buy-In. This change would better assist people with disabilities and enhance the understanding of health care benefits. The changes would also include Spanish translation.

Potential Ongoing Trainings:

There are several different ways to approach training: in-person, virtual or train the trainer model. If the State picks the train the trainer method, there will be one-time costs. Otherwise, there could be ongoing costs for virtual or in-person training. Costs for the various training methods are as follows:

- Virtual training can cost up to \$2500 for a three-hour training.
- In-Person training can cost up to \$4800, including travel costs.
- Virtual train-the-trainer can cost \$5000.

Departments can also use existing training budgets to fund the trainings.

CCEPD assumes that training would be once a year, not multiple times a year. However, Departmental staff can determine if more than once a year is needed for training in all programs. Depending on the method of training, final total costs can change.

Fiscal Year (FY)	Maintenance and Operations (Ongoing Costs)	Staffing	Ongoing Training	One-Time Costs	Total
FY 2023/2024	\$113,463	\$32,274 or \$64,548	\$2500- \$5000	\$26,897 for Spanish translation and \$18,303 to improve Medi-Cal articles	\$195, 937 or \$223,211
FY 2024/2025	\$117,486	\$32,274 or \$64,548	\$2500- \$5000		\$150,260 or \$187,034
FY 2025/2026	\$117,486	\$32,274 or \$64,548	\$2500- \$5000		\$150,260 or \$187,034

First year costs will include one- time costs. However, costs will be reduced in following two years due to the one-time costs disappearing.

Depending on what type of staffing is chosen, the total costs could be:

- With a quarter PY at the analyst level and rounded to \$5000 for training, the total for the three years would be:
 - FY 23/24 -- \$195,937
 - FY 24/25 -- \$150,260
 - FY 25/26 -- \$150,260
- With a half PY at the analyst level and rounded to \$5000 for training, the total for the three years would be:
 - FY 23/24 -- \$223,211
 - FY 24/25 -- \$187,034
 - FY 25/26 -- \$187,034

Funding options for the recommendations can be as follows:

- Develop through an Interagency Agreement that each state Department agrees and identifies the existing revenue streams. Funding streams should include both federal and state revenues.

- Request a Budget Change Proposal to receive funding from the General Fund. If there is a lead Department chosen, that lead Department can develop it and work with CCEPD to support efforts. This will include the costs above and based on decisions made as outlined.

Other State's DB 101 Usage

DB101 is now available in ten states, including Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, and Ohio. In 2022, DB101 is launching in Illinois. California, Arizona, Colorado, and New Jersey have a bilingual website and so will Illinois.

Each state can add additional specific information to the tool. For instance, the State of Minnesota has included information on energy, childcare, housing, and food assistance that California does not include. Additionally, Arizona has included information on home ownership and how to start a business. The State of Michigan provides veterans information on its web-based online tool. The State of California can also include other information not currently included on the toolkit.

Not only are states including several types of information to assist people with disabilities, but States have also integrated DB101 into the service delivery of multiple systems. The following are three examples of how States integrated DB101 into their systems to assist people with disabilities navigate and manage benefits and employment.

Arizona (AZ) has integrated AZ DB101 into every service provider system within the state. Though the site is funded solely by Vocational Rehabilitation dollars, systems like Medicaid have mandated use of and competencies in AZ DB101 for all employment specialists receiving Medicaid reimbursement. The mental health system has also created policy that mandated AZ DB101 usage. AZ DB101 has been incorporated into Development Disability trainings as has the Department of Education. Each agency has looked at how AZ DB101 can improve the effectiveness of the services they provide to promote and support employment.

Michigan (MI) has united MI DB101 with their benefit planner tiered-approach system. Michigan has included a professional path to their vault that allows for benefit planner to coordinate services and communicate with their beneficiaries. They have also included videos as a diverse way to

communicate benefit complexity. Michigan also has tutorial video to support users – both individuals with disabilities and service providers.

Minnesota (MN) has created an integrated system that partners with local Center of Independence to provide a HUB, where trained professionals are available to provide information and referral to people with disabilities. MN DB101 is at the center of the HUB information. Minnesota Department of Human Services has partnered with Vocational Rehabilitation to access MN Vault activities through the HUB.

Funding Streams Used in Other States

In the State of Alaska, the Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Senior and Disability pays for monthly maintenance services. The State of Arizona funds DB101 by the Department of Economic Security, Division of Employment and Rehabilitation, and pay for direct training services, change requests and monthly maintenance. The States of Kentucky and Ohio fund DB101 through developmental services departments in respective states (Kentucky Commonwealth Council on Developmental Disabilities and Ohio Department of Developmental Services, Policy, and Strategy Division). The State of Kentucky pays for monthly maintenance and the State of Ohio pays for both monthly maintenance and change requests. The State of Michigan pays for DB101 through the Department of Technology, Management and Budget and pays for monthly maintenance. No information on how State of New Jersey funds DB 101 was provided.

Only two states, Minnesota, and Missouri, seem to have braided funding for the DB101 website. The Department of Human Services, Disability Services Division and Housing and Supportive Services Division paid for monthly maintenance, change requests and real-time search tools for DB 101. Braiding funds also occurred in the State of Missouri. The Department of Mental Health, Division of Behavioral Health and Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services and the Developmental Disabilities paid for DB 101 for both monthly maintenance and change requests.