



**U.S. Department of Labor
Disability Employment Initiative Cooperative Agreements**

Illinois

Grantee: Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Location of Grant Activity: Four Illinois Workforce Investment Areas (Northern Cook County, Chicago, Stark, Marshall, Peoria and Woodward Counties, and Ford, Iroquois, Platt, and Champaign Counties)

Grant Award Amount: \$1,839,588

Period of Performance: Three Years

Key Partnerships: Illinois Medicaid Infrastructure Grant, Work Incentive Planning and Assistance program, Department of Employment Security, Health Care and Family Services – Division of Rehabilitation Services, Southern Illinois University, Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center, Easter Seals, and local and regional Chambers of Commerce.

Individuals to be Served: Individuals with Disabilities

Project Description: The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) is building upon their former Disability Program Navigator Initiative through their flagship program, **disabilityworks**, and their **disabilityworks** Disability Coordinators (dRCs). Illinois plans to focus their initiative on adults with disabilities through deployment of Integrated Resource Teams and Services, Customized Employment, asset development strategies and partnerships and collaboration. The dRCs have expertise as most were formerly Disability Program Navigators and 75 percent of them are individuals with disabilities. The Illinois DEI project is committed to increasing employment and retention outcomes for adults with disabilities accessing their workforce system.

The Illinois DEI includes a focus on disabled veterans and job seekers with developmental disabilities. Integrated Resource Team approaches will provide a comprehensive approach to the complex systems available to disabled veterans and their return to work efforts. Illinois will utilize customized employment strategies with adults with disabilities when applicable, and develop a wide spectrum of customized employment resources that will enable **disabilityworks** to incorporate this approach across workforce investment areas. Early intervention approaches will be utilized during intake and will include Medicaid Buy-in resources and information, work incentives counseling for Social Security disability beneficiaries, and assistance to clients in developing Plans to Achieve Self Support (PASS).

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