

# GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

These snapshots and the data (at right) show progress in GA to build a sustainable, higher performing integrated employment system, driving future work and systems' goals.

## Systems Change in Action

### The BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal)

Georgia's goal is to triple the percentage of persons with IDD engaged in competitive integrated employment by 2025, from 16.3% to 48.9%. Georgia established a 32-member state-level supported employment leadership team led by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities. The team is comprised of 10 state agencies, employment providers, families, advocates, and other state employment leaders. They held 10 monthly meetings devising strategies to improve system policies and practices tied to meeting Georgia's goal.

### Provider-Level Goal

In fall 2019, a statewide leadership cohort was established. The cohort is comprised of executive directors and program managers from 25 supported employment provider agencies representing all 6 regions of the state. These participants set a group goal to get 428 individuals employed in the community by the end of 2020 to assist with meeting the BHAG.

### Capacity Building

In collaboration with Wise, Georgia embarked on a mission to develop high-performing employment organizations and communities. The Wise team led statewide activities such as virtual and in-person learning and networking sessions for the leadership cohort. Team members focused on specific programmatic needs including expanding community building, goal setting, building professional connections, resource sharing, and data collection.

Additionally, the 6 regional Gardens of Change that were formed in 2018 sprouted projects geared towards the goal. With technical assistance from Wise, regional activities include:

- ❖ **Region 1** – “The Determined Dandelions” created and submitted a video success story to the statewide provider network news and hosted a provider information event.
- ❖ **Region 2** – “Miracle Growers” created a Basecamp site for gathering and sharing information and resources and hosted 3 family education forums.
- ❖ **Region 3** – “Sprouts” hosted a family and provider information event and 6 provider agencies hosted community partner on-site visits.
- ❖ **Region 4** – “Busy Bees” hosted 3 informational luncheons for families and providers on “SSI and How to Access the Employment Process: Benefits, Education and Employment Services.”
- ❖ **Region 5** – “Peachy People” hosted 3 family employment information sessions.
- ❖ **Region 6** – “Harvest Six” hosted an online video resume and storytelling training session as well as a training about building disability employment awareness.



### Employment Express Funding Data



**\$10.14** Average Wage



**80.6** Average Hours Worked (Monthly)

Note: During the last quarter of FY2020, an average of 229 individuals reported active employment status and earning wages during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: April, May, and June 2020  
Employment Express Funding Data

### GEORGIA

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### State Employment Leadership Network



The SELN is a joint program of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services.

[www.selnhub.org](http://www.selnhub.org)

## The Employment Framework

Member states enlist the support of a wide variety of key informants to participate in discussions and workgroups to determine a state's course of action. A direct member benefit is access to guidance that can lead states to a better understanding of priorities while setting that course. The Framework for Employment, developed through extensive experience and research conducted within states, is used to guide the SELN's strategy for system improvements. The elements represent practices and outcomes known to be effective at enabling states to develop and sustain high-performing integrated employment systems.



## Elements of a High-Performing Employment System

This graphic demonstrates the factors that, when working together, can lead to better integrated employment outcomes. It is the dynamic interplay of all the elements that can lead to long-term systems change.

### **Leadership.**

Clear and unambiguous commitment to employment in individual community jobs at all levels in the system.

### **Strategic Goals and Operating Policies.**

Employment is supported by program goals and operating practices

### **Financing and Contracting Methods.**

State resource allocation formulas, reimbursement methods, and rate-setting practices support integrated employment.

### **Training and Technical Assistance.**

Investment in the development and maintenance of a strong, competent workforce.

### **Interagency Collaboration and Partnership.**

Building relationships to remove barriers to employment supports.

### **Services and Service Innovation.**

Service definitions and support strategies are structured and aligned to facilitate the delivery of employment supports.

### **Performance Measurement and Data Management.**

Comprehensive data systems are used to measure progress, benchmark performance, and document outcomes.