

# California Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities

June 26, 2019

Jay Alburez Sevilla  
Policy Unit  
Employment Development Department  
P.O. Box 826880/MIC 50  
Sacramento, CA 94280-0001

Dear Mr. Alburez Sevilla:

The California Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (CCEPD) advances the employment of people with disabilities in the state. With a variety of representation, the CCEPD provides a forum for state departments, the business community and others to develop better state program coordination to increase employment outcomes.

The CCEPD commends the efforts to create strategic co-enrollment policies, leading to more integrated service delivery, streamlined access and common intake among the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) partners. The CCEPD encourages more “no wrong door” approaches and coordinated integrated service delivery approaches to serving people with disabilities.

Although we commend strategic co-enrollment, the CCEPD encourages and supports additional partnership agreements to be created with non-vocational rehabilitation systems serving people with disabilities. For instance, other systems like Independent Living Centers, Programs and Services for Students with Disabilities within community colleges and universities, Regional Centers and mental health organizations are not designated WIOA partners and not included in strategic co-enrollment discussions at the statewide level. This would further accomplish the wrap-around services approach by including more programs serving people with disabilities.

The CCEPD supports continued cross-training efforts on various disabilities and commends the collaborative efforts between the Department of Rehabilitation, California Workforce Association and Employment Development Department. We urge the Departments to create ongoing and systematic cross-training approaches on disability and create an evaluation mechanism to continue creating and addressing disability-related topics. These topics, such as disability awareness, societal concepts of disability and employment supports needed by individuals with disabilities, should always be a part of the curriculum for the WIOA partners. By having disability-related topics in its curriculum, the State of California will continue to break down the stigma of disability. Some of our most creative thinkers, entrepreneurs and leaders are people with disabilities.

The CCEPD continues to support capacity building within the workforce programs through the Disability Employment Initiative and Disability Accelerator grants. These grants have created models that can be replicated in other local workforce development areas. Models, such as using Disability Resource Coordinators and program navigators, have created better service delivery for people with disabilities. As strategic co-enrollment becomes state policy, the CCEPD encourages these models to be replicated throughout California.

The CCEPD also encourages developing benefits planning training for WIOA partners. Currently, the State of California's benefits planning approach is disjointed and the use of existing training and resources is not leveraged and incorporated into all systems that serve people with disabilities. As strategic co-enrollment is further implemented, the CCEPD hopes WIOA partners develop more integrated approaches to benefits planning. Clear, timely, and accurate benefits planning allows people with disabilities to choose employment over benefits, and plan for their future. Benefits planning is just as important as inclusive employment strategies and educational opportunities.

Again, the CCEPD commends the efforts and work of the strategic co-enrollment workgroups. Our belief is that further implementation of strategic

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co-enrollment will lead to long term and systematic access to all programs for people with disabilities.

As a partner, we are very interested in further collaboration on strategic co-enrollment and how to better serve people with disabilities. If you have questions or would like to discuss the CCEPD's comments, please call Maria Aliferis-Gjerde, the Executive Officer of the CCEPD at (916) 558-5698.

Sincerely,

Original Signed

Rachel Stewart  
Chair, CCEPD

Enclosure(s)

cc: Patrick W. Henning  
Director  
Employment Development Department

Joe Xavier  
Director  
Department of Rehabilitation

Department Designees to CCEPD