

Annual Report of the Supported Employment Program




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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Members of the Illinois General Assembly

FROM: James P. Sledge, Director 

DATE: December, 2009

SUBJECT: Annual Report of the Supported Employment Program

Background

The Supported Employment Program (SEP) was implemented in January of 1991. In the enacting legislation, the Department of Central Management Services was charged with coordinating the program, while the former Departments of Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities and Rehabilitation Services (now the Department of Human Services) and the Department of Public Aid (now the Department of Healthcare & Family Services) were cited as participatory agencies to provide active assistance in developing the program. The stated mandate was "...to seek cooperation, assistance and the participation of all state agencies in the development of the program to employ individuals whose severe physical or mental disabilities seriously limit their functional capacities." (5 ILCS 390). The supported employees are to be provided with the ongoing assistance of a job coach, technological support and/or other assistance deemed necessary to carry out the functions of a particular position until such time as these supports are no longer necessary.

The Department of Central Management Services staff, with assistance from the Department of Human Services, Office of Rehabilitation Services counselors and other professional staff identified appropriate position titles for supported employee candidates. State agencies were polled, participating agencies were identified, and positions were targeted and matched with SEP candidates.

The coordinated effort resulted in a total of 19 supported employees working at various agencies by the second year of the program.

Changes to Initial Legislation

In FY01, The Supported Employment Legislation was amended to eliminate the requirement "...to place 25 people by June 30, 1991." (P.A. 92-84).

Current Agency Involvement

Today, there are 11 SEP employees. Following is a breakdown of their placements:

Agency	SEP Employees
Central Management Services	1
Children & Family Services	2
Human Services	6
Prisoner Review Board	1
Transportation	1

Please note that all of these employees required job coaches or some other kind of support at the time of their appointments. Six of the placements have outgrown the need for assistance and are able to carry out the duties of their jobs unassisted.

Future Endeavors

The Department of Central Management Services continues to meet its mandate to coordinate the Supported Employment Program by assisting State agencies through advisement and consultation on the appointment process through the Supported Employment Program and working with agencies to establish trainee programs to facilitate such appointments.