

ACCSES REVIEW

State Auditor's Office Performance Audit Report:
"Developmental Disabilities in Washington:
Increasing Access and Equality"

THE VOICE

OF DISABILITY SERVICE PROVIDERS



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ACCSES, a national organization representing disability service providers, is committed to enhancing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities. ACCSES believes that state systems must support the full array of employment options that reflect the strengths, needs, preferences, abilities and capabilities of each individual we serve, consistent with each individual's person-centered plan. ACCSES also believes that the preferred, priority outcome for the individuals with disabilities we serve should be competitive integrated employment while recognizing that other employment outcomes may be appropriate.

In order to improve the quality of employment-related services and supports our members provide to the individuals with disabilities we serve, ACCSES continually reviews reports describing national trends in the provision of employment-related and other day services and supports. One such report is *State Data: The National Report on Employment Outcomes 2012* prepared by the Institute on Community Inclusion. The Report includes a state-by-state chart that describes the participation of individuals with disabilities in day and employment services in FY 2011 including total served, percent in integrated employment, percent in community-based non-work, percent in facility-based work, and percent in facility-based non-work.

The data reported by the State of Washington varied so significantly from the data reported by all other states that ACCSES decided it was critical to determine if an independent review could shed some light on actual state participation rates. Specifically the State of Washington reported 88 percent of individuals with disabilities in the state participated in integrated employment; 5 percent participated in community-based non-work; 8.5 participated in facility-based work; and .9 percent participated in facility-based non-work.

On July 31, 2013, the State Auditor's Office conducted a Performance Audit— *Developmental Disabilities in Washington: Increasing Access and Equality*. The purpose of this paper is to describe the Auditor's findings with regard to participation rates and the experience of individuals with developmental disabilities in accessing employment-related and other services. Below is a summary of the Auditor's findings.

— Of the total of 81,800 individuals in Washington with developmental disabilities, a majority (57%) have NOT requested services from the state; 25% are receiving benefits (9% employment services; 16% other services); and 18% are on a wait list.

— Of those receiving employment services:



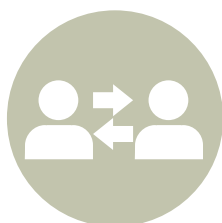
64%

are supported in fully-integrated environments



13%

are receiving group supported employment services



8%

are in pre-vocational settings/skill development centers



15%

receive support from other state & local programs

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (CONT.)

- While a significant percentage of the population receiving employment support are able to participate in a fully-integrated work setting, the number of individuals actually receiving employment support is small relative to the number of individuals with disabilities living in the state.
- When the individuals currently on a waitlist and those that have not yet requested services are set aside, the number of individuals receiving fully integrated employment services represents **twenty-three percent (23%)** of the population receiving services and the number receiving group supported employment services is **five percent (5%)**; **three percent (3%)** were receiving pre-vocational employment; and **six percent (6%)** were receiving other employment support. Also, **sixty-three percent (63%)** were receiving non-employment services.

The Auditor also found that individuals with disabilities that choose state-funded employment programs, including the more than 7,500 individuals receiving services through the Employment First program, are ineligible for most other state-supported programs. Specifically, they are not permitted to opt into day programs to supplement the hours they work. For instance, should individuals opt into an Employment First program, such as a supported employment position, they are ineligible for most other support programs from the state.

- Of those who work, many forgo day services to work very few hours during the month—in some instances approximately **4 hours per week on average** for those with high employment support levels.

It is important to note that Washington State recently passed a law ([SB 6387](#)) signed by its Governor to improve access and funding. Further, advocates in the state continue to work on proposals for system reform to fill gaps and enhance service delivery. The data contained in this report helps to inform the ongoing discussion of how to best support a full array of options and opportunities for all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Without adequate funding dedicated to supporting various options many thousands of individuals with the most significant disabilities in the state will be left behind.



To view the bill and reports in their entirety online, please visit:

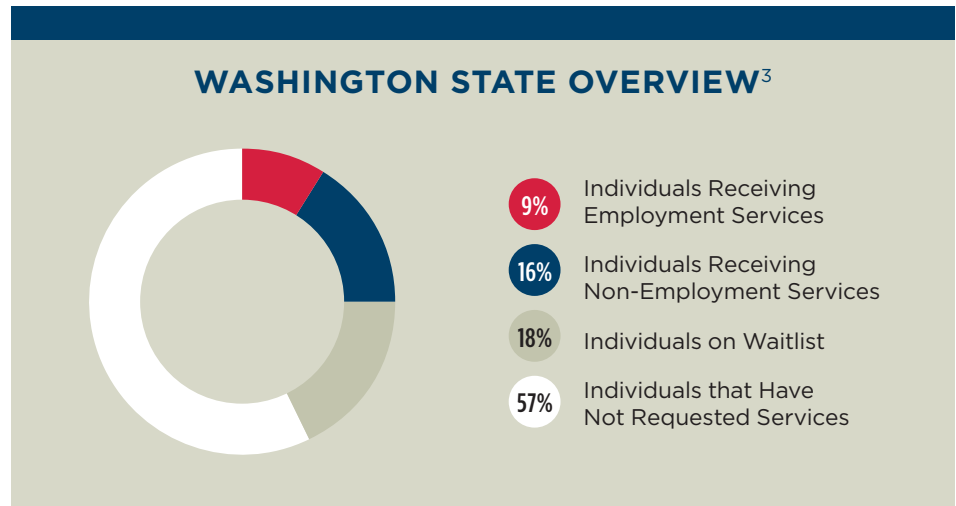
“Developmental Disabilities in Washington: Increasing Access and Equality” –
http://www.sao.wa.gov/state/Documents/PA_DevDisabilities_Access_ar1009938.pdf

SB 6387 – <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/summary.aspx?bill=6387>

“State Data: The National Report on Employment Outcomes 2012” –
<http://communityinclusion.github.io/book12/>

KEY FINDINGS

According to the Washington State Auditor's report, there are **81,800** individuals in the State of Washington that live with developmental disabilities. The majority of that group, **46,200** individuals, has not yet requested services from the state. Of the group that has requested services, **20,500** individuals are receiving benefits, and **15,100** are currently on a waitlist. Within the group that is receiving benefits, **7,516**¹ receive employment services, and the remainder benefit from other services, including institutional care, and activities that develop skills, work toward community integration and independence. The graph on the right represents these statistics.²



¹ This number was calculated by reference to the chart on page 32 of *Developmental Disabilities in Washington: Increasing Access and Equality*. It represents the number of people who were receiving employment services at the time the audit was conducted. It does not include participants in Washington's Community Access Program. Participation in the Community Access program is an option after 9 months of employment services.

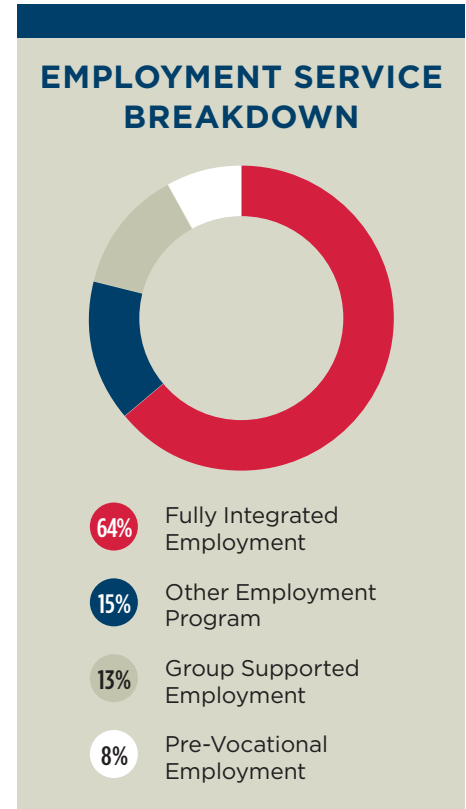
² Data in graph taken from *Developmental Disabilities in Washington: Increasing Access and Equality*, page 10

KEY FINDINGS (CONT.)

Employment services are offered by the state in a number of different forms. Sixty-four percent (**64%**) of those benefiting from employment services, about 4,796 individuals in total, receive support in a fully-integrated environment.⁴ Thirteen percent (**13%**), around 1001 individuals, receive group supported employment services, such as working in cleaning crews composed entirely of individuals with disabilities. Eight percent (**8%**), about 567 individuals, receive support in pre-vocational settings, sometimes called “sheltered workshops”. The remaining fifteen percent (**15%**), 1,152 individuals, receive services from other state and local programs. This information can be found in the graph to the right.⁵

It is important to note that, with the Employment First program, the **7,516** individuals receiving employment services are rendered ineligible for most other support programs from the state. Specifically, they are not permitted to opt into day programs to supplement the hours that they work. They are, however, provided with personal care and respite hours.⁶

Individuals participating in each of the employment support programs receive support according to their needs. Thus, there are some individuals who work in low support environments, and others in high support environments. The amount an individual works on average varies given the type and extent of the support they receive. Some statistics on the number of hours that individuals receiving employment support are able to work can be seen in the chart below.⁷



AVERAGE PAID HOURS WORKED PER MONTH			
Type of Employment Support	All Employment Support Levels	Low Employment Support Levels	High Employment Support Levels
Fully-Integrated Employment	47	71	17
Group Supported Employment	54	58	45
Pre-Vocational Employment	50	71	37
Other Employment Services	36	36	32

³ The number of individuals receiving non-employment services was determined by subtracting the number of individuals receiving employment services from the total number of individuals receiving services from the state.

⁴ Washington State’s definition of fully-integrated employment differs from that used by the Institute on Community Inclusion.

⁵ Data in graph taken from *Developmental Disabilities in Washington: Increasing Access and Equality*, page 32. Given that exact numbers are not listed, estimates were carefully made based on the values represented in the report’s chart.

⁶ *Developmental Disabilities in Washington: Increasing Access and Equality*, page 31.

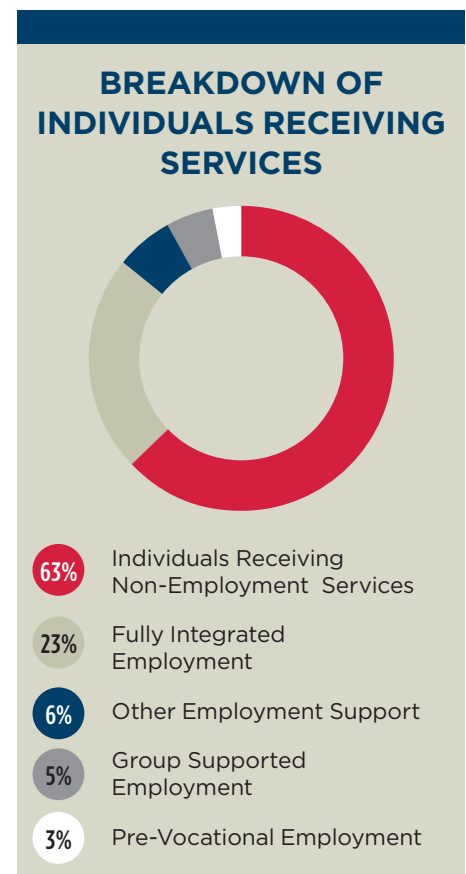
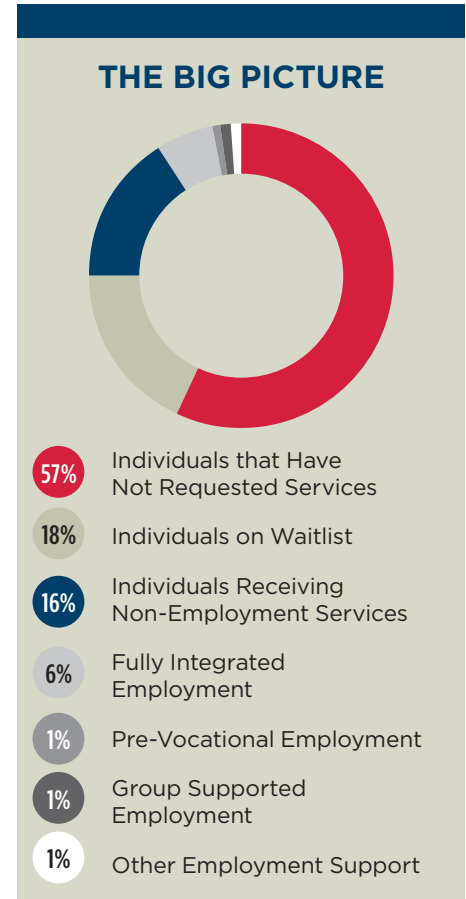
⁷ Data in chart taken from *Developmental Disabilities in Washington: Increasing Access and Equality*, page 30.

KEY FINDINGS (CONT.)

With all of this information in mind, a clear picture of employment support provided throughout the state comes into focus. While significant percentage of the population receiving employment support is able to participate in a fully-integrated work setting, the number of individuals actually receiving employment support is small relative to the number of individuals with disabilities living in the state. Of those who work, many forgo day services to work very few hours during the month—in some instances approximately **4 hours per week on average**. The graph to the right depicts the employment statistics in context of the statewide population of individuals with disabilities.

When the individuals currently on a waitlist and those that have not yet requested services are set aside, the number of individuals receiving integrated employment services represents twenty-three percent (**23%**) of the population receiving services and the number receiving group supported employment services is five percent (**5%**). This fact is evident in the graph to the right.

⁸ Data in graph taken from *Developmental Disabilities in Washington: Increasing Access and Equality*, pages 10 and 32.





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