

STATEDATA: THE NATIONAL REPORT ON EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND OUTCOMES

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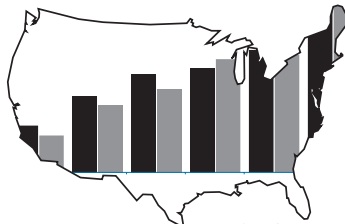
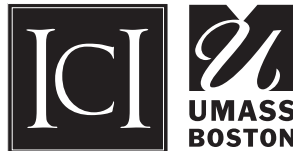
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Advancing employment and opportunity for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities



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Executive Summary

Federal and state policy has paved the way to support opportunities for people with disabilities to have meaningful jobs in their communities (Nord, Luecking, Mank, Kiernan, & Wray, 2013; National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities, 2011; Butterworth et. al, in press). With an increasing emphasis on integrated employment and an Employment First philosophy, the nation is poised for transformation that could put Americans with disabilities on a path out of poverty and towards self-sufficiency.

However, there remains a significant gap in employment rates between people with and without disabilities. The 2013 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates that 33.6% of working-age adults with disabilities are employed, compared with 72.0% of people without disabilities (Butterworth et al., 2014). Labor force statistics for February 2015 estimate that 27.3% of individuals with disabilities ages 16 to 64 are employed, compared with 71.4% of those without disabilities (Bureau of Labor Statistics, March, 2015).

For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), the disparity in employment participation when compared to people without disabilities widens further. Data from the National Core Indicators (NCI) Project suggest that in 2012-2013, only 14.7% of working-age adults supported by state IDD agencies were employed in integrated employment (Bradley et al, 2015; Butterworth et al, in press). Community rehabilitation providers reported in 2010 that only 27% of individuals with IDD supported by their organization received integrated employment services, including both individual job supports and group supported employment (Domin & Butterworth, 2012). Those who are employed typically work limited hours with low wages (Boeltzig, Timmons, & Butterworth, 2008; Butterworth et al, in press). At the same time, participation in facility-based and non-work services has grown, suggesting that employment services remain an add-on rather than a systemic change (Butterworth, Smith, Hall, Migliore, & Winsor, 2013; Mank, 2003; Domin & Butterworth, 2012).

For over 25 years, the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) has been home to Access to Integrated Employment, a national data-collection project on day and employment outcomes funded by the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Since 1988, this project has described the nature of day and employment services for individuals with IDD, and contributed to a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence employment outcomes at the individual, service-provider, and state-policy level.

This report provides statistics over a 25-year period from several national datasets that address the status of employment and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with IDD. The report is divided into two major sections:

- A comprehensive overview that describes national trends in employment for people with IDD.
- An appendix with individual state profiles and a national profile.

Data from four sources is included: the ICI's IDD Agency National Survey of Day and Employment Services (from FY1988, 1990, 1993, 1996, 1999, 2001, 2004, and 2007 through 2013), and datasets from the Social Security Administration, state vocational rehabilitation (VR) programs, and the U.S. Census Bureau (the American Community Survey).

Data continue to highlight the economic disparities between people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities. State investment in supports continues to emphasize facility-based and non-work services, rather than integrated employment services. In the VR system, earnings of adults with disabilities are substantially lower compared

to those in the general population, and weekly earnings of individuals served by VR have declined slightly over time. Overall, the findings suggest that across datasets, people with intellectual disabilities experience greater levels of unemployment, underemployment, low wages, and poverty compared to those without disabilities. This year's data suggest:

- In the IDD system, there has been only modest growth in the number of individuals in integrated employment services since 1988. The estimated percentage of individuals participating in integrated employment services was 18.6% in FY2013, similar to the 18.5% for FY2012, while investment in non-work services continues to expand. In FY2013, Connecticut, Maryland, Oklahoma, Washington, and West Virginia all reported that at least 40% of individuals receiving day and employment services were receiving integrated employment services.
- In the VR system, the rehabilitation rate for FY 2013 decreased when compared to 2012, but was slightly higher than in the years following the recession of 2007-2009. Weekly wages have declined slightly over time as well. People with intellectual disabilities who exited the VR system in 2013 took about 718 days to gain employment, on average, from application. This represented 8 additional days compared to 2012, continuing a trend of increasingly more days from application to an employment outcome.
- American Community Survey (ACS) data continue to show that people with disabilities are much less likely to work than their counterparts without disabilities. People with a cognitive disability, as defined on the ACS who are also receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), the group likely to include people who have the most significant cognitive disabilities, have the lowest employment rate of all disability subgroups examined, and are the most likely to live in a household that is below the poverty line. The positive impact of the economic recovery on employment appears to have been stronger for people without disabilities than it has been for people with disabilities.
- Data from the Social Security Administration show that work incentive programs for SSI recipients with disabilities remain underused. SSI recipients with ID work more than their counterparts with other types of disabilities, but participate in work incentive programs less frequently. Younger people who receive SSI appear to work more frequently than their older counterparts.

Data for FY2013 highlight the economic and employment disparities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. While some data suggest progress (e.g., the increasing number of IDD state agencies that are serving over 40% of individuals in integrated employment services), overall data demonstrate the continued need for policies and initiatives that prioritize employment. The evolving shift in states toward Employment First policies can make an important contribution to raising expectations, improving outcomes, and increasing self-sufficiency for individuals with IDD.

Introduction

Federal and state policy has paved the way to support opportunities for people with disabilities to have meaningful jobs in their communities (Kiernan, Hoff, Freeze, & Mank, 2011; National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities, 2011). With an increasing emphasis on integrated employment, the nation is poised for transformation that could put Americans with disabilities on a path out of poverty and towards self-sufficiency.

However, there remains a significant gap in employment rates between people with and without disabilities. The 2013 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates that 34% of working-age adults with disabilities are employed, compared with 76% of people without disabilities (Butterworth et al., 2014). Labor force statistics for January 2015 estimate that 19.6% of adults with disabilities over the age of 16 are employed, compared with 68.2% of those without disabilities (Bureau of Labor Statistics, February 2015). Labor force data also indicate that workers with disabilities have had significantly higher levels of job loss and hardship during the recent recession, and have not benefitted from the economic recovery as much as their non-disabled counterparts (Kaye, 2010).

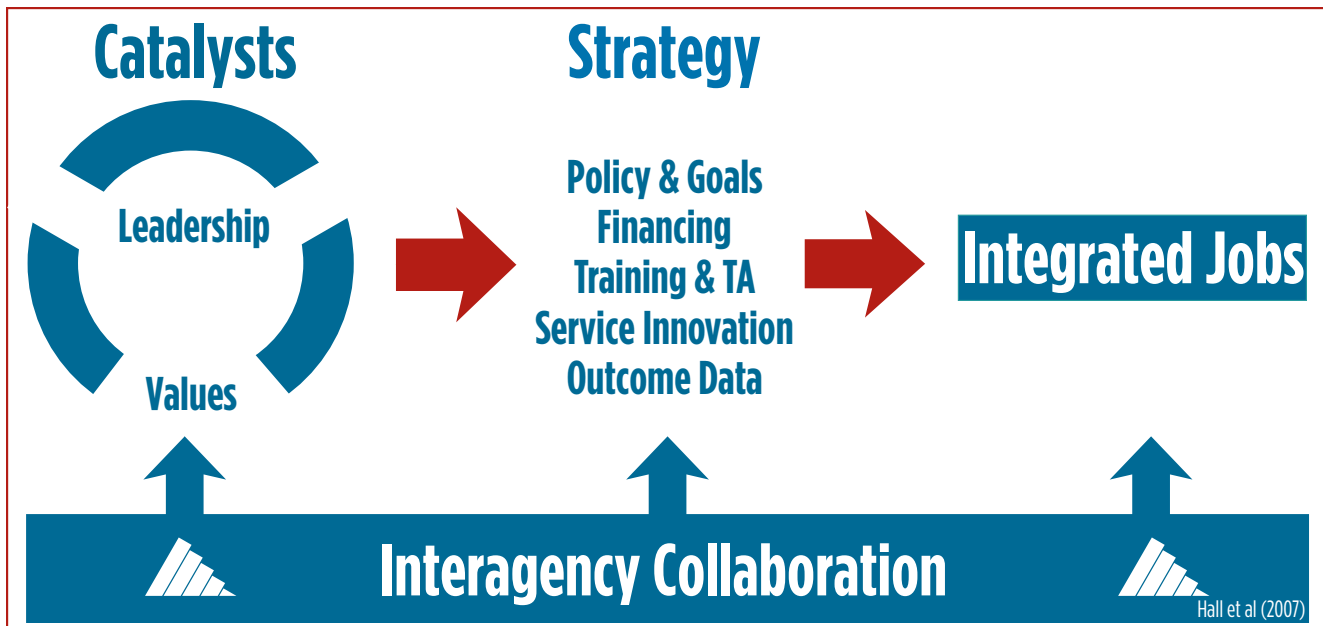
For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), the disparity in employment participation widens further. Data from the National Core Indicators Project suggest that, in 2010, only 15% of working-age adults supported by state IDD agencies achieved integrated employment (Human Services Research Institute, 2014). Community rehabilitation providers reported that, in 2012, only 27% of individuals with IDD supported by their organizations' worked in integrated jobs, including both individual jobs and group supported employment (Domin & Butterworth, 2012). Those who are employed typically work limited hours with low wages (Boeltzig, Timmons, & Butterworth, 2008; Human Services Research Institute, 2012). At the same time, participation in facility-based and non-work services has grown, suggesting that employment services remain an add-on rather than a systemic change (Butterworth et al., 2014; Mank, 2003; Domin & Butterworth, 2012).

Further, the disparity in employment participation and growth of non-work services should be viewed within the context of what people with IDD have said their goals are for employment. Individuals with IDD have clearly expressed both a desire to be full participants in the typical labor force, and an expectation that they would be employed after graduation. The national self-advocacy group Self Advocates Becoming Empowered has a policy statement calling for the end of sub-minimum wage and sheltered employment (SABE, 2009). Further the research literature has documented the desire of individuals with IDD to be employed in the community (Migliore, Mank, Grossi, & Rogan, 2007; Timmons, Hall, Bose, Wolfe, & Winsor, 2011).

Although resources and priorities have not coalesced nationwide, there is substantial evidence of progress across the country. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2013, CT, MD, OK, WA, and WV all reported that at least 40% of individuals with IDD receiving day and employment services were receiving integrated employment services. As an outgrowth of the Access to Integrated Employment project, 29 states have committed to expansion of integrated employment by joining the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN, August 2014).

The SELN is a membership roundtable co-managed by the ICI and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services. Its work is guided by the High Performing States Model, which identifies seven elements that transmit and maintain commitment to the goals of community inclusion and integrated employment (see Figure 1). More than a decade of research by the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston (ICI) has found that integrated employment outcomes only improve if all policies and practices are realigned to support employment as the goal for all service recipients (Hall et al., 2007; Butterworth et al., 2014). Between 2004 and 2010, the reported percentage of individuals in integrated employment services grew from 32.1% to 36.4% for SELN states, and dropped from 19.9% to 18.4% in 2010 for non-SELN states (SELN, 2012).

Figure 1. High Performance Model



On the national level, integrated employment has emerged as a policy priority, both in the disability arena and beyond. The National Governors Association in 2012, under the leadership of Delaware governor Jack Markell, launched a blueprint for governors entitled *A Better Bottom Line: Employing People with Disabilities*. The purpose of this initiative is to increase employment for individuals with intellectual and other significant disabilities.

The Alliance for Full Participation, a coalition of disability advocacy organizations, established employment as the priority for their 2011 national summit, attended by over 1,250 people. This marked the mid-point in a campaign to double employment for people with IDD by 2015 (Walsh, 2011). The National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities released a report entitled *The Time is Now: Embracing Employment First* in conjunction with the AFP summit.

The Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities has issued multi-year system change grants to support states in cross-system collaboration to address increasing employment outcomes for youth and young adults, as well as grants to establish community of practice opportunities for states engaged in Employment First efforts. Employment First strategies consist of a clear set of guiding principles and practices promulgated through state statutes, regulations, and operational procedures. All these practices target employment in typical work settings as the priority for state funding, and the purpose of supports furnished to people with IDD during the day. The Office of Disability Employment Policy at the U.S. Department of Labor has issued policy statements and developed grant opportunities and communities of practice to support implementation of Employment First in several states. The Obama administration recently launched a new competitive grant program, Promoting Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income (PROMISE). PROMISE is designed to improve the education and career outcomes of low-income children with disabilities, ages 14–16, who receive Supplemental Security Income through the Social Security Administration.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services released guidance to the field clarifying their commitment to individual integrated employment as an outcome of employment-related services under the home and community-based services waiver program (Mann, 2011), and is anticipated to release guidance related to the assessment of community-based employment settings (Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, 2014). Additionally, the U.S. Department of Justice has extended the *Olmstead vs. L.C.* decision related to the unnecessary segregation of people

with disabilities to employment in several states. In July 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) required that each state's public vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency focus on transition services and pre-employment services, coordinate with the state agency responsible for administering the State Medicaid Plan and with state intellectual and developmental disability agencies, and focus on the general workforce development system and One-Stop Career Centers (also called American Job Centers).

At least 34 states have some form of Employment First initiative (APSE, 2014), which is nationally recognized as a policy path towards greater community employment for people with IDD. Employment First policies anchor a service delivery system, focusing funding, resource allocation, training, daily assistance, and the provision of residential supports on the overall objective of employment. This strengthens the capacity of all individuals receiving publicly financed supports to enter the workforce and become contributing members of society (Moseley, 2009). Employment First represents a commitment by states, and state IDD agencies, to the propositions that all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (a) are capable of performing work in typical integrated employment settings; (b) should receive, as a matter of state policy, employment-related services and supports as a priority over other facility-based and non-work day services; and (c) should be paid at minimum or prevailing wage rates.

Services and Supports Used by People with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities

Employment supports are provided within a context of state and federal disability policy, workforce development policy, income maintenance, and healthcare policy. These include supports related to transportation, housing, welfare, and childcare. Core supports are funded by state IDD and VR agencies, as well as local education agencies, and employment supports are provided by a network of over 8,000 community rehabilitation providers.

State IDD agencies.

State IDD agencies remain the primary source of long-term funding and service coordination. They provide, fund, and monitor a wide range of services, including employment supports, facility-based options (sheltered workshops and non-work day habilitation programs), community integration services, and self-directed options. Funding for state IDD agency day and employment services come from two main sources: Medicaid and state general revenue funds.

State vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies.

State VR agencies provide services to over one million people annually, closing approximately 600,000 cases in each fiscal year. Approximately 8.2%, or 48,540, of those case closures can be identified as individuals with IDD, a person with a primary or secondary impairment code of intellectual disability (formerly categorized as mental retardation).

In 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) began requiring that each state's public VR system have formal cooperative agreements with the state agency responsible for administering the state Medicaid plan and with state IDD agencies, with respect to the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services, including extended services. This is an emerging requirement for state VR agencies, although policy under the Medicaid HCBS program requires that individuals access VR for employment support prior to receiving Medicaid waiver funding. There is historical evidence that collaboration between state VR and Medicaid HCBS authorities is impeded by a wide range of systemic barriers, including lack of agreement about target populations and differences in culture and resources (Timmons, Cohen, & Fesko, 2004).

One-Stop Career Centers.

Established and supported under the Workforce Investment Act and its reauthorizations, these centers, also known as American Job Centers, provide an underused resource for individuals with IDD and other disabilities. In 2013, 507,702 individuals with disabilities registered as job seekers for Wagner Peyser-funded One-Stop services (U.S. Department of

Labor, Employment & Training Administration, 2014). Six hundred and sixty-one individuals with ID who closed out of state VR services in 2013 (1.3% of all VR closures with ID) were identified as referrals from One-Stop Career Centers. A number of provisions in WIOA emphasize and increase the requirements for the general workforce development system and One-Stop Career Centers to meet the needs of job seekers with disabilities. WIOA explicitly requires that state and local workforce development boards' members can include community organizations that provide or support competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities.

Medicaid.

Medicaid is both a primary source for health care for individuals with IDD and the largest federal source of funds for day and employment services under the Home and Community Based Services waiver program. While historically there has been no clear preference for integrated employment in Medicaid-funded services, in 2011 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a policy bulletin that provides guidance for the development of employment-related service definitions in 1915(c) waivers. This guidance establishes individual integrated employment as a priority goal (CMS, 2011). Over the past decade, CMS has expanded its focus on employment through the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant program and expansion of state Medicaid buy-in programs. It is anticipated that shortly CMS will release guidance related to the assessment of community-based employment settings (CMS, 2014).

Social Security.

Social Security Administration (SSA) work incentives, such as the Plan for Achieving Self-Support, Impairment Related Work Expenses, and the Student Earned Income Exclusion, support employment by allowing individuals who receive Supplemental Security Income to exclude money, resources, and certain expenses from total earned income. The SSA also administers the Ticket to Work program, which provides beneficiaries with a ticket to purchase VR, employment, and other support services from any participating employment network or state VR agency (Social Security Administration, n.d.). Despite the SSA's initiatives, work incentives and the Ticket to Work program remain underused (Butterworth et al., 2014).

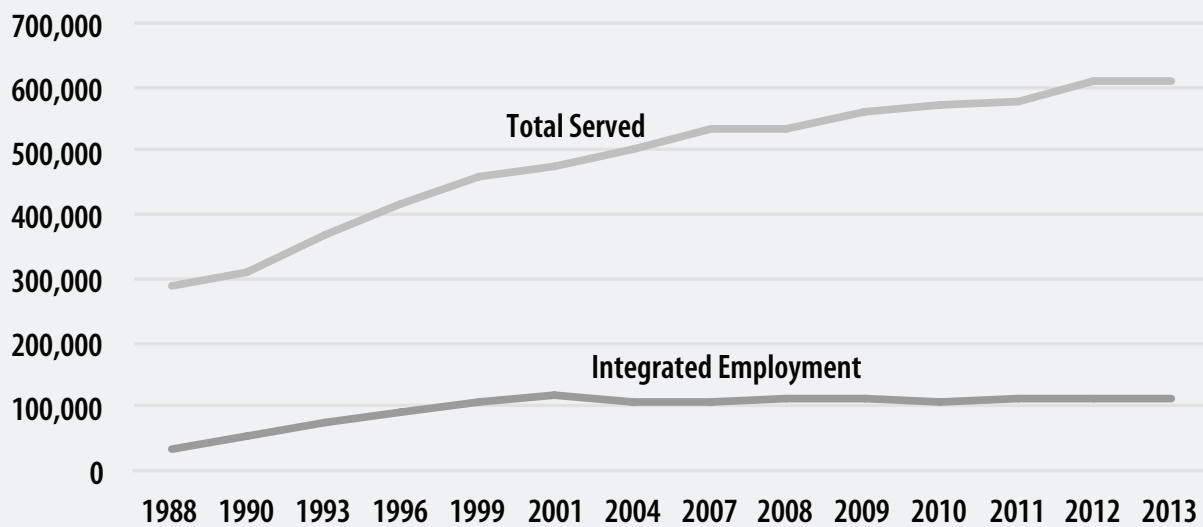
Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs).

CRPs and their staff are the primary source of day and employment supports for people with IDD. The ICI maintains a national provider list, and estimates that over 8,000 CRPs nationwide offer vocational services to individuals with disabilities. The majority (over 70%) of those served by CRPs are people with IDD (Metzel et al., 2007; Domin & Butterworth, 2012). Over two thirds of CRPs provide both work and non-work services (Metzel et al., 2007; Domin & Butterworth, 2012).

Factors that Influence Employment Outcomes

Despite state and federal initiatives, policy change, and emerging leadership, widespread integrated employment for people with IDD has not occurred. Nationally, an estimated 18.6% of individuals receiving day supports from state IDD agencies participated in integrated employment services during FY2013. This number has slowly declined after reaching a peak of almost 25% in FY2001. Overall growth in integrated employment slowed following the end of the RSA Supported Employment Systems Change grants in the mid-1990s (Butterworth et al., 2012; see Figure 2). At the service delivery level, best practices evolved, including person-centered career planning, customized employment, job creation, and self-employment, but adoption of these practices is limited (Migliore et al., 2012).

Figure 2. Number Served by IDD Agencies



Continuing challenges for systems change include:

State and federal policy do not consistently prioritize employment.

While more individuals with IDD are in integrated employment, the number participating in facility-based and non-work services has grown more rapidly. Despite investments in education, income supports, and healthcare for Americans with disabilities, few of these resources encourage or reward integrated community employment (Niemiec, Lavin, & Owens, 2009). Additionally, CRPs that have closed a facility-based program report that state agencies are rarely a catalyst for change (Butterworth, Fesko, & Ma, 2000).

Expansion of community-based non-work (CBNW) services has competed with integrated employment (Sulewski, 2010). Thirty state IDD agencies reported supporting individuals in CBNW services in FY2013, and indicated that 45.8% of those served that year participated in CBNW. Respondents to the ICI's 2010–2011 National CRP Survey reported a more modest but still meaningful role for CBNW services, indicating that 16.4% of individuals with IDD participated (Domin & Butterworth, 2012).¹ The increase in participation in CBNW is troubling because it is a service that at the state level is typically loosely defined with respect to requirements, activities, populations served, and goals (Sulewski, Butterworth, & Gilmore, 2008).

¹ This difference reflects both the ability of CRPs to more accurately report on individual service settings when compared to state IDD agencies ability, and the inclusion of data from more states.

CRPs have not reallocated resources to community employment.

Respondents to the ICI's 2010–2011 National CRP Survey reported that 19% of individuals with IDD participated in individual employment services, a slight increase from the 18% reported in 2002–2003. An additional 9.5% of individuals were reported to be working in mobile work crews or enclaves. The majority of individuals participated in facility-based or non-work services (25.2% and 43%, respectively). The largest growth was in non-work services (facility-based or community-based). Between 2002 and 2010, participation in non-work services grew from 33% to 43%, offset by a decline in the percentage of individuals in facility-based work. Literature citing challenges in provider organizational transformation shows significant variation in the services offered and the beliefs about integrated employment within the provider community, ranging from quite progressive to more traditional with deeply entrenched attitudes. This makes the creation of a unified vision for service delivery extremely difficult (ODEP, unpublished). Many organizations were founded five or six decades ago by families whose children with IDD had no other educational or employment options. Some of these organizations have since have transformed their employment options to include current best practices in employment services, but the use of these practices has not been brought to scale across all provider organizations (Butterworth & Fesko, 2001).

Funding mechanisms vary across states and do not always reflect policy priorities.

In an environment of increasing fiscal limitations and individualized budgeting, there is a growing need for state employment systems to discuss rate-setting and funding. Analysis of five states' employment funding structures suggests there is no "best" approach, but there are several key elements for success (Hall, Freeze, Butterworth, & Hoff, 2011). Rate and contracting structures should be selected with a clear intent regarding goals. Unambiguous definitions and service categories should also reflect these priorities. States with policy and funding alignment pay more for desired outcomes (a community job), and less or nothing at all for other outcomes.

Work with SELN states suggests that changes made to funding rates should be based in the real-world costs of providing high-quality integrated employment services, and should not solely rely on the typical approach of revising funding based upon historical costs. When considering states' funding methodologies, all state agencies that pay for employment services should be involved in the discussion. Past experience has shown that making fragmented changes to one or two service rates is not sufficient to address the underlying funding issues faced by providers and service recipients. Consideration of the entire funding system helps ensure that individuals receive services that support a whole-life, individualized, community-centered approach to employment.

Best practices in job supports are not consistently implemented.

Research has investigated competencies and training needs of direct support professionals (DSPs) in residential settings (Larson & Hewitt, 2005; Larson et al., 2007). However, less has been done to examine the same issues regarding DSPs who assist job seekers. These DSPs face complex responsibilities, ranging from meeting business demands to addressing the personal needs of people with disabilities (Test, Flowers, & Hewitt, 2004).

Research suggests that employment specialists inconsistently use established promising practices, including spending time with individuals in community settings, working with families, and negotiating job responsibilities with an employer (Migliore et al., 2012; Migliore, Hall, Butterworth, & Winsor, 2010). Findings also suggest that job developers have limited opportunities for effective professional development, including both formal and informal chances for learning (Hall, Bose, Winsor, & Migliore, 2014), though employment specialists who receive training and mentorship do improve the number and quality of the jobs they develop (Butterworth et al., 2012).

Individual employment outcomes have not improved.

Data consistently show that the majority of individuals with IDD work part-time in entry-level positions, have low annual income, and have limited access to employee benefits (Human Services Research Institute, 2012; Boeltzig, H., Timmons, J. C., & Butterworth, J. (2008); Mank, Cioffi, & Yovanoff, 2003). Outcomes have also declined for individuals with ID served by state VR agencies. In 2012, a total of 46,672 people with intellectual disabilities exited the VR program. This figure was the lowest reported during the past ten years (Butterworth, 2013). Additionally, about 65% of the people with intellectual disabilities who exited the VR program in 2012 received services, compared to 72% of those exiting the program in 2004.

The hourly earnings of people with intellectual disabilities, adjusted for inflation, remained about the same between 2003 (\$8.13) and 2012 (\$8.25).² Schur, Kruse, Blasi, and Blank (2009) found that employees with disabilities have less job security, receive less company-sponsored training, and have lower rates of participation in decision-making when compared to workers without disabilities.

Transition-age youth continue to face challenges.

Data on youth and young adults with disabilities indicate that, similar to the adult population, they lag behind their peers without disabilities in measures of education, employment, and economic well-being. Nationally, compared to youth without disabilities, students with disabilities are less likely to receive a regular high school diploma, drop out twice as often, and enroll in and complete postsecondary education programs at half the rate (Chapman, Laird, & KewalRamani, 2010).

At two years post-high school, four in ten youth with disabilities are employed, compared to six in ten youth in the general population (Chapman, Laird, & KewalRamani, 2010). Students with IDD in particular have the lowest rates of education, work, and preparation for work after high school. Sulewski, Zalewska, and Butterworth (2012) found that outcomes for youth with IDD lag behind youth without IDD, and that this gap increases with age.

Poor employment outcomes for youth with IDD are a result of a confluence of issues. These include lack of emphasis on integrated employment outcomes within state IDD agencies (Butterworth et al., 2011), inadequate collaboration between the adult disability and education systems (Whelley, Hart, & Zaft, n.d.), limited vocational experiences in school (Carter, Austin, & Trainor, 2011), inadequate support to transition directly to jobs in the community (Certo et al., 2003), and limited development of self-determination and career-related decision-making skills (Shogren & Plotner, 2012). Other employment system factors include low teacher expectations of students working (Carter et al., 2010), unmet needs for professional development of special education teachers (Winsor et al., 2010), lack of long-term follow-up of graduates after transition to employment (Rusch & Braddock, 2004), and limited diffusion of best practices such as person-centered planning in schools (Winsor et al., 2010).

State IDD agencies widely view transition from school to adult life as an important time to establish a pathway into employment. However, National Core Indicator Project data suggest that only 17% of individuals with IDD ages 18–34 are working in integrated employment.

² This decline is reported in 2005 dollars after adjusting for inflation.

Methodology

This report provides statistics over 25 years from several national datasets that address the status of employment and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The authors use abbreviations for both intellectual disability (ID) and intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in this report. We do this because data sources vary in the specific target groups that can be described.

We provide a comprehensive overview that describes national trends in employment for people with IDD, and the appendices provide individual state profiles with data from several sources. These include the ICI's IDD Agency National Survey of Day and Employment Services (from FY1999, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013), and datasets from the Social Security Administration, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and American Community Survey. The appendices provide a state-by-state analysis of trends across each dataset.

Data Sources

IDD Agency National Survey of Day and Employment Services

This survey is part of a longitudinal study commissioned by the Administration on Developmental Disabilities to analyze community-based day and employment service trends. Data is presented for services received between FY1988 and 2013 for individuals with IDD and closely related conditions. Between 1988 and 2004, the survey was administered on a semi-annual basis; starting in 2007, information has been collected annually. The most recent version of the survey is focused on state IDD agency data for FY2013.

The survey is designed to provide the following information:

- Trends in the number of people served in integrated employment, facility-based employment, and facility-based and community-based non-work programs
- Trends in the number of individuals waiting for services
- Funding sources being used to support day and employment services
- The allocation of funds across day and employment services

The survey was developed with input and field-testing support from state IDD agency administrators. Core variables include the number of people served (total and by day and employment service categories), number of people on waiting lists, expenditures by service, and total funding by source. All questions focus on community-based day or employment services monitored by the state IDD agency, including services funded by another state agency (such as the Medicaid agency), even if the IDD agency does not provide or directly contract for the service.

In 1996, the category of community-based non-work services was added to the survey. The most recent changes to the survey occurred in 2010. States are now asked not only to provide the number of individuals in each service category, but also to indicate if they provided each service. Additionally, states are now asked specific questions about the number of individuals that they serve who are working for pay in jobs in the community, in order to distinguish between services and employment outcomes. Since FY2001, states have had the opportunity to complete the survey using a secure website. Each state's responses from the previous year are listed on the website for reference and updating if necessary.

The survey was most recently administered in June 2014 to IDD agencies in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The agency director from each state and the staff members who responded to the previous survey were contacted to ensure consistency in the data reported. Initial contact was made by email, and follow-up was completed via email and telephone. States were asked to complete the most recent survey using data from FY2013.

The survey home page provides general information and instructions for completing the survey. Additionally, instructions and guidance for responding to the survey questions are included within each question. The survey requests data on the total number of individuals served; however, if a state does not have the capacity to adjust for individuals who enter or exit the system during a fiscal year and can only provide the number served at the end of the fiscal year (or at some other specific point in time), there is a place on the survey to provide this information.

Each step of the survey provides an opportunity for states to enter explanatory comments on their data. The final step of the survey offers states the chance to make suggestions for how the survey could be revised in the future. States are also asked to identify the information source used to provide service category data. There is a definitions page that can be referred to from any page of the survey. A summary of the service category definitions can be found in Table 1.

After a state has finalized its response to the survey, ICI staff review the data and follow up with states whose data shows an unexpected increase or decrease in the total number served, number served in a service category, or total funding.

Table 1. IDD Survey Service Definitions

Type of Setting/ Service	Work	Non-Work
Community	Integrated employment: Integrated employment services are provided in a community setting and involve paid employment of the participant. Specifically, integrated employment includes competitive employment, individual supported employment, group supported employment, and self-employment supports.	Community-based non-work: Community-based non-work includes all services that are focused on supporting people with disabilities to access community activities in settings where most people do not have disabilities. It does not include paid employment.
Facility	Facility-based work: Facility-based work includes all employment services that occur in a setting where the majority of employees have a disability. These activities occur in settings where continuous job-related supports and supervision are provided to all workers with disabilities. This service category is typically referred to as a sheltered workshop, work activity center, or extended employment program.	Facility-based non-work: Facility-based non-work includes all services that are located in a setting where the majority of participants have a disability. These services do not involve paid employment of the participant.

In a typical year, between 40 and 45 states complete the IDD survey. The authors produce figures for total served in day and employment services and total served in integrated employment by estimating these data points for states that did not report these data in a particular year. The researchers used the linear trend method for estimating missing values that is available in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21.0 to produce these estimates. This algorithm uses all non-missing observations in a series to fit a regression line, and applies a regression equation to replace the missing values.³ To increase stability of the estimates for states that did not report on these data points, data from the literature were added to the IDD survey observations, with FY2006, FY2009, and FY2011 data drawn from the most recent literature available (Braddock et al., 2011).

Rehabilitation Services Administration 911 (RSA-911) Database

The RSA-911 is a public access database that captures individual characteristics, services provided, and employment outcomes at the point of closure from VR services. Records are at the individual level, covering roughly 600,000 case closures per year.

3 For more information on the Replace Missing Values algorithm applied by SPSS, go to http://www-01.ibm.com/support/knowledgecenter/SSLVMB_21.0.0/com.ibm.spss.statistics.help/alg_rmv_lineartrend.htm

Table 2. RSA Service Definitions

Term	Explanation
Closure	Data in the RSA-911 are collected at the time of closure (conclusion) of VR services. The VR closure categories used in this report include closure with an employment outcome after receiving services (formerly Status 26), and closure without an employment outcome after receiving services (formerly Status 28).
Successful rehabilitation	Closure with an employment outcome, including integrated employment (including supported employment), self-employment, state-agency-managed business enterprise, homemaker, and unpaid family worker.
Rehabilitation rate	The percentage of individuals receiving services who achieve a successful rehabilitation. Calculated as: closures with an employment outcome / closures with an employment outcome + closures without an employment outcome after receiving services.
Supported employment services	Supported employment may be funded from Title VI-b funds, funds dedicated to supported employment under the Rehabilitation Act, or general rehabilitation funds.

For the purposes of this report, a person was considered to have an intellectual disability (ID) if code 25 (mental retardation in the RSA-911 dataset) was reported as the cause of either a primary or secondary impairment to employment.

American Community Survey

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a national survey designed and administered by the U.S. Census Bureau to better understand changing communities. The ACS collects information from all 50 states and D.C. on topics such as disability, age, race, income, and other demographic and personal data (www.census.gov). To gather information on people with disabilities, the Census Bureau asks six questions on long-lasting conditions and functional impairments. Any person who indicates having at least one of these conditions or functional impairments is coded as having a disability. The individual items used to collect these data points are outlined in Table 3.

Due to changes implemented in the ACS beginning in 2008, data for people with disabilities for 2007 and earlier years should not be compared with data beginning in 2008. The sensory disability item used from 2000–2007 was eliminated, and two distinct items for visual and hearing disabilities were added in 2008. The employment disability variable that was used from 2000–2007 was eliminated from the survey in 2008. Additional changes in wording for other disability items included removing the duration of impairment from some questions and adding the term “serious” to focus on long-term/more severe impairments.⁴

⁴ Source: <http://www.disabilitystatistics.org/faq.cfm#>

Table 3. ACS Service Definitions

Term	Explanation
Employment rate	The percent of civilian, non-institutionalized working-age (16–64 years old) individuals who have a job.
Disability categories	<p>The 2000 through 2007 ACS classifies individuals as having a disability based on:</p> <p>1) Presence of a long-lasting condition in one or both of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blindness, deafness, or a severe vision or hearing impairment (sensory disability). • Substantial limitation in the ability to perform basic physical activities, such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting, or carrying (physical disability). <p>And/or</p> <p>2) Difficulty doing any of the following activities because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting six months or more:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty learning, remembering, or concentrating (mental disability). • Difficulty dressing, bathing, or getting around inside the home (self-care disability). • Difficulty going outside the home alone to shop or visit a doctor’s office (go-outside-the-home disability). • Difficulty working at a job or business (employment disability). <p>The 2008 and 2009 ACS classify individuals as having a disability based on:</p> <p>1) Answering affirmatively to one or more of the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this person deaf or does he or she have serious difficulty hearing (hearing disability)? • Is this person blind or does he or she have serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses (vision disability)? • Does this person have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs (ambulatory difficulty)? • Does this person have difficulty dressing or bathing (self-care difficulty)? • Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, does this person have difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor’s office or shopping (independent-living difficulty)? • Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, does this person have serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions (cognitive disability)?

Social Security Administration (SSA).

These data are abstracted from the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Annual Statistical Report. The SSA reports work-incentive participation and the number of individuals receiving SSI who are working. Beginning with the 2010 SSI Annual Statistical Report, tables showing data by diagnostic group provide more specific details for mental disorders in these categories: autistic disorders, developmental disorders, childhood and adolescent disorders not elsewhere classified, intellectual disability, mood disorders, organic mental disorders, schizophrenic and other psychotic disorders, and all other mental disorders. Data from previous years use three categories for mental disorders: retardation, schizophrenia, and other.

Table 4. Work Incentive Program Definitions

Program	Definition
Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS)	Allows a person with a disability to set aside income or resources to support achieving a specific work goal. Money set aside under a PASS plan is excluded both as current income and from the SSI resource limits.
Impairment-Related Work Expense (IRWE)	Allows people to exclude the cost of certain impairment-related services or items needed to earn income when determining the beneficiary’s current earned income for SSI eligibility and benefits.
Section 1619(a)	Allows people with disabilities to continue receiving SSI income even if their earned income is at Substantial Gainful Activity levels, i.e., the amount that would normally make them ineligible for SSI.
Section 1619(b)	Allows individuals to continue receiving Medicaid benefits if their earnings disqualify them from eligibility for SSI cash payments but are not enough to afford medical insurance.

State Demographics.

State demographics are from multiple data sources. State population data is taken from the U.S. Census website (www.census.gov). Unemployment data is taken from the Bureau of Labor Statistics website (www.bls.gov).

National Trends in Employment

IDD Agency National Survey of Day and Employment Services (FY1999–2013)

The data reported here are the core elements of the Institute for Community Inclusion's IDD Agency National Survey of Day and Employment Services. These data focus on participation in integrated employment, community-based non-work, and facility-based services. Data are solicited from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The number of reporting states varied from 37 to 46 over the time studied (1999–2013).

The researchers calculated national estimates for the total number of people served by state IDD agencies, as well as the total number of people who received integrated employment services. For some states, data reported by service setting represent duplicated counts because individuals were served in multiple settings. For these states, the percentage served across settings may add up to more than 100%. Other services, including services for individuals who are elderly, are not reported.

Major findings include:

- National estimates suggest that there has been modest growth in the number of individuals in integrated employment since 1988.
- The estimated percentage of individuals participating in integrated employment services was 18.6% in FY2013.
- Growth in supported employment primarily occurred between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s, and there has been a decline in the percentage of people with IDD in integrated employment since 2001.
- Growth in community-based non-work services has continued for states that report offering this service.
- There is large variation across states in participation in integrated employment.

Figure 3: Trend Line for Estimated Total Number of People Served by State IDD Agencies and Estimated Number Served in Integrated Employment

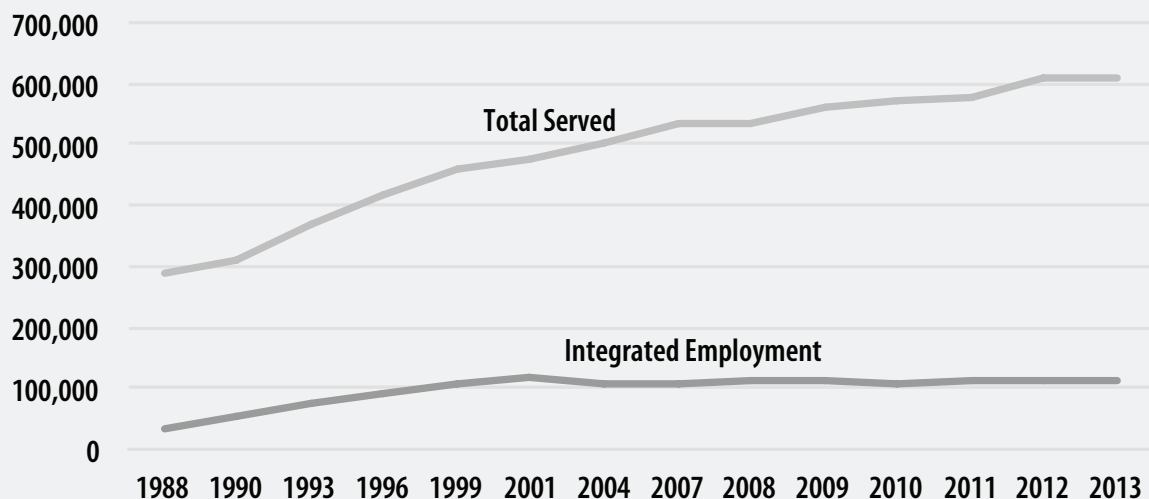


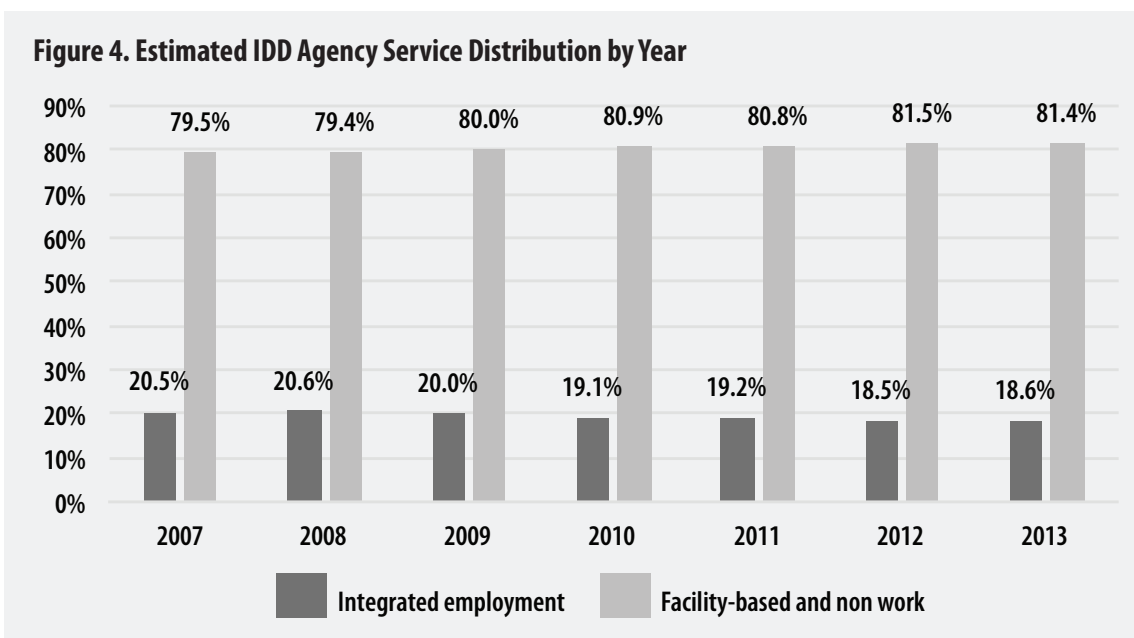
Table 5: Participation in Day and Employment Services in FY2013

State	Total Served	Percent Integrated Employment	Percent Community-Based Non-Work	Percent Facility-Based Work	Percent Facility-Based Non-Work
AK	1608	26%	0%	0%	98%
AL	4893	4%	0%	2%	94%
AR	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
AZ	7471	21%	0%	12%	67%
CA	79833	12%	75%	13%	0%
CO	7706	27%	74%	0%	54%
CT	9764	49%	51%	4%	0%
DC	1253	12%	-1	0%	87%
DE	1923	29%	13%	24%	31%
FL	16653	14%	0%	0%	0%
GA	19854	13%	26%	0%	60%
HI	2180	2%	90%	1%	56%
IA	12998	17%	0%	25%	58%
ID	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
IL	24178	6%	0%	1%	93%
IN	13049	15%	71%	34%	43%
KS	6200	13%	53%	50%	58%
KY	7072	18%	96%	0%	13%
LA	5346	31%	0%	29%	39%
MA	15523	29%	17%	20%	55%
MD	12663	40%	0%	0%	60%
ME	3515	28%	-1%	-1	-1
MI	17746	23%	36%	25%	28%
MN	22306	13%	25%	53%	8%
MO	5618	12%	6%	0%	89%
MS	-1	-1%	-1	-1	-1%
MT	1854	12%	0%	0%	88%
NC	13625	22%	28%	19%	33%
ND	-1	-1%	-1	-1	-1
NE	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
NH	3603	38%	65%	0%	0%
NJ	11910	11%	0%	22%	63%
NM	3332	33%	75%	0%	50%
NV	2372	18%	1%	44%	36%
NY	56873	13%	0%	14%	82%
OH	34689	21%	0%	54%	41%
OK	4050	62%	28%	55%	0%
OR	10919	33%	32%	24%	25%
PA	28133	18%	44%	33%	33%
RI	3475	33%	58%	14%	77%
SC	7425	29%	11%	38%	42%
SD	2490	18%	31%	67%	31%
TN	7026	19%	92%	0%	53%
TX	46043	8%	0%	1%	54%
UT	3131	23%	81%	0%	0%
VA	14127	24%	4%	4%	68%
VT	2905	38%	63%	0%	0%
WA	8280	86%	12%	8%	<1%
WI	15367	21%	13%	44%	50%
WV	2134	41%	100%	1%	58%
WY	1428	18%	0%	9%	72%

A "-1" indicates that a state did not report that data point.

In FY2013, an estimated 607,959 individuals received day or employment supports from state IDD program agencies. This number grew from 457,405 in FY1999. The estimated number of individuals in integrated employment services increased from 108,680 in FY1999 to 113,271 in FY2013, including modest growth in each year since 2010. However, state investment continues to emphasize facility-based and non-work services, rather than integrated employment services.

Figure 4 shows trends in the percentage of people served in integrated employment and in facility-based and non-work settings between FY2004 and FY2013. In FY2013, an estimated 18.6% of individuals receiving day supports from state IDD agencies received integrated employment services. These data demonstrate a decline in the estimated percentage of people served in integrated employment services (from 24.6% in 2001), suggesting that the growth seen in employment between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s has not continued.



The data also demonstrate an increase in the percentage of people served in facility-based and non-work settings. Variability in the number of states that are able to report data in these three individual service categories (facility-based work, facility-based non-work, and community-based non-work) limits our ability to pinpoint the specific setting in which growth is occurring. However, analysis using data from states that are able to report data in each of the three service categories suggests that participation in facility-based work has remained stable or declined slightly, and the percentage of individuals served in non-work settings is increasing.

In FY2013, fourteen state IDD agencies reported that their state agencies did not support individuals in facility-based work services. However, this does not mean that those 14 states have eliminated all funding for facility-based work. A state's ability to report on facility-based work is impacted by service structure and state reporting capacity; many states have facility-based work services imbedded within their facility-based non-work services, or rely on other state agencies to fund these services.

Vermont's IDD agency is nationally recognized for not funding facility-based or group supported employment services, and a review of active 14c sub-minimum wage certificates indicates that there are no active certificates in the state. Other states that should be recognized for having strong IDD agency policy for not funding facility-based work services are the District of Columbia, Maine, and New Hampshire.

Data from State Employment Leadership Network member states and Partnerships in Employment grantee⁵ states indicate that several state IDD agencies are engaged in strategic efforts to place time limitations on pre-vocational work services, reduce new entrants in facility-based work services, and support individuals who have engaged in facility-based work services to pursue employment in more integrated settings. State efforts are supported by actions at the federal level. For example, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has released field guidance clarifying their commitment to individual integrated employment as an outcome of employment-related services under the home and community-based services waiver program (CMS, 2011). Also, the U.S. Department of Justice has extended the Olmstead decision to include integrated employment.

State efforts to increase the number of individuals in integrated employment are expanding through investments such as Employment First initiatives, membership in the State Employment Leadership Network, Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities projects, and participation in Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy initiatives, although the results of these efforts on national trends are not yet clear. Data were examined for 38 states that provided the total number of individuals served and the number of individuals in integrated employment services. Of these 38 states, four reduced the total number of individuals they served between 2001 and 2013, and the average reduction was 4,106 individuals (range: 940–10,303); 34 states increased the total number served, and the average increase was 3,866 (range: 282–28,105).

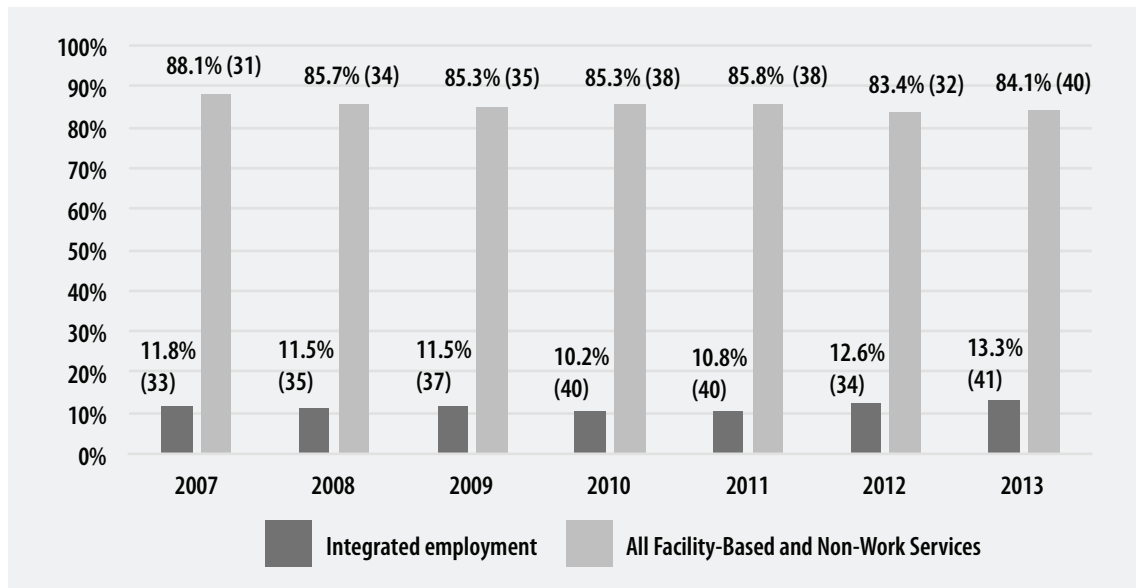
Seventeen of these 38 states reduced the number of individuals reported receiving integrated employment services, and the average reduction was 1,276 (range: 138–3,953). However, in the 21 states that increased the number of individuals in integrated employment, the average increase was 756 individuals (range: 9–3,023). States that reported increasing the number of individuals served in integrated employment by more than 500 individuals between 2001 and 2013 were CT, LA, MA, MD, NC, OK, OR, VA, and WA. Each of these states has engaged in strategic efforts and systematic changes to their service delivery system to make integrated employment the preferred service outcome for adults with IDD in their state.

States vary in their ability to report on funding for day and employment services by service setting. Figure 5 shows trends in funding allocation by service setting for states that reported these monetary figures. Facility-based and non-work settings continue to make up the largest percentage of expenditures for day and employment services. Collectively, states that reported funding facility-based work and non-work services (n=39) allocated 86.5% of the funding for all day and employment to services in these services in FY2013. In contrast, states that reported funding for integrated employment (n=39) allocated 13.5% of the funding for all day and employment services to integrated employment services in FY2013.

There has been a net decrease in the percentage of reported funds allocated toward facility-based services since 1999. However, there has been little fluctuation over time in the percentage of funding allocated toward integrated employment, which peaked in 2001 at 16.6%, but otherwise has ranged between 9.6% and 13.5% in all other years since 1999.

5 Funded by AIDD, the Institute for Community Inclusion and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services provide training and technical assistance to eight states. The purpose of these efforts is to change state systems to improve employment outcomes for youth and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Figure 5. Percentage of Total Funding Allocation by Year (Number of States Reporting in Parentheses)



More individuals are participating in integrated employment services than are working in the community.

In FY2009, the survey began asking states about their ability to provide data on the number of individuals working for pay in integrated community jobs, including competitive employment, individual supported employment, group supported employment, and self-employment. These questions were added because the percentage of individuals in integrated employment services does not reflect the number of individuals working for pay in the community.

For example, data from the National Core Indicators (NCI) Project suggest that, in 2012–2013, only 15% of working-age adults supported by state IDD agencies worked in integrated employment, and NCI data has consistently reported a lower percentage of adults working than the ICI survey has reported in integrated employment services. While the NCI data is collected on a broader population, typically individuals who receive any service from the state IDD agency rather than individuals who receive a day or employment service, the difference likely reflects the time when individuals are looking for work or between jobs, and in some cases, integrated or supported employment services may include other activities.

One characteristic of states that support a high percentage of individuals in integrated employment services is the presence of a comprehensive employment outcome data-collection system (Hall et al., 2007). While in FY2013 more than half of states (n=27) that responded to the survey reported collecting data on the number of individuals working for pay in the community, many states do not engage in this practice. States that reported collecting data on the number of people working are AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, FL, HI, KS, MA, ME, MI, MN, MO, MT, NC, NH, NM, NV, OK, OR, SD, TN, TX, VT, WA, WI, and WV.

Twenty-six states were able to report on the total number of individuals served in any day and employment service who were working for pay in community jobs. The total number of individuals who worked in paid integrated employment in FY2013 as reported by these 26 states was 54,807. In these 26 states, 18% of individuals who received any day and employment service were working in the community in integrated jobs. These data indicate that there are some individuals with IDD working for pay in the community who are not receiving paid employment supports from their state IDD agency, but are receiving other non-integrated employment day services.

States were also asked how many of the individuals participating in integrated employment services work for pay in the community. Twenty-six states were able to report on the total number of individuals receiving integrated employment

services who were working in paid integrated employment positions in FY2013 (n=50,257). In these 26 states, 77.7% of individuals who received integrated employment services were working in the community in integrated jobs. This indicates that the number of individuals earning wages who received integrated employment services from their state IDD agency was lower than the total number receiving these services. In other words, not every person who received integrated employment services was working for pay. This difference may grow in future years as states add integrated employment services such as Discovery and Career Exploration that are intended to support individuals to transition into individual integrated jobs.

Community-based non-work (CBNW) continues to grow.

First added to the survey as a service option in FY1996 in response to state feedback, the number of states reporting providing CBNW services has grown from 18 in FY1996 to 30 in FY2013. Nationally, reported participation in CBNW has grown steadily for states that report it as a service, from 18.7% in FY1999 to 45.8% in FY2013. CBNW services accounted for 46% of state IDD agency expenditures for FY2013, for states that reported expenditures for this service (n=29).

The rapid growth in CBNW services may reflect a growing emphasis on community presence, although the nature of the service that is being reported and the contribution of this service to community participation remain unclear. Data reported by Community Rehabilitation Providers in a national survey suggest that only 16.4% of individuals with IDD participate in CBNW (Domin & Butterworth, 2012). While CRP and IDD agency responses are not directly comparable, and may reflect differing approaches to reporting duplication of service, the disparity raises concerns about how state agencies are defining and categorizing services. There is currently a limited amount of data on the structure, activities, and outcomes of this service, and states have not established clear service expectations or quality-assurance strategies (Sulewski, Butterworth, & Gilmore, 2008; Sulewski, 2010).

While some states report service requirements for how much time CBNW participants spend in the community, it is possible that in some cases states have reclassified services from facility-based to community-based as the emphasis on community participation grows, even though substantial time is still spent in facility-based settings. The trend toward CBNW services raises concerns about the clarity of the service system's goals for community employment. It is highly likely, due to the lack of specificity of the goals of CBNW services (Sulewski, Butterworth, & Gilmore, 2006), that as funds transition to the community, non-work services are seen as an alternative to (rather than a complement to or an avenue towards) integrated employment services.

Sulewski, Butterworth, and Gilmore (2008) recommend that states use CBNW services as a supplement to integrated employment services. As the prevalence of CBNW services grows, additional research is needed on whether these services enhance or impede integrated employment outcomes, and how CBNW services can be individualized to support a person during the hours s/he is not working in the community.

Medicaid Title XIX Waiver services are the primary funding source for day and employment services.

Medicaid Title XIX Waiver Funds are the largest sources of funds for day and employment services, representing 64.4% of reported funds in FY2013. Medicaid waivers as a funding resource to support individualized integrated employment have received significant attention in recent years. Based upon feedback from State Employment Leadership Network member states, in September 2011, CMS released an information bulletin, "1915(c) Waiver Technical Guidance Revisions," on waiver program employment services. The bulletin emphasized the importance of integrated employment and person-centered planning, and distinguished between pre-vocational and supported employment services.

The bulletin also discussed best practices. It split supported employment into two core service definitions—individual and small group (two to eight people)—and added a new core service definition for career planning (Kennedy-Lizotte & Freeze, 2012). Additionally, many states are making use of technical assistance available through the State

Employment Leadership Network, two AIDD-funded grants (Partnerships in Employment and the Community of Practice for Supporting Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities), and the Office of Disability Employment Policy's Employment First State Leadership Mentor Program to support the redesign of their Medicaid Title XIX Waivers to increase individualized integrated employment outcomes.

States vary in their ability to report Medicaid Title XIX Waiver funds on specific IDD agency services. As the number of states able to report these figures increases, it will be important to examine both the cross-sectional and trend data for this type of funding. For states that have been able to report these figures, the allocation of these funds has varied based upon year and service category: integrated employment, community-based non-work (CBNW), facility-based work, and facility-based non-work.

In FY2013, 33 states reported expenditures by day and employment service for the Medicaid Title XIX Waiver. These funds represent both the federal dollars allocated to the state and the state matching dollars. The percentage of waiver funds spent by state IDD agencies on integrated employment services was 12.9%, mirroring the percentage of all day and employment dollars spent on this service. Expenditures on facility-based non-work services made up the greatest percentage of dollars spent (56.2%), and expenditures on community-based non-work services made up 30.9% of dollars spent, representing a continued investment in all non-work services.

Butterworth, Kennedy-Lizotte, & Winsor (2012) suggest several reasons why, despite the increased emphasis on individual integrated employment as a priority in the development and administration of Medicaid Title XIX Waivers, dollars from this source continue to be overwhelmingly spent on non-work services. These reasons include overly complicated funding systems that are not easily understood by provider agencies, case management staff, resource allocation staff, and individuals and their families; the inability to bill for non-direct services needed for successful job development; the failure to capture the real-world cost of providing individual integrated employment services and an over-reliance on the historical cost; the failure to include the cost of individual integrated employment when developing individual service budget allocations; the expectation that transportation of the individual to a job in the community will be paid for out of the integrated employment rate; and the failure to identify transportation as a separate service that has a distinct payment rate from the payment for an employment or day service.

Trends in Vocational Rehabilitation: 2004–2013

In this section we describe the employment and postsecondary education outcomes of all adults with intellectual disabilities (ID) who exited the state and territory vocational rehabilitation (VR) programs during fiscal years 2004 through 2013. To provide context, we compare the findings with the corresponding outcomes of people with other disabilities. We also describe selected employment outcomes disaggregated at the state level for fiscal year 2013. In this section we focus on integrated employment, defined as work in integrated settings with or without support.

Major findings regarding people with intellectual disabilities included the following:

- Over time, fewer people exited the VR program
- The percentage of people receiving services remained about the same
- The rehabilitation rate slightly decreased
- Hourly earnings and weekly wages declined slightly
- Weekly work hours remained the same
- Time from application to employment continued to increase
- The percentage of people who attained a postsecondary outcome remained low and about the same
- The majority of people were male, most were white, and most were transition-age young adults
- Outcomes varied considerably across states

Over time, fewer people exited the VR program. As Table 6 shows, in 2013, a total of 48,847 people with intellectual disabilities exited the VR program. This figure was higher than in the previous two years, but lower than in the 10 years examined. The maximum figure was reported in 2004, when 57,113 people with intellectual disabilities exited the program.

The corresponding figure for people with other disabilities was 492,247 in 2013, a higher figure compared to 2012 (484,330), but still lower compared to earlier years.

Table 6. Trends in Employment Outcomes in 50 States and DC: 2004–2013

	Total Closures		Received Services		Rehabilitation Rate		Hourly Wage		Weekly Hours		Got a Job in One Year	
	ID	Other	ID	Other	ID	Other	ID	Other	ID	Other	ID	Other
2004	57,113	533,137	72%	64%	55%	52%	\$8.05	\$12.19	26	34	36%	38%
2005	56,332	498,250	71%	63%	55%	55%	\$7.95	\$12.12	25	34	35%	37%
2006	56,487	500,072	71%	62%	56%	56%	\$7.91	\$12.20	26	34	35%	37%
2007	53,620	491,016	70%	62%	58%	57%	\$8.04	\$12.30	25	33	35%	38%
2008	53,974	506,005	69%	62%	56%	55%	\$8.11	\$12.34	25	33	36%	39%
2009	49,382	488,824	66%	59%	53%	53%	\$8.45	\$12.46	24	32	35%	37%
2010	49,697	511,441	65%	58%	48%	49%	\$8.64	\$12.29	24	32	33%	37%
2011	47,812	494,273	66%	60%	51%	51%	\$8.43	\$11.92	24	32	32%	36%
2012	46,672	484,330	65%	60%	52%	53%	\$8.38	\$11.77	24	32	30%	35%
2013	48,847	492,247	66%	62%	50%	51%	\$8.31	\$11.60	24	31	30%	34%

Note: ID = Intellectual disabilities; Other = Other disabilities

The percentage of people receiving services remained about the same. Receiving services is the first step toward an employment outcome. As Table 6 shows, 66% of the people with intellectual disabilities who exited the VR program in 2013 received services, a slightly larger figure compared to 2012 (65%), but overall similar to figures reported in the past five years. Higher values were reported in the first part of the period examined. For example, in 2004 about 72% of individuals with ID received services.

Nevertheless, the percentages of people with intellectual disabilities who received services were consistently higher compared to the corresponding figures for people with other disabilities across the years examined. In 2013, only 62% of people with other disabilities who exited the program received services, compared to the maximum of 64% in 2004 (Table 6).

The most frequent reasons for people with intellectual disabilities to exit the program without receiving services—in 2013—included refusal or failure to cooperate (47%); inability to locate or contact applicant (27%); and other reasons including disability too significant, death, job seeker’s relocation, no disability-related needs for services, or other non-specified reasons. People with other disabilities reported similar reasons for exiting the program without receiving services.

The rehabilitation rate slightly decreased.

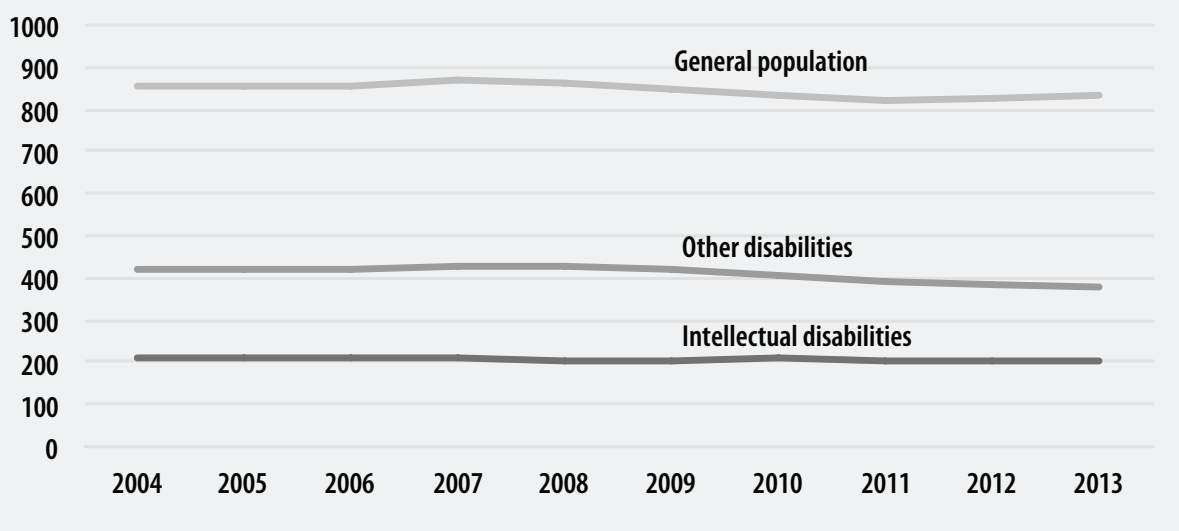
The rehabilitation rate is the percentage of people who gain employment out of the total number of people who receive services. As Table 6 shows, 50% of people with ID who received services in 2013 exited with an employment outcome, compared to 52% the year before. This is a setback after three years of increases in the rehabilitation rate. The maximum reported in earlier years was 58% in 2007. Overall, the figures reported for people with other disabilities reflected a similar trend: 51% in 2013, down from a high of 57% in 2007, but growing for the third year in a row.

Hourly earnings and weekly wages declined slightly.

The hourly earnings of people with intellectual disabilities, adjusted for inflation, slightly declined during the past five years, from \$8.45 in 2009 to \$8.31 in 2013. For people with other disabilities, hourly earnings adjusted for inflation continued their decline, representing the lowest figure during the period examined from \$11.60 in 2013 compared to a high of \$12.46 in 2009.

As Figure 6 shows, inflation-adjusted weekly wages of people with intellectual disabilities who exited with an employment outcome in 2013 were slightly lower compared to the previous years: \$200 in 2013, compared to \$202 in 2012. The weekly wages of people with other disabilities also declined over time, though this group earned almost twice as much as their peers with ID. People without disabilities reported the highest wages across the years examined, going against the declining trends of the past several years, since 2007.

Figure 6. Trends in Weekly Wages (in 2013 Dollars)⁶



⁶ Earnings of the general population were computed by dividing the annual wages of civilians, ages 16–64, by 52 weeks, using data from the American Community Survey.

Weekly work hours remained the same.

In 2013, people with intellectual disabilities who exited the program with employment worked an average of 24 hours per week, the same amount of hours reported in the previous four years. Weekly work hours peaked at 26 in 2003, 2004, and 2006. People with other disabilities reported more weekly work hours: 33 hours in 2013, and 32 hours for each of the previous four years).

Time from application to employment continued to increase.

People with intellectual disabilities who exited in 2013 took about 718 days to gain employment, on average, from application. This represented eight additional days compared to 2012, continuing a trend of taking longer to an employment closure. The shortest amount of time to an employment outcome was reported in 2003, when finding employment took only 637 days.

With respect to time it takes to gain employment, individuals with ID fared better than those with other disabilities. In 2013, people with other disabilities reported 772 days from application to closure in an employment outcome, compared to 747 in 2012. The shortest amount of time was reported in 2003, with 691 days.

Another way of looking at this outcome is to examine the percentage of people with disabilities who gained employment within one year from application. Of the people with ID who exited the program in 2013 with an employment outcome, about 30% reported gaining employment in one year or less, down from 36% in 2008. The corresponding figure for people with other disabilities was 34% in 2013, down from 39% in 2008.

The percentage of people who attained a postsecondary outcome remained low and about the same across the years examined.

Between 2005 and 2013, about 3% of people with intellectual disabilities exited the VR program with one of the following postsecondary education outcomes after reporting they had no postsecondary outcome at application: postsecondary education, no degree; associate degree or vocational/technical certificate; or bachelor’s, master’s, or a higher degree. In earlier years, only 2% reported a postsecondary education outcome.

Between 2007 and 2013, about 11% of people with other disabilities reported exiting the program with greater postsecondary education outcomes than at application. This figure was slightly lower than in earlier years, when it reached 12%.

The majority of people were male, most were white, and most were transition-age young adults.

The majority of people with intellectual disabilities who exited VR in 2013 were male (58%), the same figure as the prior year, although slightly greater compared to earlier years. Similar figures were reported for people with other disabilities: 56% were male in 2013 (Table 7).

Table 7. Trends in Demographic Characteristics in the 50 States and DC: 2004–2013

	Gender				Race and Ethnicity							
	Male		Female		White (Non-Hispanic)		Black (Non-Hispanic)		Hispanic		Other	
	ID (%)	Other (%)	ID (%)	Other (%)	ID (%)	Other (%)	ID (%)	Other (%)	ID (%)	Other (%)	ID (%)	Other (%)
2004	55	55	45	45	59	66	32	22	7	9	2	2
2005	55	55	45	45	60	67	32	22	7	9	2	3
2006	55	55	45	45	60	68	33	22	7	9	1	1
2007	55	55	45	45	59	66	32	22	7	9	2	3
2008	55	56	45	44	58	66	33	22	7	9	2	3
2009	56	56	44	44	58	66	33	23	7	9	2	3
2010	57	57	43	43	56	64	34	24	8	9	2	2
2011	58	57	42	43	56	64	34	24	8	10	2	3
2012	58	57	42	43	55	64	35	24	7	10	3	3
2013	58	56	42	44	54	63	35	24	8	10	2	3

The majority of people with intellectual disabilities who exited VR in 2013 were white (54%), showing a downward trend from 2006, when white people comprised 60% of people with ID. The second largest racial group for people with intellectual disabilities was black. This group increased slightly, from 32% in 2004 to 35% in 2013. People of Hispanic ethnicity represented 8% of the total in 2013.

People with other disabilities included a greater proportion of white people: 63% in 2013, down from 68% in 2006. Also in the case of people with other disabilities, the second largest racial group was black: 24% in 2013, slightly up from 22% in 2004. People of Hispanic ethnicity represented 10% of the total in 2013.

A substantial number of VR closures for individuals with ID take place during the transition from school to adult life. About 63% of the people with intellectual disabilities who exited the VR program in 2013 were between 16 and 26 years old at application, a figure consistent with previous years.

These figures contrasted with the figures reported for people with other disabilities from the same age group: only 36% of people with other disabilities who exited the program in 2013 were 16 to 26 years old at application.

Outcomes varied considerably across states.

As Table 8 shows, the extent of services provided by the VR program and employment outcomes achieved by people with disabilities varied considerably across states. Some of these differences can be attributed to the size of the states' general population. For example, whereas North Carolina reported 5,333 people with intellectual disabilities exiting the program in 2013, a smaller state like Alaska reported only 70. For people with other disabilities, the highest number of people exiting a state program was 43,055 in California, whereas the smallest figure was 1,418 in DC.

Other differences across states require more research to clarify the causes of such disparities. For example, whereas Alabama and Colorado reported the highest figure of 83% of people with intellectual disabilities receiving services, North Dakota reported the lowest figure of 36%. In the case of people with other disabilities, the variation in percentage of people receiving services across states ranged from a high of 79% in Vermont to a low of 36% in Tennessee. These figures are significant because receiving services is a necessary step toward employment; those who do not receive services exit the program without employment.

Alaska and Colorado reported the highest rehabilitation rate (percentage of people who gained employment out of the total number of people who received services) for people with intellectual disabilities (74%), whereas Georgia reported the lowest figure (25%). For people with other disabilities, the highest rehabilitation rate was reported in West Virginia (75%), and the lowest in Louisiana (25%).

The hourly wage of people with intellectual disabilities varied from \$7.21 in California to \$10.53 in the District of Columbia. For people with other disabilities, earnings varied from \$10.08 in South Dakota to \$17.25 in Connecticut.

Weekly work hours varied greatly across states as well. People with intellectual disabilities in the District of Columbia worked the most hours: 36. In contrast, people with intellectual disabilities in Maine reported the lowest amount of hours: 13. Among people with other disabilities, the longest work hours were reported in West Virginia (36 weekly work hours), and the shortest work hours in Massachusetts, Maryland, and Illinois (26 weekly work hours).

People with intellectual disabilities in Vermont were the most likely to find jobs within one year of application for services (66%), whereas their peers in North Dakota were the least likely to find jobs within one year (3%). In regard to people with other disabilities, finding jobs within one year was most likely in Nevada and Vermont (57%), and least likely in North Dakota (3%).

Table 8. State Outcomes in 2013

	Total Closures		Received Services		Rehabilitation Rate		Hourly Wage		Weekly Hours		Got a Job in One Year	
	ID	Other	ID (%)	Other (%)	ID (%)	Other (%)	ID	Other	ID	Other	ID (%)	Other (%)
AK	70	1,551	66	58	74	59	\$9.38	\$14.25	19	33	26	39
AL	1,071	9,678	83	68	55	61	\$8.13	\$10.12	29	33	38	37
AR	264	7,253	57	65	36	65	\$8.05	\$11.63	24	34	46	42
AZ	292	4,623	62	58	48	39	\$8.65	\$11.26	24	31	24	13
CA	3,503	43,055	80	70	46	34	\$7.21	\$11.82	28	29	48	26
CO	701	5,587	83	68	74	59	\$7.45	\$12.18	14	28	54	53
CT	255	3,879	59	61	43	57	\$9.21	\$17.25	21	31	20	52
DC	174	1,418	65	69	55	57	\$10.53	\$12.51	36	36	44	38
DE	286	2,659	54	55	68	65	\$8.82	\$10.70	26	31	29	33
FL	2,043	24,433	71	63	40	44	\$8.44	\$11.24	22	31	10	21
GA	2,655	15,270	70	56	25	36	\$8.20	\$10.78	30	33	17	27
HI	189	1,648	78	54	35	28	\$7.82	\$12.69	26	28	10	8
IA	888	5,479	58	57	57	60	\$8.90	\$12.14	26	33	14	7
ID	315	4,927	64	60	53	59	\$8.27	\$11.19	22	32	38	47
IL	1,373	14,230	75	65	50	50	\$8.83	\$10.87	19	26	29	38
IN	1,817	10,976	64	59	55	59	\$8.24	\$12.01	21	29	40	46
KS	596	6,490	69	50	58	44	\$8.07	\$10.14	21	30	32	29
KY	1,396	10,127	53	62	48	57	\$8.37	\$12.21	23	33	18	32
LA	1,121	13,120	70	61	26	25	\$8.13	\$11.89	25	33	20	28
MA	291	9,830	76	65	61	54	\$9.03	\$13.10	18	26	27	21
MD	723	6,614	61	56	68	56	\$8.61	\$10.71	22	26	35	29
ME	344	3,500	57	49	57	45	\$8.19	\$13.34	13	27	14	36
MI	1,109	18,665	74	67	42	50	\$8.06	\$12.28	23	32	45	53
MN	598	7,049	63	62	62	59	\$8.60	\$11.38	26	29	29	30
MO	2,123	11,696	53	58	61	58	\$8.16	\$10.66	26	29	40	47
MS	923	8,006	57	71	46	61	\$7.92	\$11.49	30	35	8	39
MT	175	3,422	59	52	60	44	\$8.61	\$11.77	17	27	31	35
NC	5,333	17,308	71	60	50	50	\$8.20	\$10.10	26	30	24	32
ND	211	2,211	36	41	48	42	\$10.26	\$14.69	31	35	3	3
NE	437	4,588	64	64	66	59	\$8.58	\$10.85	29	34	48	57
NH	144	3,081	75	64	56	53	\$8.70	\$13.25	15	28	30	41
NJ	676	10,862	63	65	44	58	\$8.24	\$12.17	21	30	29	35
NM	158	3,641	72	49	41	36	\$8.12	\$11.73	15	29	41	26
NV	118	2,552	47	58	46	49	\$8.92	\$11.82	27	32	50	53
NY	2,079	28,825	71	64	58	60	\$8.45	\$11.35	22	29	30	28
OH	2,033	18,623	56	43	47	37	\$8.33	\$10.57	23	28	17	15
OK	526	6,147	72	58	47	52	\$8.40	\$11.26	29	32	13	7
OR	632	7,293	54	49	59	59	\$9.35	\$12.15	20	27	49	54
PA	1,954	23,755	72	70	45	55	\$8.57	\$12.24	24	32	23	25
RI	113	1,807	58	53	51	59	\$9.01	\$11.72	19	29	6	38
SC	640	12,338	66	73	45	59	\$8.28	\$10.61	29	35	18	49
SD	268	2,217	76	58	68	63	\$7.86	\$10.08	23	30	54	45
TN	1,610	7,207	44	36	60	54	\$7.95	\$10.33	22	28	26	16
TX	1,649	30,644	69	70	53	58	\$8.22	\$12.39	21	32	27	41
UT	305	8,942	78	68	68	56	\$8.70	\$11.46	23	33	22	18
VA	1,403	8,428	67	62	55	52	\$8.30	\$10.87	26	30	22	30
VT	328	3,771	82	79	72	54	\$9.48	\$11.52	16	28	61	57
WA	960	10,020	61	44	69	56	\$9.87	\$12.76	16	28	40	38
WI	1,427	13,515	51	44	59	56	\$8.55	\$11.69	19	28	9	11
WV	411	7,140	60	68	59	75	\$8.14	\$13.70	25	36	38	46
WY	137	2,147	76	69	64	41	\$9.39	\$12.56	18	33	27	30
Average	958	9,652	65	60	54	53	\$8.54	\$11.83	23	31	29	33
Min	70	1,418	36	36	25	25	\$7.21	\$10.08	13	26	3	3
Max	5,333	43,055	83	79	74	75	\$10.53	\$17.25	36	36	61	57

Note: ID = intellectual disabilities; Other = other disabilities

US Territories

This section describes the VR program outcomes reported for the five US territories of American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The main findings include:

- The number of closures continued to decline
- The percentage of people who received services increased
- The rehabilitation rate remained about the same
- Hourly earnings declined
- Weekly work hours remained about the same
- Only a small percentage of people gained employment within one year from application
- The vast majority of VR closures from the territories are from Puerto Rico

Table 9. Trends in Employment Outcomes in the Five Territories: 2004–2013

	Total Closures		Received Services		Rehabilitation Rate		Hourly Wage		Weekly Hours		Got a Job in One Year	
	ID	Other	ID	Other	ID	Other	ID	Other	ID	Other	ID	Other
2004	544	5,894	59%	51%	66%	61%	\$6.99	\$9.76	27	34	4%	6%
2005	639	6,736	60%	51%	65%	61%	\$6.69	\$9.77	28	34	3%	5%
2006	638	7,141	59%	47%	64%	60%	\$6.62	\$9.34	28	34	5%	6%
2007	566	7,198	59%	44%	63%	64%	\$6.64	\$9.04	27	34	4%	8%
2008	570	7,838	54%	42%	54%	61%	\$6.92	\$9.36	28	34	8%	8%
2009	600	7,922	57%	40%	60%	56%	\$7.83	\$9.87	27	33	4%	6%
2010	775	8,913	46%	38%	51%	57%	\$8.03	\$9.92	26	33	5%	5%
2011	728	7,740	55%	46%	53%	58%	\$7.89	\$9.36	26	33	7%	5%
2012	498	6,826	67%	56%	56%	63%	\$7.94	\$9.12	27	34	7%	5%
2013	402	6,625	79%	64%	55%	60%	\$7.57	\$9.18	27	34	4%	4%

Note: ID = Intellectual disabilities; Other = Other disabilities

The number of closures continued to decline.

As Table 9 shows, in 2013, a total of 402 people with intellectual disabilities exited the VR program. This figure was lower than in 2012 (498), and the lowest reported during the years examined. The highest figure was reported in 2010, when 775 people with intellectual disabilities exited the program. The corresponding figure for people with other disabilities was 6,625 in 2013, a lower figure compared to 2012 (6,826), but not the lowest figure reported during the years examined (5,894 in 2004).

The percentage of people who received services increased.

Receiving services is the first step toward an employment outcome. As Table 9 shows, the percentage of people with intellectual disabilities who received services has been increasing since 2010, when it was 46%, reaching 79% in 2013. The same pattern applies to people with other disabilities, with 40% receiving services in 2009 and 64% in 2013. These data also show that people with intellectual disabilities were more likely to receive services compared to their peers with other disabilities.

The rehabilitation rate remained about the same.

The rehabilitation rate is the percentage of people who gained employment out of the total number of people who received services. As Table 9 shows, in 2013 the rehabilitation rate of people with intellectual disabilities was 55%,

slightly greater compared to 51% in 2010, but smaller than 66% as reported in 2004. Overall, the figures reported for people with other disabilities reflected a similar trend: 60% in 2012, up from a low of 56% in 2009.

Hourly earnings declined.

Inflation-adjusted hourly earnings of people with intellectual disabilities declined from a high of \$7.83 in 2009 to \$7.57 in 2013. Similarly, hourly earnings of people with other disabilities slightly declined, from \$9.77 in 2003 to \$9.18 in 2013.

Weekly work hours remained about the same.

In 2013, people with intellectual disabilities who exited the program with employment worked an average of 27 hours per week, a figure close to the minimum (26) and maximum (28) reported during the period examined. People with other disabilities reported more weekly work hours: between 33 and 34 during the period examined.

Only a small percentage of people gained employment within one year from application.

At most, only 8% of people with intellectual disabilities and people with other disabilities gained employment within one year from application. The figure ranged between 3% and 8% during the period examined.

The vast majority of VR closures from the territories are about people of Hispanic ethnicity.

Of the total number of people with intellectual disabilities who exited the VR program, the large majority were people of Hispanic ethnicity: 96% in 2013. This figure has been slightly increasing over time, from 92% in 2004. A similar pattern applies to the group of people with other disabilities. This is not surprising given that most closures were about people from Puerto Rico.

Trends from American Community Survey (ACS) Data (2008–2013)

Data show that people with disabilities are consistently less likely to be working than their non-disabled counterparts. The ACS allows us to compare employment participation and outcomes for civilian working-age people with and without disabilities, and provides a population estimate that includes people who do not receive formal supports from a human service agency. Thus, it offers a broader view of employment outcomes for working-age people with disabilities than system-specific data sources, such as the RSA-911 data.

We define “working-age people” as civilian non-institutionalized people ages 16–64. The data presented below will emphasize the ACS disability category of cognitive disability as the closest approximation for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We emphasize the importance of looking at multiple demographic, economic, and employment outcome indicators in order to get the best understanding of the employment situation for individuals with ID.

Recent trends and key data points that emerged from the dataset:

- People with disabilities are much less likely to work than people without disabilities.
- People with a cognitive disability who are receiving Supplemental Security Income, the group likely to include people who have the most significant cognitive disabilities, have the lowest employment rate of all disability subgroups examined.
- Among working-age Americans, people with any disability and people with a cognitive disability are more likely to live in a household that is below the poverty line.
- People with disabilities who are employed are less likely to live in a household that is below the poverty line than people with disabilities who are not employed.
- Individuals with disabilities who are employed work fewer weeks per year on average than their nondisabled counterparts.

Employment and Labor Market Benchmarks for Population Subgroups

People with disabilities are much less likely to work than people without disabilities.

In assessing employment outcomes, it is important to review multiple indicators to get a full understanding of the employment experiences of people with disabilities. Indicators commonly used in labor market and population studies include:

- **Employed:** People with jobs.
- **Unemployed:** People who do not have jobs and have actively looked for work in the past four weeks. These people are considered part of the labor force.
- **Not in the labor force:** People who do not have jobs and have not actively looked for work in the past four weeks.
- **Employment rate (also referred to as the employment-to-population ratio):** Number of people employed / number of people in the working-age population
- **Unemployment rate:** Number unemployed / (number employed + number unemployed)

Reporting meaningful indicators of labor market success for individuals with disabilities, particularly ID, is challenging for a number of reasons. Questions that allow people to indicate specific disabilities like ID are uncommon in large national surveys. Additionally, the use of the unemployment rate typically reported by the Department of Labor as an indicator of labor market success for people with disabilities leaves people who are not in the labor force, a significant group when it comes to subpopulations of people with disabilities, out of the calculation.

For this reason, we focus primarily on employment rate as an indicator of successful employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Because a large proportion of people with disabilities are not in the labor force, an employment-to-population ratio is a more appropriately descriptive measure of this population's economic situation (Brault, 2010).⁷

While the ACS does not collect information on people with ID specifically, it does allow people to self-report on six disability-related questions. Any individual who answers yes to one or more of these six items is categorized as having any disability. Someone with a cognitive disability has indicated that because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting six months or more, s/he has difficulty learning, remembering, and concentrating.

Table 10 below displays indicators of labor market success for four groups of working-age individuals: people who do not have a disability, people who indicated they have at least one disability (any disability), people with a cognitive disability, and people with a cognitive disability who received Supplemental Security Income (SSI) in 2013. This last group is likely to include people who have the most significant cognitive disabilities.

Table 10. Labor Market Success Indicators by Disability Status: 2013

	No Disability	Any Disability	Cognitive Disability	Cognitive Disability with SSI
A. Percentage employed (employment rate)	72.0	33.6	23.4	8.5
B. Percentage unemployed	6.3	7.2	8.6	3.5
C. Percentage not in the labor force	21.7	59.2	68.0	88.0
Total (A+B+C)	100	100	100	100
Unemployment rate (number unemployed / number employed + number unemployed)	8	17.7	26.9	28.8

Source: 2013 American Community Survey

The table confirms the low levels of employment for individuals with disabilities. People with any disability or a cognitive disability are employed at much lower rates (33.6% and 23.4% respectively) than those without disabilities (72.0%). People with cognitive disabilities who receive SSI have the lowest employment rate (8.5%).

There are striking differences in outcomes between disability subgroups and their nondisabled counterparts with regard to the percentage not in the labor force, as displayed in Table 10. Across disability subgroups, all are much less likely to be in the labor force when compared to people without disabilities.

The high rate of individuals with disabilities who are not in the labor force suggests that a significant majority of this population are not actively looking for work, despite the fact that the Two-thirds of nonemployed people with disabilities say they would prefer to be working. (Harris Interactive, 2004). People with disabilities who are not in the labor force are more likely to rely on publicly funded poverty prevention programs such as Supplemental Security Income, and experience increased marginalization from society because of the lack of community attachment that comes with work.

Individuals with disabilities also fare poorly, comparatively, using the traditional calculation of unemployment rate favored as a labor market indicator by the U.S. Department of Labor. Unemployment rates for subgroups of people with disabilities who are in the labor force are two to three times the unemployment rate for people without disabilities. These figures may reflect a longer job search and the difficulty individuals with disabilities face in reentering the workforce after a job loss.

⁷ Brault, Matthew W. (2010). Disability among the working age population: 2008 and 2009, ACSBR/09-12. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau.

These data suggest the importance of examining both 1) the percentage employed, percentage unemployed, and percentage not in the labor force (indicators A, B, and C in Table 10) and 2) the unemployment rate in order to gain a full understanding of the employment experiences of individuals with disabilities.

Employment of People with Disabilities since the Economic Recession of 2007-2009

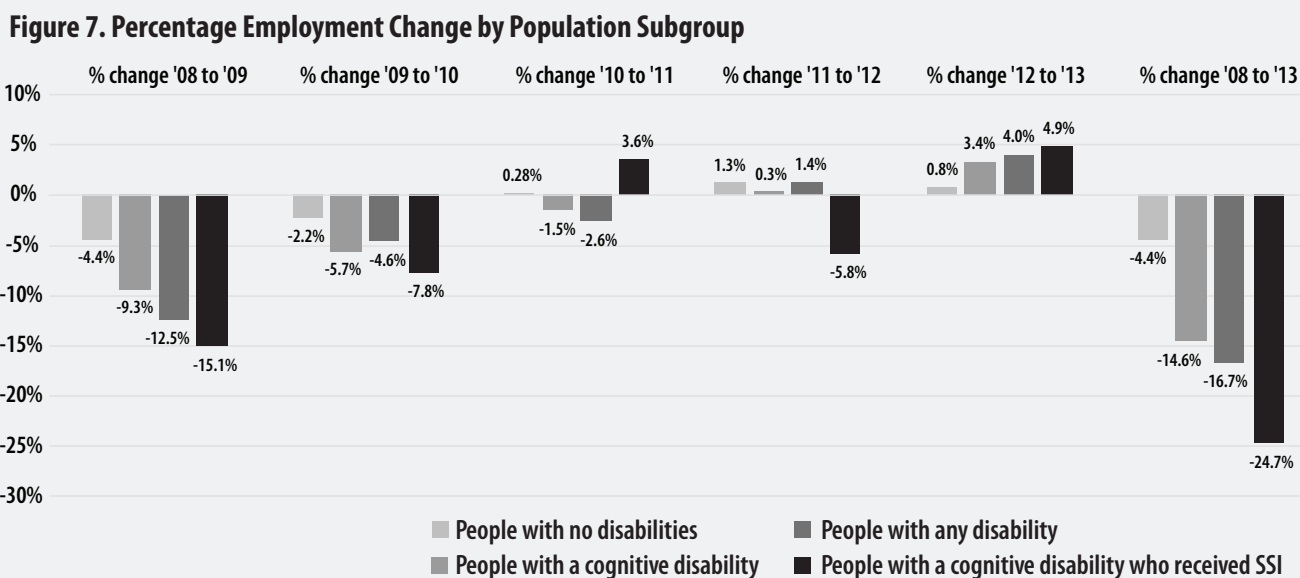
While all population subgroups examined experienced a net decrease in employment rate since 2008, the decrease was greater for subpopulations of people with disabilities than it was for people without a disability.

An analysis of trends over 21 months of data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) revealed strong evidence that the 2007–2009 recession disproportionately affected workers with disabilities, resulting in a 9% decline in the presence of people with disabilities in the employed labor force (Kaye, 2010). Other research shows that, despite a decline in the employment gap between people with and without disabilities between 2004 and 2010, people with disabilities had a bigger drop in employment in percent terms over the same period (Harris Interactive, 2010). Evidence from the recent economic recession suggests that people with disabilities were the first to be laid off, and the upswing in job exit has a larger magnitude and occurs earlier for workers with disabilities than for others (Kaye, 2010).

Some data suggest hiring for people with disabilities during the economic recovery may lag behind hiring for their nondisabled counterparts. Figure 7 shows the percentage change in employment rate from one year to the next for the examination period (2008–2013) for each of the four population subgroups, as well as the net change in employment rate between 2008 and 2013. All of the population subgroups examined had a net decrease in employment rate between 2008 and 2013. The decrease for subpopulations of people with disabilities, however, was three to five percentage points greater, depending on disability subgroup, than that of people without disabilities.

Looking at the first set of bars in Figure 7, which represents the percentage change in employment rate between 2008 and 2009, the final full year of the economic recession, we see that employment dropped for all four subpopulation groups. The drop in employment was least severe for people without disabilities, and more severe as we look across disability subgroups from left to right in each set of bars.

Looking at the second set of bars, we see a similar pattern for the change between 2009 and 2010, albeit a less severe drop for each group than the previous year. People from disability subpopulation groups still show greater drops in employment than their counterparts without disabilities.



Source: 2008–2013 American Community Survey

The third set of bars best exemplifies the lag of the economic recovery for people with disabilities in terms of employment. Between 2010 and 2011, employment for people without a disability increased 0.3%. While this change is very small, it is positive in direction. Despite the growth in employment for people without disabilities, the employment rates for people with any disability and people with a cognitive disability continued to decline.

The fourth set of bars in Figure 7, representing the change in employment rate between 2011 and 2012, clearly demonstrates the impact of the economic recovery on employment for most of the working-age population. There is a positive impact of the economic recovery on employment rates for people with any disability and people with a cognitive disability. The absolute value of the increase between 2011 and 2012, however, was much smaller than the absolute value of the decrease in employment rate each of the three years prior. Thus, despite this positive turn, employment rates for people with any disability and people with a cognitive disability have yet to approach pre-recession rates.

2013 was the first year following the recession in which the employment rate increased for each population subgroup when compared to the employment rate for the previous year.

Disability, Employment, and Poverty Status

Among working-age Americans, people with any disability and people with a cognitive disability are more likely to be living in a household that is below the poverty line than people without a disability.

In 2013, only 13.5% of all people without a disability lived in a household that was below the poverty line, compared with 28.4% for people with any disability, 34.4% for people with a cognitive disability, and 41.3% for people with a cognitive disability who received SSI payments as part of their income. It is not surprising to see this last group having the highest percent living in a household below the poverty line, since eligibility for the SSI program includes having limited financial resources.⁸

Table 11 compares poverty rates for population subgroups of working-age people who are employed and who are not employed. **Chi square** tests, which determine whether or not there is a statistical relationship between categorical variables, were run for each subgroup, and the results in each instance showed that a statistical relationship exists. People who are working are less likely to be living in a household below the poverty line than people who are not working.

The difference in poverty rates between people who are employed and people who are not shows how critical work is to economic self-sufficiency. Nearly half of the people who had a cognitive disability, received SSI payments as part of their income, and were not working (43.8%) were living in a household that was below the poverty line, compared with 15.4% of people in this same subgroup who were working.

Although people in disability subgroups who worked were less likely to be living in poverty than their non-working counterparts, the poverty rates for disability subpopulations who did work are still higher than the poverty rates for their non-disabled counterparts who work. This finding suggests that people with disabilities may have a greater likelihood of being underemployed, i.e., working in jobs that do not provide them with the earning potential to get above the poverty line.

8 <http://www.ssa.gov/ssi/text-eligibility-ussi.htm>

Table 11. Poverty Rates in 2013 for Disability Subgroups by Employment Status

	Percentage Living Below the Poverty Line (Poverty Rate)	
	Not Employed	Employed
People with no disabilities	29.1	7.6
People with any disability	36.7	11.9
People with a cognitive disability	39.4	17.7
People with a cognitive disability who received SSI	43.8	15.4

Source: 2013 American Community Survey

Disability, Employment, and Consistency of Work

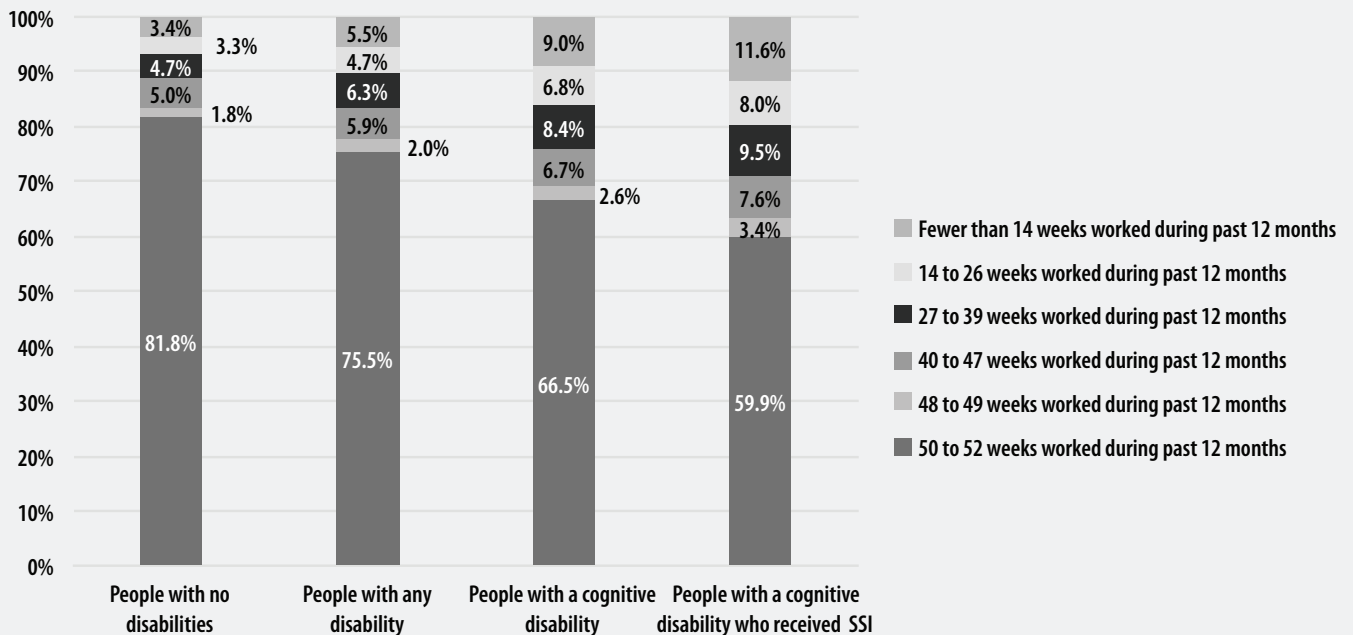
Among those who are employed, individuals from disability population subgroups work fewer weeks per year on average than their nondisabled counterparts.

Figure 8 shows that in 2013, individuals from disability sub-population groups who were employed worked fewer total weeks out of the year, on average, than their counterparts without disabilities. The majority of employed people from each subgroup worked between 50 and 52 weeks in 2013.

Across the population subgroups, however, individuals in disability subpopulations are concentrated in the top bar segments, which represent less frequent work over the course of the year. Nearly one-quarter of working individuals with a cognitive disability worked fewer than 40 weeks during the 12 months previous to answering the survey. Over one quarter of individuals with a cognitive disability who received SSI worked fewer than 40 weeks in the 12 months previous to responding to the survey. By contrast, only 11% of individuals without a disability worked fewer than 40 weeks.

These data show that the lack of consistency with which individuals with disabilities, particularly cognitive disabilities, maintain paid employment (measured here in number of weeks worked per year) is an additional barrier to economic self-sufficiency. In order to achieve self-sufficiency, individuals with disabilities not only need to be employed at higher rates, but also need to be working in jobs that promote stable and long-term employment.

Figure 8. Number of Weeks Worked in 12 Months Prior to Responding to ACS among Employed Individuals



Source: 2013 American Community Survey

Trends in Social Security Administration Data (1990–2013)

The Supplemental Security Income program (SSI) administered by the Social Security Administration provides cash assistance to low-income individuals who are seniors, are blind, or have a disability. Analysis of the SSA dataset revealed these key findings:

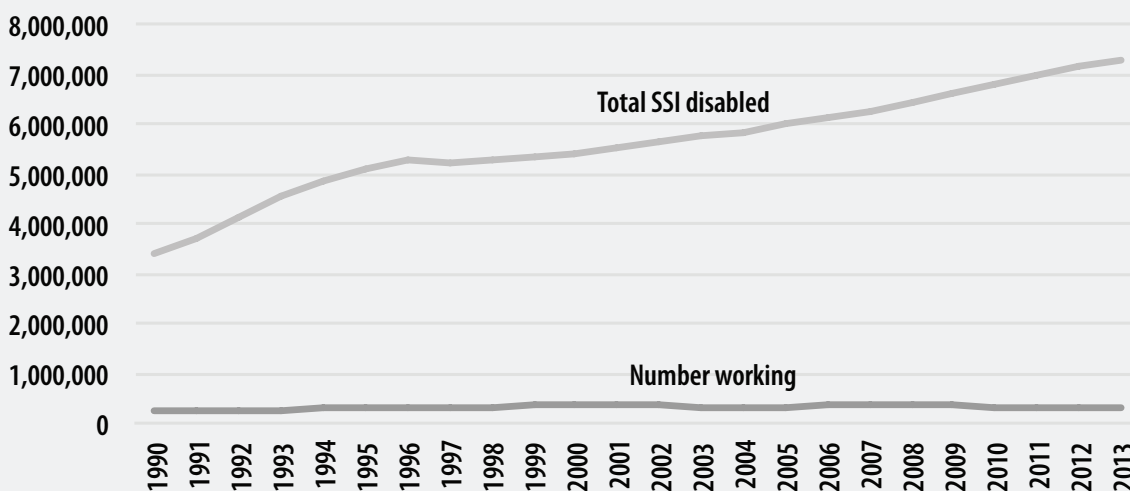
- The percentage of SSI recipients who worked in 2013 (4.3%) is the lowest percentage observed since 1990.
- Overall, work incentive programs for SSI recipients with disabilities remain underused.
- SSI recipients with ID work more than their counterparts with other types of disabilities, but participate in work incentive programs less frequently.
- Younger people who receive SSI appear to work more frequently than their older counterparts.

Employment among SSI recipients reached its lowest point in over 20 years in 2013.

Only 4.3% of individuals with disabilities who received SSI worked in 2013. The percentage of recipients employed was between 5% and 7% every year between 1990 and 2009. In 2010, the percentage of recipients employed dropped below 5%, and it has remained below 5% in every year since.

The decrease in percentage of SSI recipients appears at least partially to be due to the fact that overall growth in SSI rolls outpaced growth in the number of recipients who worked between from 1990 and 2013. As Figure 9 shows, growth in total SSI recipients has been consistent since 1990, while the number of working recipients grew fully one third between 1990 and 2000 but has since fluctuated, dropping to its lowest point since 2000 in 2013.

Figure 9. Total SSI Recipients and SSI Recipients Who Worked (1990–2013)



Work incentives remain largely underused.

Congress has enacted a number of work incentive programs for SSI recipients with disabilities, after concluding that additional incentives were necessary to help these individuals become self-supporting. Moreover, Congress has noted that individuals who could work in integrated employment might have been discouraged from doing so by the fear of losing their benefits before they had established the capability for continued self-support.

To encourage employment for individuals with disabilities, the Social Security Administration (SSA) offers special provisions that limit the impact of earnings from work on eligibility for SSI or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits. These work incentives include the Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS), Impairment-Related Work Expenses (IRWE), Blind Work Expenses (BWE), section 1619(a) benefits, and section 1619(b) benefits.

PASS, IRWE, and BWE allow individuals to set aside money, resources, and expenses to be excluded from total earned income calculations. PASS allows people to set aside money and resources to be used for attaining a work goal, such as going back to school, finding a better job, or starting a business. IRWE allows people to exclude impairment-related expenses that are necessary for work from their income. Examples include attendant care, transportation, medication, or specialized equipment. BWE allows workers who are blind to exclude expenses related to earning income. These include service animal expenses, income taxes, visual/sensory aids, and professional or union dues.

Section 1619(a) allows people with disabilities to continue receiving SSI, even if their earned income is at Substantial Gainful Activity levels, i.e., the amount that would normally make them ineligible for SSI. Section 1619(b) allows individuals to continue receiving Medicaid benefits if their earnings disqualify them from eligibility for SSI cash payments, but are not enough to allow them to afford medical insurance.

A notable trend is the sharp drop in the number of people enrolled in the PASS program between 1995 (10,322) and 1997 (1,998). This decline followed a publication by the General Accounting Office that criticized the SSA for being too lenient in accepting applicants into a program deemed ineffective for achieving the goal of self-support. The procedures for acceptance were then reevaluated by the SSA and amended, resulting in fewer approvals in subsequent years.

Table 12. Number of People Enrolled Nationally in Work Incentive Programs from 1997–2013 (Odd Years Only)

	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013
PASS	1,998	1,045	1,600	1,700	1,578	1,495	1,455	1,271	948
IRWE	9,637	9,520	8,798	7,602	6,309	5,155	3,862	3,323	2,982
BWE	4,116	3,972	3,642	3,070	2,547	2,133	1,638	1,555	1,284

SSI recipients with ID have a higher employment rate, but participate in work incentive programs less frequently than their counterparts with other types of disabilities.

One fifth of all SSI recipients with disabilities ages 18–64 in 2013 (18.9%) were individuals with an intellectual disability. With the expansion of additional “mental disorders” categories by the SSA,⁹ this is now the largest disability subgroup among SSI recipients.

SSI recipients with ID have had relative success with employment participation compared to recipients who do not have ID. In 2013, the rate at which SSI recipients with ID worked was almost three times that of SSI recipients without ID (12.5% versus 4.5%). The rate of employment among SSI recipients with ID was third among all diagnostic groups and subcategories, behind people with congenital anomalies (18.1%) and people with autism (17.7%).

SSI recipients with ID have consistently been employed at higher rates than their counterparts with other disabilities. The percentage of SSI recipients with ID who are employed has been more than twice the percentage of people with all other disabilities in each year since 2009.

SSI recipients with ID participate in the 1619(a) and 1619(b) work incentive programs at lower rates than SSI recipients with other disabilities (see Table 13). SSI recipients with ID participate in the IRWE program at about the same rates as recipients with other disabilities. A number of factors could explain these differences in participation. Analysis of other data sources, e.g., the RSA-911, has shown that people with ID often work fewer hours and earn less than individuals from other disability subgroups. As a result, individuals with ID who work are less likely to have earnings close to SGA, and may be at lower risk of losing benefits because of earnings.

The low rates of participation in work incentive programs by SSI recipients with ID should not overshadow the overall

⁹ Beginning with the 2010 SSI Annual Statistical Report, tables showing data by diagnostic group provide detail for mental disorders in these categories: autistic disorders, developmental disorders, childhood and adolescent disorders not elsewhere classified, intellectual disability, mood disorders, organic mental disorders, schizophrenic and other psychotic disorders, and all other mental disorders.

impact of these programs. For instance, in 2013, section 1619(b) benefits allowed more than 18,567 individuals with ID to work and to continue receiving Medicaid benefits. Better explanations of incentives and greater encouragement of participation in incentive programs by employment and disability services professionals could lead to higher rates of employment and better employment outcomes for individuals receiving SSI.

Table 13. Employment Outcomes and Participation in Work Incentives for SSI Recipients with Disabilities (2013)

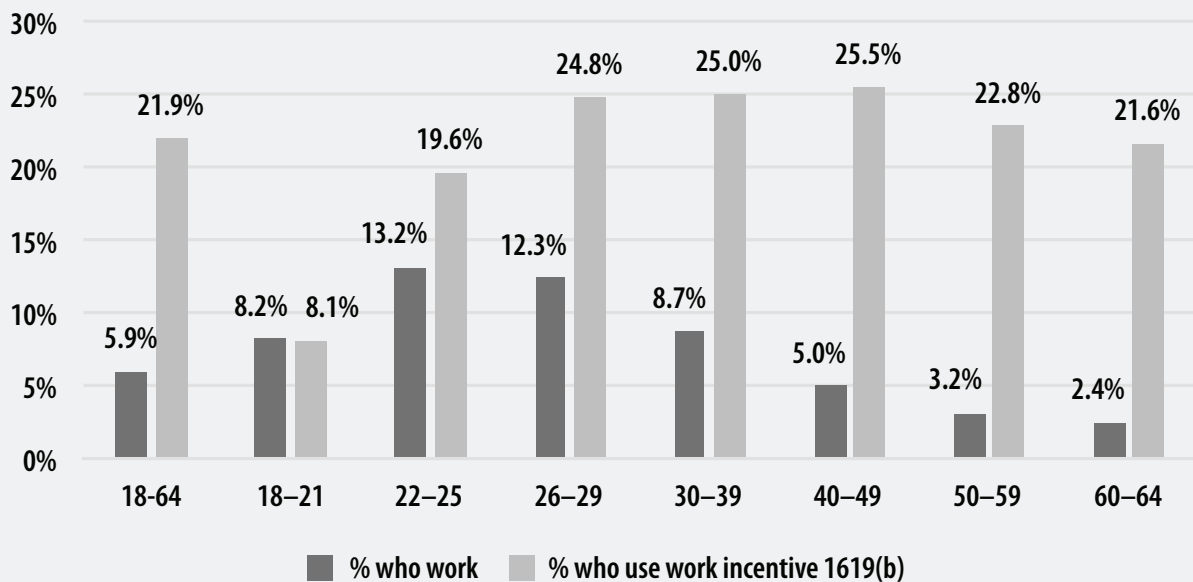
	Intellectual Disability	All Other Disabilities
Percentage of SSI recipients with disabilities who work	12.5%	4.5%
Percentage of working SSI recipients who participate in 1619(a)	2.7%	4.8%
Percentage of working SSI recipients who participate in 1619(b)	15.9%	25.8%
Percentage of working SSI recipients who participate in IRWE	1.0%	0.9%

Younger people who receive SSI appear to work more frequently than their older counterparts, suggesting that transition plans may be focusing more on employment and indicating that greater numbers of people on SSI can work.

Young adults with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 25 are a significant demographic of people who receive SSI, constituting 14.6% of recipients in 2013. Eleven percent (10.7%) of SSI recipients with disabilities between the ages of 18–25 work, which is higher than the percentage of all people ages 18–64 on SSI who work (5.9%).

Looking at Figure 10, younger SSI recipients—those between the ages of 18 and 39—are more likely to be working than SSI recipients 40 and older. If we look more closely at the 22–25 and 26–29-year-old groups, we see that the percentage of SSI recipients working is more than twice that of the 40–49 age group, and four times that of the 50–59 age group. These findings merit further exploration into why younger SSI recipients are more likely to be working, and how recipients can receive supports that will allow them to continue working as they age.

Figure 10. Percentage of SSI Recipients Who Work and Use Work Incentives by Age (2013)



Even though younger SSI recipients are more likely to be working than their older counterparts, older SSI recipients are slightly more likely to use work incentives (see Figure 10). Work incentive usage gradually increases from the 22–25-year-old group, peaks at the 40–49 group, and gradually declines after that. If we look more closely at the 18–21-year-old group, we see that the percentage of work incentive usage is almost three times lower than that of the overall percentage for recipients ages 18–64.

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