A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that employment is one key to full civic engagement for individuals with developmental or intellectual disabilities. In addition to improving economic well-being, employment increases self-worth, builds relationships, and provides access to community resources. Employment establishes community connections that allow people to become contributing and valued members of their community.

The legislature further finds that employment first is a policy based upon the idea that working age persons with developmental or intellectual disabilities can work in jobs fully integrated in the community. Integrated employment includes typical workplace settings that offer regular opportunities for meaningful interaction with coworkers, customers, and the community. The employment of persons with developmental or intellectual disabilities adds to the diversity of the workforce and general enrichment of communities.
The purpose of this Act is to establish an employment first policy for persons with developmental or intellectual disabilities in Hawaii.

SECTION 2. Chapter 333F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§333F—Employment first policy; committee. (a) In furtherance of the State's responsibility to provide support and services for persons with developmental or intellectual disabilities in order to support them in living self-determined lives, it shall be the policy of the State to provide greater opportunities for integrated, competitive employment for working age persons with developmental or intellectual disabilities. Integrated, competitive employment is intended to be the first option considered by the department for working age persons with developmental or intellectual disabilities; provided that the person may choose goals other than integrated, competitive employment. This policy shall be construed to be consistent with the rights established pursuant to section 333F-8.

(b) The department shall establish an employment first committee to serve in an advisory capacity for the
implementation of the employment first policy. The director of
health shall serve as chairperson of the employment first
committee and appoint members as may be necessary; provided that
the membership shall at least include representatives or
advocates for employers and individuals with developmental or
intellectual disabilities.

(c) The employment first committee shall:

(1) Identify the roles and responsibilities of state and
county agencies in enhancing integrated, competitive
employment opportunities for persons with
developmental or intellectual disabilities;

(2) Identify strategies, best practices, and incentives
for increasing integrated, competitive employment
opportunities for people with developmental or
intellectual disabilities, including ways to improve
the transition planning process for students and to
develop partnerships with employers and job
developers;

(3) Identify sources of employment data and make
recommendations for increasing integrated, competitive
employment for persons with developmental or
intellectual disabilities;

(4) Identify sources of consumer data that may be used to
provide demographic information, including age,
gender, ethnicity, types of disability, and geographic
location, and that may be matched with employment data
to identify outcomes and trends of the employment
first policy;

(5) Recommend goals for measuring employment participation
and outcomes for persons within the developmental
disabilities system; and

(6) Recommend statutory, rule, and policy changes to
increase the number of persons with developmental or
intellectual disabilities in integrated, competitive
employment.

(d) The members of the employment first committee shall
serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for expenses,
including travel expenses, necessary for the performance of
their duties.

(e) The employment first committee shall submit a report
to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the
convening of the regular session of 2016, and each regular
session thereafter, on its activities and recommendations during
the year preceding the report.

(f) For purposes of this section:

"Competitive employment" means work in the competitive
labor market that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis
in an integrated setting and for which an individual is
compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the
customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for
the same or similar work performed by persons who are not
disabled.

"Integrated employment" means employment of a person with
developmental or intellectual disabilities in a setting
typically found in the community in which the person interacts
with persons without disabilities other than those who are
providing services to the person with developmental or
intellectual disabilities, to the same extent that persons
without disabilities in comparable positions interact with other
persons."

SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.
SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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Report Title:
Developmental or Intellectual Disabilities; Employment First

Description:
Establishes an employment first policy for persons with developmental or intellectual disabilities in Hawaii. Requires the DOH to establish an employment first committee.

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