

# WA State

## 2024 Alderbrook Employment Forum Resources



# Alderbrook 2024

## Data and Session Information

ICI WA State and National Data



## Taking Stock

### 2024 edition

Alderbrook Employment Forum  
October 2024

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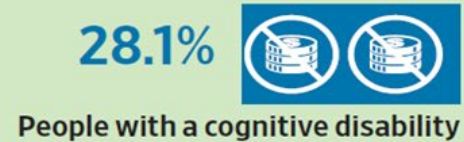


# People with a cognitive disability are more likely than their peers to be unemployed and live in poverty

## WORK



## POVERTY



# Higher-Performing States Model

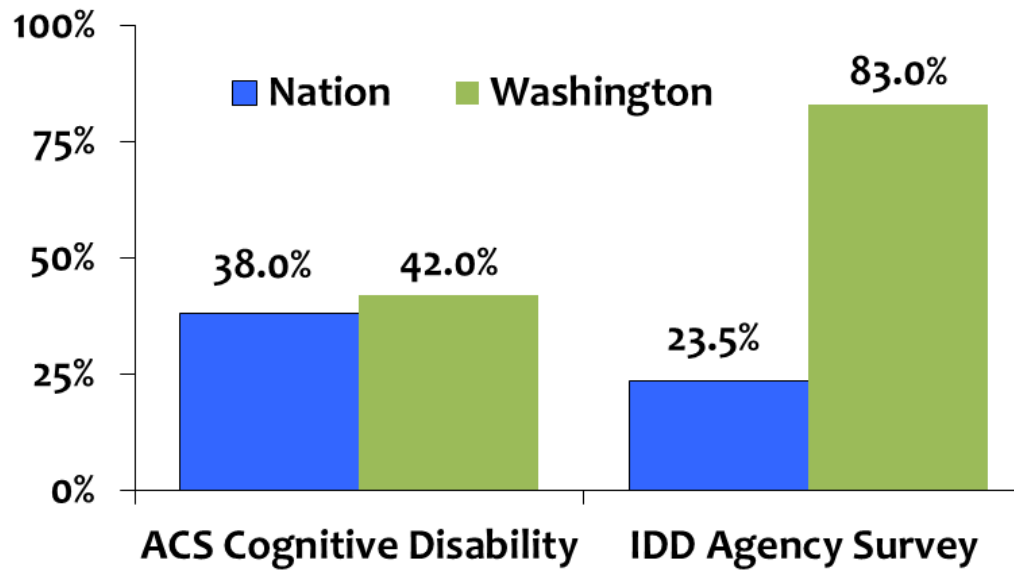
## Higher Performing Framework



Hall et al., 2007;  
Winsor et al., 2023

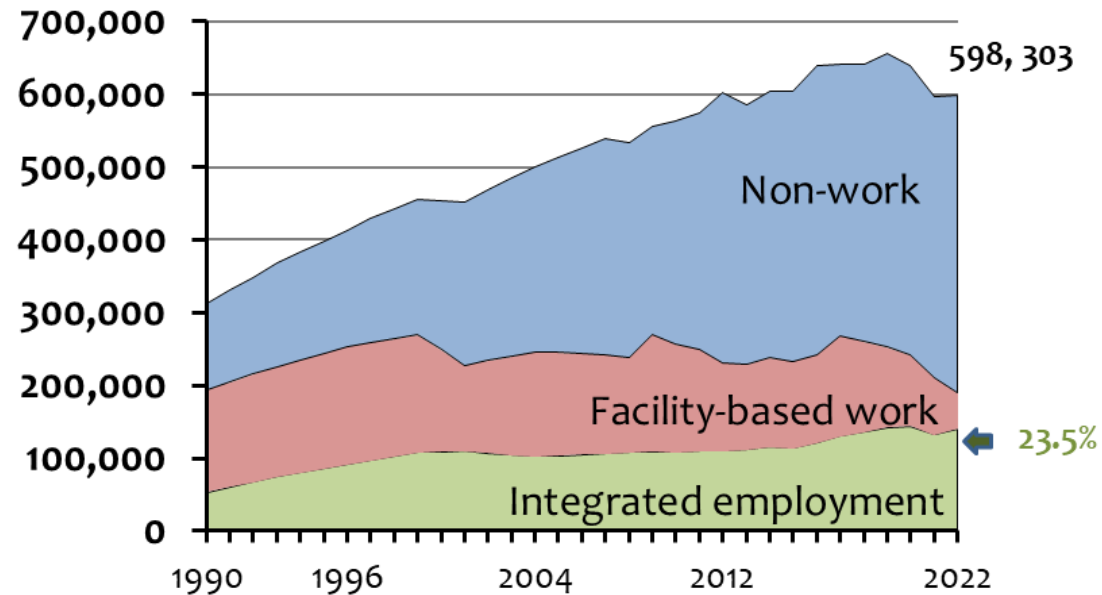


# How many people are employed?



Source: American Community Survey, 2022  
Source: ICI's National Survey of State IDD Agencies, 2022

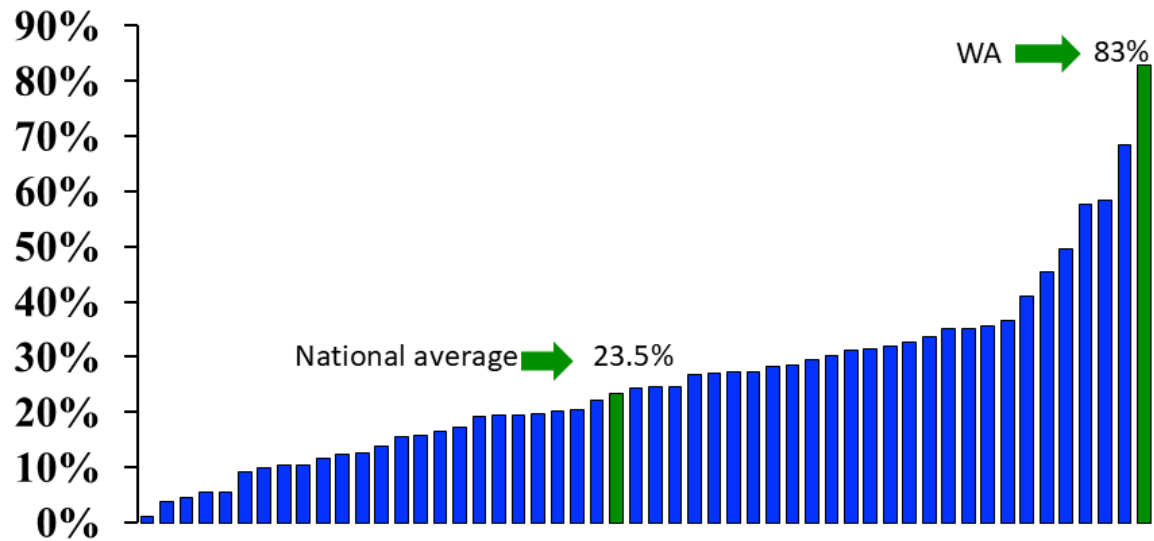
# Number in Employment and Day Services: Nation



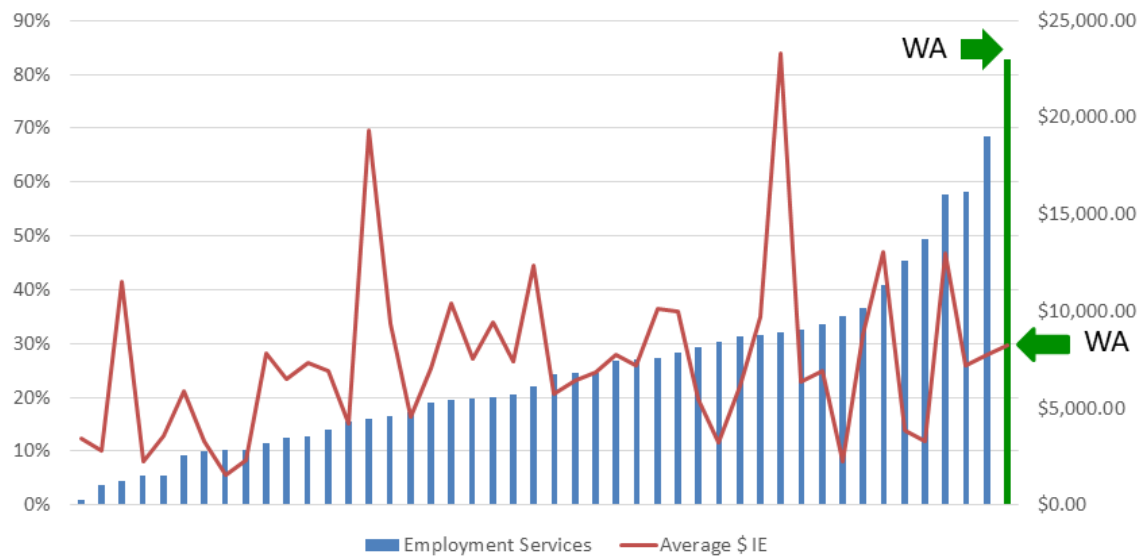
Source: [ICI National Survey of State IDD Agencies](#)



# Participation in integrated employment services varies widely



# Does more \$ spent = more people in IE? It's messy

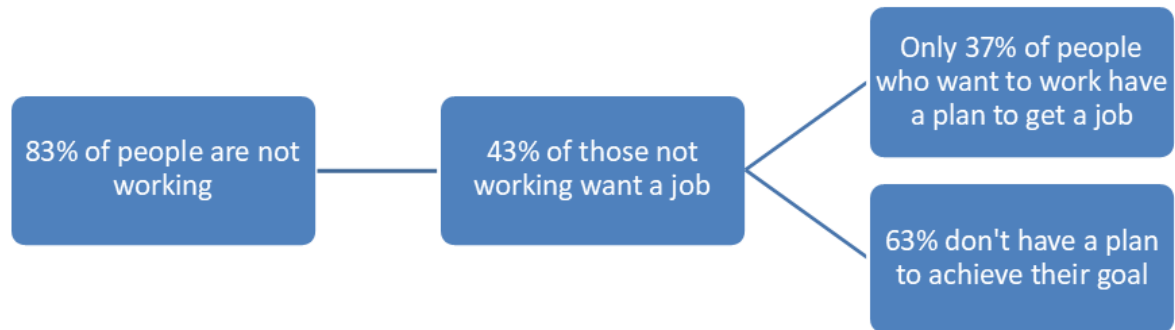


Source: ICI National Survey of State IDD Agencies 2022





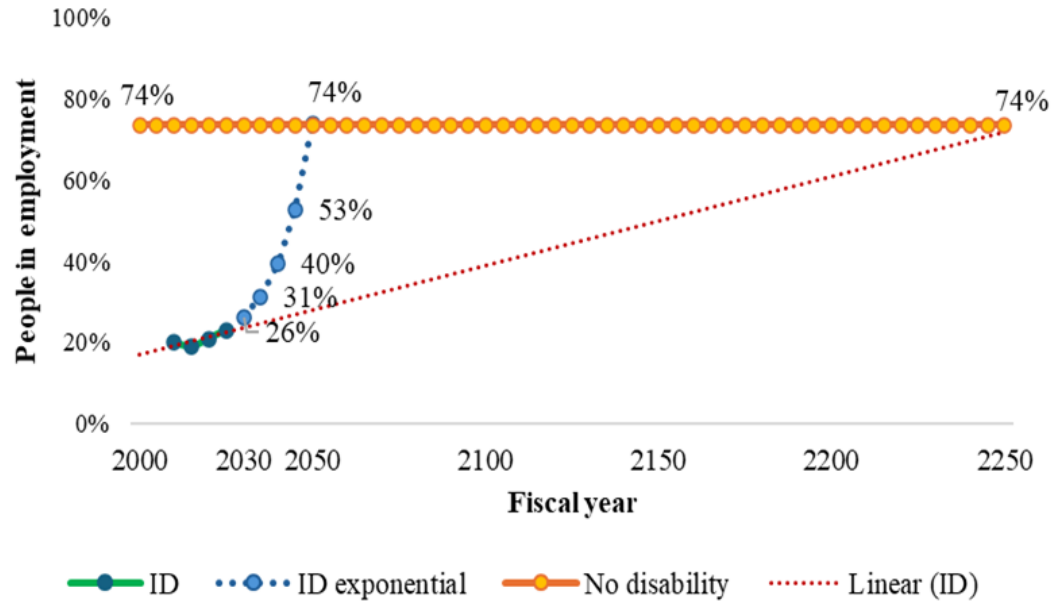
# People want to work!



**We need to do a better job of listening to people**

Source: National Core Indicators 2022-2023

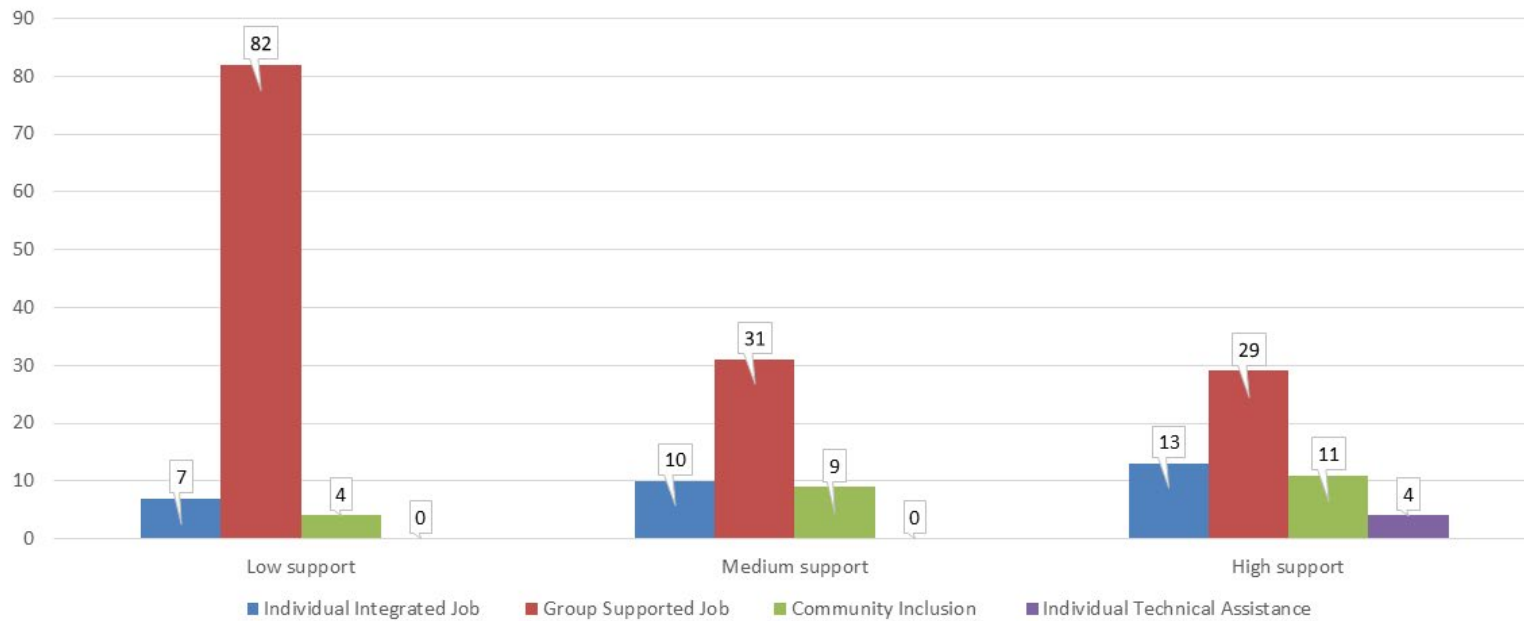
## How long will it take for people who receive state IDD agency services to be employed at the same rate as people without disabilities?



Source "No disability" data: American Community Survey, 2022  
 Source IDD data: ICI National IDD Agency Survey



## Average number of employment support hours by level of employment support need, January 2024



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# Alderbrook 2024

## Breakout Session Themes and Topical Focus Areas

### Themes

#### Collaboration and Advocacy

Partnerships that involve collaborative communication and clearly defined roles enhance both access and accountability. It is crucial to ensure that individuals with lived experiences are placed in valued social roles, spearheading advocacy efforts and advocating for rights and needs effectively.

#### Partnering Equitably with All Communities

We're leaving behind people from marginalized, historically underserved and underrepresented communities across our state, missing out on valuable insights, so we need to do better in our outreach and support for these communities

#### Comprehensive Supports for All

We need to do better and increase our support for those with complex support needs to live a fuller life.

## Topical Areas

Each theme area had the following breakout topical focus areas utilized for input. Attendees chose which topical discussion they'd like to attend.

### Person Centered Systems and Supports

Keeping the person and their choice at the center of each decision.

### Employer, Community Education and Engagement

Further funded outreach and education to inform individuals about available community services, how to access them, and their benefits.

### Modernization from Policy to Practice

"Modernization" refers to transformation, innovation, upgrading, renewal, or leveling up. Consider that we are marking 20 years since the Working Age Adult Policy was launched in 2004. While the policy remains effective, it is crucial to identify the key implementation strategies required for 2025 and moving toward 2030. These strategies should aim to advance employment outcomes and enhance access to a broader community. This includes ensuring that individuals from diverse backgrounds can engage for various purposes and receive the necessary support without solely depending on available services.

## Questions Posed

### Breakout Session #1- Collaboration and Advocacy

#### Person-Centered Systems and Supports

- **Question 1:** What are the main challenges to building systems that focus on individuals, and what changes should we push for in policies and communities to address these challenges?
- **Question 2:** How can we ensure that service recipients are meaningfully involved in every step of designing and implementing person-centered systems and support?

#### Employer, Community Education and Engagement

- **Question 1:** What are the challenges to expanding access to employment services for job seekers from underrepresented communities?
- **Question 2:** How can we use innovative approaches to expand access to employment for those we have left behind?

#### Modernization from Policy to Practice

- **Question 1:** What are the most significant gaps between current disability employment policies and real- world practices?
- **Question 2:** How can we collaborate with community leaders, employers, and individuals with IDD to refresh old practices and policies, ensuring they are flexible and inclusive for the diverse needs of today's workforce?

### Breakout Session #2- Partnering Equitably with All Communities

#### Person-Centered Systems and Supports

- **Question 1:** What strategies can we develop to support people from underserved communities in utilizing their voice to participate in the development of their own support systems?

- **Question 2:** How can we ensure that person-centered systems are culturally responsive and tailored to meet the unique needs of historically marginalized communities?

## Employer, Community Education & Engagement

- **Question 1:** In what ways can community leaders and employers collaborate to create sustainable employment pathways for individuals with IDD, particularly those from underrepresented and underserved backgrounds?
- **Question 2:** How can we work more effectively with employers from diverse communities to increase awareness of and commitment to equitable hiring practices for individuals with IDD?

## Modernization from Policy to Practice

- **Question 1:** What are some concrete ways we can modernize service delivery and employment support systems to be more inclusive of diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, ensuring that no community is left behind in policy implementation?
- **Question 2:** How can we ensure that policies designed to support individuals with IDD are equitable and accessible for all communities, especially those that have been historically underserved or marginalized?

## Breakout Session #3- Comprehensive Supports for All

### Person-Centered Systems and Supports

- **Question 1:** What strategies can we implement to actively involve individuals with complex needs and their families in co-designing their services, ensuring that their choices and preferences are prioritized in a meaningful way?
- **Question 2:** How can we enhance person-centered systems to deliver more tailored, comprehensive support that address the unique needs of individuals, fostering their full inclusion in both the community and the workforce?



## Employer, Community Education and Engagement

- **Question 1:** What strategies can we implement to educate employers about the specific accommodation and support needed for employees with varying needs, ensuring successful employment outcomes?
- **Question 2:** How can we foster partnerships between employers and community organizations to develop more inclusive work environments?

## Modernization from Policy to Practice

- **Question 1:** What changes do we need in our policies to make sure that people get the full support they deserve, and how can we make sure these policies work in real life?
- **Question 2:** How can we update our service delivery systems to better combine all the support that individuals require, making sure that everyone stays included as policies change?

# Alderbrook 2024

## Summary of Input from Breakout Sessions

### Modernization from Policy to Practice

#### 1. Equitable and Inclusive Policy Development

- Fully implement “Nothing About Us Without Us” by involving individuals with lived experience in policy design, paying them for their participation.
- Ensure policies address cultural, language, and accessibility needs, using universal design principles.
- Develop policies to include underserved groups (BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, individuals with significant disabilities) and address systemic gaps in support.
- Streamline policies with a single point of entry and simplify application processes across services.

#### 2. Comprehensive and Flexible Support Systems

- Expand funding and services for personal care, transportation, assistive technology, and wraparound supports, including during work hours.
- Shift to person-centered, strength-based assessments and support planning that adapt to individual needs.
- Increase flexibility in waivers and funding to provide cultural and linguistic supports.
- Introduce navigators or community guides to help individuals and families access and integrate services effectively.

### **3. Collaborative Community Engagement and Outreach**

- Partner with trusted community organizations, cultural leaders, and agencies to enhance outreach and service delivery.
- Conduct community mapping to identify underserved populations and establish coalitions with local and statewide organizations.
- Create events like job fairs, town halls, and transition fairs to foster connections and promote advocacy.
- Engage families early (e.g., birth to 3) to support lifelong self-advocacy and career development.

### **4. Workforce Development and Professionalization**

- Increase wages and training for employment providers, job coaches, and case managers to improve retention and service quality.
- Recruit diverse staff reflective of the communities served, including individuals with disabilities.
- Professionalize vendor roles and develop career pathways within the disability services sector.
- Train staff on cultural competency and disability awareness to provide informed, inclusive care.

## 5. Technology and Innovation for System Efficiency

- Leverage technology like AI (e.g., ChatGPT, Co-Pilot) to streamline service navigation, communication, and documentation.
- Modernize systems by adopting Lean processes to simplify intake and assessments.
- Develop accessible tools like flowcharts and visual guides to improve system understanding for individuals and families.
- Use data and feedback systems to measure service impact and guide continuous improvement.

## Employer, Community Education and Engagement (Jenny & Emily)

### 1. Cultural Responsiveness and Accessibility

- Expand interpretation services beyond Spanish and provide system-informed interpreters knowledgeable about state policies and cultural nuances.
- Hire culturally responsive care providers and diversify staff to reflect community needs.
- Reframe marketing materials to use plain language, minimize text, and include values beyond employment.
- Engage communities of color and marginalized groups by building trust and creating pathways for authentic collaboration.

## **2. Transportation and System Navigation**

- Address transportation barriers in rural areas with incentives for long drives, accessible vehicle programs (e.g., Uber), and better transit support for complex care needs.
- Simplify the application process with a single-entry point (e.g., "1-800-Call-WDDA") and reduce administrative complexity to eliminate reliance on navigators.
- Ensure families and individuals have personal agents or navigators to provide continuous support and fiscal tracking.

## **3. Workforce Development and Employer Engagement**

- Develop a diverse workforce by starting early with internships, integrated classrooms, and career readiness initiatives.
- Educate employers through tailored training, myth-busting about supported employment, and intentional relationship-building at job fairs and community events.
- Encourage inclusive hiring practices and create a culture where hiring individuals with disabilities is normalized rather than seen as “special.”
- Foster peer-led employer dialogues to promote the benefits of supported employment and create healthy competition among businesses.

## **4. Person-Centered Planning and Family Support**

- Shift focus to holistic, person-centered planning that includes family involvement and addresses basic needs like housing, personal care, and emotional support.
- Leverage shared success stories to inspire families and individuals about employment possibilities.
- Provide expanded services for individuals with complex needs, including secondary care providers during transit and additional family-centered resources.

## **5. Community Building and Representation**

- Build inclusive communities by engaging diverse stakeholders, connecting service coordinators, and creating pathways for people with disabilities to serve on governing boards.
- Encourage collaboration among businesses, schools, and service providers to create sustainable pathways to employment.
- Advocate for the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in leadership roles and decision-making processes to ensure equity and representation.
- Use community-focused marketing to emphasize shared responsibility and belonging, framing employment as a community-driven initiative.

## **Person Centered Systems and Supports (Jaimie & Anthony)**

### **1. Equitable Access to Services and Supports**

- Address barriers to transportation, housing, personal care, and childcare, especially in rural areas.
- Develop flexible, person-centered plans updated alongside IEPs and DDA assessments to ensure holistic, accessible services.
- Ensure language access support through interpreters, translated materials, and plain language communication.
- Expand services like mental health supports, childcare, and flexible waivers to cover a broad range of individual needs.

### **2. Community Collaboration and Engagement**

- Involve individuals with lived experience, families, and underrepresented communities in decision-making processes and policy design.
- Host community-centered events like town halls, job fairs, and small group discussions to gather input and foster relationships.

- Partner with cultural organizations and community leaders to build trust and improve outreach.
- Break down silos by fostering collaboration between government departments and service providers to create seamless support systems.

### **3. Systems Modernization and Simplification**

- Create a single point of entry for services, inspired by models like the homeless system.
- Leverage technology, such as AI tools and software systems, to streamline processes and support system navigation.
- Train service providers and staff on system-wide resources to improve navigation and reduce administrative burdens.
- Develop tools like flowcharts and second-person plans to make systems and resources more comprehensible for individuals and families.

### **4. Workforce Development and Representation**

- Hire and train diverse staff who reflect the communities they serve, including individuals with disabilities in leadership roles.
- Provide mandatory DEI and cultural competency training for all staff.
- Professionalize the human services field with higher pay, career pathways, and specialized training for providers.
- Advocate for fair compensation for bilingual staff and those with specialized expertise.

### **5. Advocacy and Policy Innovation**

- Fully implement "Nothing About Us Without Us" by including people with disabilities in leadership and decision-making roles across agencies.
- Advocate for funding and policies that prioritize accessibility, equity, and inclusion in all service systems.

- Create accountability mechanisms for service delivery, ensuring policies are adaptable and inclusive of marginalized communities.
- Push for systemic reforms, such as seamless funding streams between agencies (e.g., DDA/DVR) and consistent policy practices statewide.