

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 07-22
	DATE October 18, 2022

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
STATE WORKFORCE ADMINISTRATORS
STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS
ALL AMERICAN JOB CENTER PROGRAMS

FROM: BRENT PARTON /s/
Acting Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Joint Communication on Resource Leveraging & Service Coordination to Increase Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities.

1. **Purpose.** To announce a joint communication from Department of Labor’s (Department) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), along with seven other federal agencies, to state and local governments titled “Resource Leveraging & Service Coordination to Increase Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities.”
2. **Action Requested.** ETA encourages state and local partners to implement blending, braiding, and sequencing strategies across systems to maximize resources and increase Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) for youth and adults with disabilities.
3. **Summary and Background.**
 - a. Summary – Many different federally-funded programs provide various services to adults and youth with disabilities. If administered without intention, these programs can unintentionally deliver fragmented or disjointed services. Blending, braiding, and/or sequencing enables state and local agencies to effectively leverage available funds across multiple systems to contribute appropriate resources or services so that individual job seekers can enter competitive integrated employment.
 - b. Background – Consistent with the Department’s commitment to a diverse and inclusive workforce, ETA, ODEP, the Social Security Administration and agencies within the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services have issued a joint communication to promote the leveraging and coordination of resources (e.g., funds, staff, equipment, services) by state and local government systems to increase competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. Agencies and programs often serve jobseekers with disabilities jointly; therefore, the goal for each shared jobseeker with a disability is to receive unduplicated government-funded services in an effective, efficient, and seamless manner.

In competitive integrated employment, individuals with disabilities are paid competitive wages and work in a community setting where most workers do not have disabilities.

The joint communication, included as an attachment to this notice, is also available alongside other resources at ODEP's webpage on competitive integrated employment, at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/program-areas/integrated-employment>.

4. **Highlights from the Joint Communication.** The joint communication provides an overview of blending, braiding, and sequencing strategies across federal systems and encourages State and local partners to proactively leverage and coordinate their resources. In summary:
- “Blending” occurs when grantees combine dollars from multiple funding streams to create a single source of dollars that is then used to fund specific services that support an individual with a disability in pursuing, obtaining, or maintaining CIE.
 - “Braiding” occurs when grantees use multiple funding streams separately and simultaneously to provide specific services.
 - “Sequencing” involves using multiple funding streams separately and sequentially providing services in support of CIE.

The joint communication highlights examples of leveraging resources to maximize employment, inclusion, and economic advancement outcomes for people with disabilities. It includes a set of frequently asked questions that provides agency-specific examples of blending, braiding, and sequencing among various federal programs and services.

5. **Inquiries.** For further information, please contact your Federal Project Officer (FPO).
6. **Reference.**
- <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/program-areas/integrated-employment>
 - Section 3(11) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 and Section 7(5) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; definition of competitive integrated employment.
7. **Attachments.**
- Frequently Asked Questions: Competitive Integrated Employment and Blending, Braiding, and Sequencing Resources (Services and Funding)
 - Resource Leveraging & Service Coordination to Increase Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities