



HOW TO
USE THE
TOOLKIT

BUILDING
THE BUSINESS
CASE

RECRUITING,
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Hiring Ohioans with Disabilities

A Toolkit for Employers, Managers
and Human Resource Professionals



How to Use This Toolkit

This interactive guide is designed to be a helpful reference for human resource professionals, recruiters, training providers, managers, business owners, executives and anyone else interested in recruiting, hiring and retaining workers with disabilities.

The tabs at right are arranged sequentially. If you've never hired workers with disabilities and you would like more information about the many benefits of doing so, start with "**Building the Business Case.**"

Next, "**Recruiting, Hiring and Retaining**" can quickly and easily connect you to all the information and resources you need to create and retain a more inclusive workforce. You'll learn

about sources of peer support, training opportunities and proven strategies for attracting qualified workers.

The "**Workplace Accommodations**" section is filled with simple ideas for creating a work environment conducive to all your employees' success.

"**Veterans' Resources**" has information and supports for employers committed to hiring veterans. Finally, "**Ohio's Workforce Integration Task Force**" explains how and why this toolkit came to be.

If you have questions about anything you find in the toolkit, please email HiringAbility@ood.ohio.gov. The toolkit will be revised periodically based on feedback from users.

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Building the Business Case

Studies show that having a more inclusive workforce boosts morale, productivity and profitability. Individuals with disabilities have proven to be dedicated, conscientious and highly productive workers when given the opportunity. Their performance, attendance and retention are often above average in industry surveys.

Too often, the greatest barriers to hiring workers with disabilities are myths, fears and misunderstandings. Many employers are unaware of the benefits of hiring workers with disabilities or of the many services and incentives available to help them recruit, hire and retain this valuable workforce. To learn more about the benefits of hiring workers with disabilities, as well as the supports and incentives available, click on the links in bold.

[Business Case for Hiring People with Disabilities](http://thinkbeyondthelabel.com/learning-tools/businesscase) is a multimedia resource that demonstrates the value of hiring individuals with disabilities in six key areas: return on investment, human capital, innovation, marketing, diversity and social responsibility. **thinkbeyondthelabel.com/learning-tools/businesscase**

[Business Strategies that Work: A Framework for Disability Inclusion](http://dol.gov/odep/topics/Employers.htm) is a U.S. Department of Labor publication that includes more than 20 recommended employment policies and practices for recruiting, hiring, retaining and advancing qualified individuals with disabilities. **dol.gov/odep/topics/Employers.htm**

To learn more about tax incentives for hiring people with disabilities, visit **askjan.org/topics/taxinc.cfm?cssearch=1970785_1**. To learn more about the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) for hiring workers with barriers to employment, visit **jfs.ohio.gov/wotc/index.stm**

[Reaching Prevalent, Diverse Consumers with Disabilities](http://nielsen.com/us/en/insights/reports/2016/reaching-prevalent-diverse-consumers-with-disabilities.html) is a report compiled by the Nielsen company with insights about the consumer habits of people with disabilities and their families. **nielsen.com/us/en/insights/reports/2016/reaching-prevalent-diverse-consumers-with-disabilities.html**

[Workplace Accommodations: Low Cost, High Impact](http://askjan.org/topics/costs.cfm?cssearch=1970789_1) is a concise summary of the positive effects of accommodating employees with disabilities. **askjan.org/topics/costs.cfm?cssearch=1970789_1**

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Recruiting, Hiring and Retaining

Many resources are available to help Ohio employers attract and maintain a more diverse and inclusive workforce. Through the links in this section, you can access sources of business-to-business support, training opportunities, best practices, free programs and more.

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Business-to-Business Support

The following organizations are excellent resources for employers. Use them to network and learn from your peers the best practices for recruiting, hiring and retaining individuals with disabilities.

Learn best practices for recruiting, hiring and retaining people with disabilities from some of Ohio's top employers by joining **Disability:IN Ohio**. **Disability:IN Ohio** is an employer-to-employer network that promotes and supports the employment of qualified people with disabilities. di-oh.org/.

The **Disability:IN** is a national nonprofit that helps businesses drive performance by leveraging disability inclusion in the workplace, supply chain and marketplace. The USBLN® serves as the collective voice of nearly 50 BLN affiliates representing more 5,000 businesses across the United States, including AT&T, Boeing, ESPN, Marriott, Starbucks and Walgreens. disabilityin.org

If your business holds a federal contract, the **National Industry Liaison Group (NILG)** can provide information about affirmative action and equal employment opportunity issues. NILG is a nonprofit employer organization formed in 1992 to improve communication between the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs and Industry Liaison Groups (ILGs). nationalilg.org

NILG also supports affiliate ILGs such as the **Ohio Industry Liaison Group**, which is a coalition of more 100 representatives from organizations of all sizes and industries in Ohio. ohioilg.org

Employer Resource Groups (ERGs) are an important tool for businesses wishing to build and maintain an inclusive workplace for people with disabilities. "A Toolkit for Establishing and Maintaining a Successful Employee Resource Group" provides a 12-step guide to starting, implementing and maintaining disability ERGs: askearn.org/refdesk/Inclusive_Workplaces/Employee_Resource_Groups/Private_ERGs

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The following resources provide information about training, strategies and procedures that will help employers create and maintain a workplace that is welcoming to all workers with disabilities, both new employees and existing employees.

Interested in learning more about interviewing, hiring and working alongside people with disabilities? Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities offers **Windmills**, a free, interactive training program that is customizable to meet your business needs. Contact a Windmills facilitator by visiting ood.ohio.gov/Employers/Windmills

Federal law requires federal contractors to invite applicants and employees to inform the contractor if they have a disability by filling out a "Voluntary Self-Identification of Disability" form. The **Disability:IN** offers guidance about this in a publication called Strategies for an Effective Self-Identification Campaign. disabilityin.org

Another excellent resource to help government contractors create an environment in which employees with disabilities feel comfortable self-identifying is **The Conference Board "Do Ask, Do Tell" publication**. hexchange.conference-board.org/publications/publicationdetail.cfm?publicationid=2915

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) offers a **Return-to-Work Toolkit** with information about how to help employees get back to work quickly and smoothly after illnesses or injuries. dol.gov/odep/return-to-work

The DOL **Customized Employment web page** has information for employers about how to offer more flexible work arrangements to retain valued employees, including those with disabilities. dol.gov/odep/topics/customizedemployment.htm

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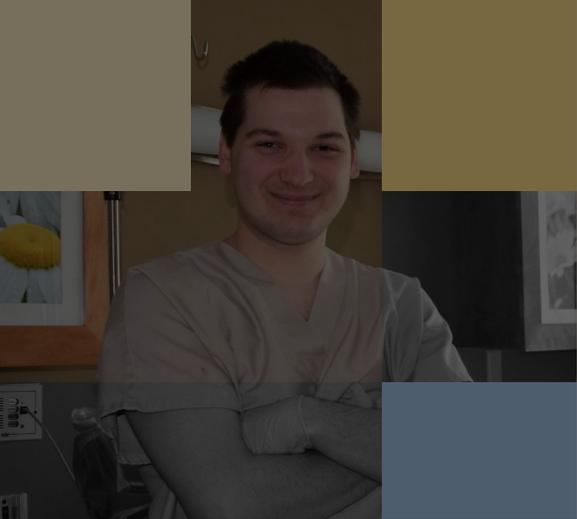
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The **Job Accommodation Network's Disability Etiquette** resources offer guidance on interacting with people with disabilities. askjan.org/topics/diseti.htm

AskJAN.org/topics/disetiq.htm

TalentWorks is an online resource designed to help employers make their online recruiting accessible to all job seekers. peatworks.org/talentworks

The **Toolkit for Establishing and Maintaining Successful Employee Resource Groups** is a 12-step guide for companies of any size or industry on how to start, implement and maintain disability employment resource groups. These are internal groups of employees with similar backgrounds, experiences or interests. They network, address common issues and concerns, and support each other.

osec.doc.gov/ocr/CivilRights/Disability/Documents/Disability%20101%20Training/ERG_Toolkit.pdf

The **Workplace Flexibility Toolkit** is a unique collection of resources to help employers adjust the time, location and manner in which employees work, in order to help them maintain better work-life balance.

dol.gov/odep/workplaceflexibility

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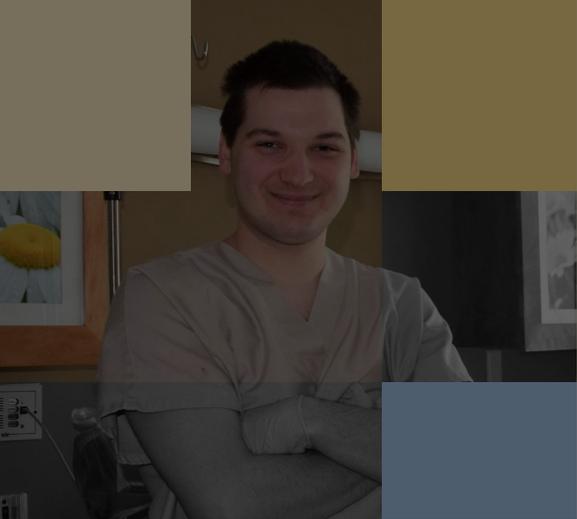
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Use these free resources to help identify and attract qualified individuals with disabilities.

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) works in partnership with businesses, educational and nonprofit organizations to help create customized employment plans for Ohioans with disabilities. OOD also helps Ohio companies recruit and retain employees with disabilities.

ood.ohio.gov

OOD launched a new website called **OODworks.com** to make it easier for Ohioans with disabilities to get vocational rehabilitation services. Through **OODWorks.com**, Ohioans can learn about vocational rehabilitation services, watch an orientation video about the employment process, take a brief self-assessment, and apply online without having to visit an office.

OODWorks.com

The **Employer Assistance and Resource Network (EARN)** provides free consultation and technical assistance for employers on diversity goals, recruitment and hiring, supervision and management, inclusive workplaces, and disability laws. **AskEARN.org** or 1-855-AskEARN (275-3276) (Voice/TTY)

The **Job Accommodation Network (JAN)** offers free, confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues. The network is a service of DOL's Office of Disability Employment Policy. **AskJAN.org** or 1-800-526-7234 (Voice); 1-877-781-9403 (TTY)

The **Ohio Department of Job and Family Services** offers a variety of programs to help employers find and retain skilled workers, take advantage of tax credit programs, avoid layoffs and more. jfs.ohio.gov/owd/Employers

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OhioMeansAccessibility.com is a free resource to help employers find and accommodate talented workers with disabilities. Working in tandem with **OhioMeansJobs.com**, this website can help employers find workers with disabilities, engage a qualified and diverse workforce, take advantage of hiring incentives, make appropriate accommodations, manage diversity in the workplace, understand employment law, access health care for employees, and understand the return on investment from hiring workers with disabilities.

ohiomeansaccessibility.com/employer/index.aspx

Find and hire the top talent of the future by searching for resumes and posting jobs at OhioMeansInternships.com. ohiomeansinternships.com

The [Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities](#) connects employers with pre-screened, highly motivated college students and recent graduates with disabilities seeking internships or permanent employment. AskEARN.org/g-wrp.cfm

OhioMeansJobs.com can help employers find the right employees with ease and at no cost. This online employment center, which ODJFS operates in partnership with **Monster.com**, has millions of resumes with advanced filtering tools that make it easy for employers to quickly narrow their talent searches to the most promising candidates. Employers can post job openings, learn about employee training programs and federal tax incentives, search for skilled veteran candidates for jobs, and learn about hiring and making accommodations for workers with disabilities. At the OhioMeansJobs Business Support Center, employers can request online, over-the-phone or face-to-face help. **OhioMeansJobs.com**

OOD Business Sourcing Analysts work with employers looking to fill critical workforce needs to link them with a skilled and job-ready workforce. Contact an OOD Business Sourcing Analyst in your area by visiting ood.ohio.gov/Employers

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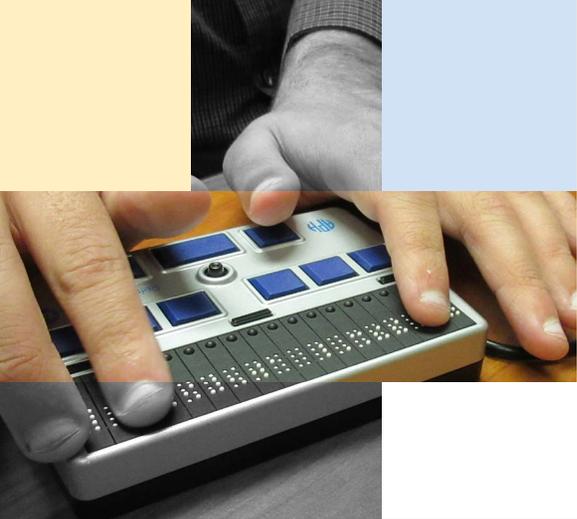
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Workplace Accommodations

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Hiring workers with disabilities is often less costly than most people expect. In fact, a recent study found that 58 percent of employers provided accommodations for workers with disabilities that cost absolutely nothing. Other times, the accommodation is very inexpensive. Often, one-time accommodations cost no more than \$500.

Providing workplace accommodations (sometimes known as reasonable accommodations) for employees leads to many direct and indirect benefits. It can increase an employee's productivity and eliminate the need to hire and train a new employee. This section of the toolkit can help you better understand reasonable accommodations, including their costs, uses and benefits.

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Situation A

An insurance claims adjustor with cancer has difficulty concentrating, dealing with fatigue and remembering tasks. Her physician says these limitations are caused by her chemotherapy and medication, which result in her needing help focusing.

Solution: The employer reduces auditory and visual distractions by moving the employee's desk to a quieter area.

Reported benefit: The employee can more easily focus on her work and meets or exceeds all production goals. The employer benefits from having a more satisfied employee and increased productivity.

Reported cost: \$0.

Situation B

A scientist with carpal tunnel syndrome experiences pain when completing quarterly reports.

Solution: The employer purchases an ergonomic keyboard.

Reported benefit: The scientist experiences less pain and stress and improved productivity and morale.

Reported cost: \$70.

Situation C

A janitor with a back impairment has trouble lifting, carrying and kneeling.

Solution: The employer provides ergonomic and lightweight cleaning equipment.

Reported benefit: The janitor can perform his job without pain.

Reported cost: \$200.

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Workplace Policies

Often, workplace policies can be easily adjusted to better accommodate employees with disabilities. For example, an employee with diabetes can be allowed to eat at her desk or a retail store cashier with a back impairment could be allowed to use a stool. Here are other examples and resources:

Leave

Employees can be allowed to use accrued paid leave for disability-related reasons, such as receiving or recovering from treatment or when a condition "flares up." They also can be provided with additional unpaid leave after they exhaust all available leave because of disability-related reasons.

Managing Employee Leave offers guidance for preparing for and managing work leave, including factors to consider when the leave is disability-related. askearn.org/refdesk/Supervision_Management/Managing_Employee_Leave

Testing and Training

Testing Accommodations offers guidance for making employment testing accommodations for workers and applicants with disabilities. askjan.org/topics/test.cfm?cssearch=1970799_1

In addition, training materials can be provided in Braille or large print, or reading instructions can be read out loud to a person with a vision or cognitive impairment.

Travel

Tips for making **Job-Related Travel** easier for employees with disabilities can be found at askjan.org/corner/vol01iss15.htm

For guidance on making **Accommodations Related to Commuting to and from Work**, see askjan.org/corner/vol08iss01.htm

For information about **Epilepsy, Driving and Employment**, see askjan.org/corner/vol05iss02.htm

Teleworking

Work at Home/Telework as a Reasonable Accommodation offers guidance to employers on how to decide whether work can be performed at home and how to offer teleworking as a reasonable accommodation. eeoc.gov/facts/telework.html

The **Workplace Flexibility Toolkit** is a unique collection of resources to help employers adjust the time, location and manner in which employees work. dol.gov/odep/workplaceflexibility

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Emergency Planning

For guidance on [Including Employees with Disabilities in Emergency Evacuation Plans](#), visit askjan.org/topics/emevac.cfm?cssearch=1970807_1

Work Schedules

Arrival or departure times often can be adjusted to more easily accommodate workers with disabilities. Periodic breaks can be provided, and the times certain tasks are performed can be altered.

Resources for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing

According to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, approximately 15 percent of American adults report some degree of hearing loss. The following resources can help employers accommodate workers with hearing disabilities:

The Job Accommodation Network publication [Employees with Hearing Loss](#) has a wealth of information about making reasonable accommodations for employees with hearing loss. askjan.org/disabilities/Hearing-Impairment.cfm?cssearch=1970808_1

The [Rochester Institute of Technology's Technological Education Center for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students](#) offers guidance, including frequently asked questions and answers, regarding possible accommodations that can be made for those with hearing loss. deaftec.org/workplace-accommodations

Job Coaches

Many public and private social service agencies provide job coaches who can accompany employees with disabilities to job sites to help them learn and perform their jobs. Job coaches often can stay with employees until they are able to complete their work independently in a safe and timely manner. For more information about job coaches, see the following:

[Job Coaching in the Workplace](#) provides an overview of job coaches. It explains how to find them, fund them and use them to improve employment outcomes for workers with disabilities. askjan.org/topics/Job-Coaches.cfm?cssearch=1970818_1

[Working with Job Coaches and Employment Support Specialists](#) explains what job coaches are and how they can help employers. askjan.org/topics/Job-Coaches.cfm?cssearch=1970818_1

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Job Restructuring and Work Schedules

Sometimes jobs can be restructured to better accommodate employees with disabilities. For example, when and/or how a task is performed can be changed, or responsibility for minor tasks can be shifted to other employees. If an employee can no longer perform a job because of a disability, often he or she can be reassigned to a vacant position. Arrival or departure times also can be adjusted to more easily accommodate workers with disabilities. Periodic breaks can be provided, and the times certain tasks are performed can be altered.

Technology and Electronic Interpreters

Often simple technological devices can allow an employee with a disability to successfully perform a job. For example, amplified stethoscopes can be purchased for nurses and physicians with hearing impairments. Computer screen readers can be purchased for employees with vision impairments. For additional ideas, see the following:

Alternate Input Devices provides an overview of tools that can improve computer accessibility for individuals with a variety of impairments. askjan.org/solutions/Alternative-Input-Devices.cfm?cssearch=1970904_1

Assistive Technology of Ohio is a federally funded nonprofit housed at The Ohio State University. It helps Ohioans with disabilities and their employers learn about or acquire assistive technology. atohio.org

TechCheck is a tool to help employers assess and improve their technology accessibility. peatworks.org/techcheck/get-started

Service Animals

Service animals help many individuals with disabilities overcome limitations and live more independently. The following resources offer information for employers regarding service animals in the workplace:

The booklet **Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals: Where are they allowed and under what conditions?** provides an overview of federal laws regarding service animals. adata.org/publication/service-animals-booklet

Service Animals in the Workplace provides answers to frequently asked questions about service animals. askjan.org/topics/servanim.cfm?cssearch=1970912_1

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The following resources are used daily by employers to learn more about reasonable accommodations and their application in the workplace.

The **Job Accommodation Network (AskJan.org)** is the leading source of information regarding workplace accommodations and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Here are some resources it provides:

- **Accommodation Information by Disability** provides an overview of information about impairments, as well as accommodation ideas and helpful organizations. askjan.org/media/atoz.htm
- The **Multimedia Training Microsite** is a web-based training on reasonable accommodations. askjan.org/training/library.htm
- The **Searchable Online Accommodation Resource (SOAR)** allows employers to search for accommodation ideas by impairment. askjan.org/soar.cfm
- The **Employers' Practical Guide to Reasonable Accommodations under the ADA** includes questions and answers about the Americans with Disabilities Act. askjan.org/publications/employers/employers-guide.cfm

- The free online **Workplace Accommodation Toolkit** has extensive resources for recruiters, hiring managers, supervisors, consultants, employees and coworkers. It also contains policies and forms for accommodating people with disabilities throughout their employment. prod.askjan.org/toolkit

The **Employer Assistance and Resource Network (AskEarn.org)** supports employers making workplace accommodations with these resources:

- **Making an Accommodation** provides guidance and examples of reasonable accommodations. askearn.org/topics/retention-advancement/
- **Understanding Accommodations: Easier than You Might Think** is a six-step guide to responding to requests for reasonable accommodations. askearn.org/refdesk/resource/47

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Additional Federal Resources

The U.S. Department of Labor's [Investing in People: Job Accommodation Situations and Solutions](#) presents real-life examples of successful workplace accommodations. dol.gov/odep/pubs/misc/invest.htm

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's [Enforcement Guidance: Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship under the ADA](#) clarifies the rights and responsibilities of employers and individuals with disabilities regarding reasonable accommodations and undue hardship. eeoc.gov/policy/docs/accommodation.html

The [U.S. Department of Labor's Emergency Preparedness Resources](#) can help employers create emergency preparedness plans that take into account people with disabilities. dol.gov/odep/topics/EmergencyPreparedness.htm

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America's Heroes at Work is a DOL initiative to give employers the tools they need to help employees affected by traumatic brain injuries and/or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). dol.gov/vets/ahaw/

The **National Resource Directory** is a service of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the U.S. Department of Defense. It has an Employment Center with resources for employers. nrd.gov/

Employers who support and/or give hiring preference to veteran and military employees and their families can sign up to be included on **Ohio's Military-Friendly Employer Registry** at OhioMeansVeteranJobs.com. For more information about the registry, visit jfs.ohio.gov/owd/OMJResources/Military-Friendly-Employer-Registry.stm

The Veterans Business Support Center offers employers online, over-the-phone or face-to-face help finding skilled veteran candidates for jobs. Employment specialists can help employers find qualified veteran candidates for job openings; post jobs at **OhioMeansJobs.com**; screen resumes; find career fairs, workshops and other hiring events in their areas; learn more about hiring incentive programs such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit; and learn more about the demographics of the veterans in their area. Visit **OhioMeansJobs.com**, your local OhioMeansJobs Center or call (888) 296-7541, option 5.

DOL offers a **Veterans Hiring Toolkit** to help employers committed to including transitioning service members, veterans and wounded warriors in their recruitment and hiring initiatives. The toolkit offers step-by-step guidance on how to design and implement a recruitment strategy, create a welcoming and educated workforce, and promote an inclusive workplace to improve retention. americasheroesatwork.gov

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Ohio's Workforce Integration Task Force

The Ohio General Assembly created the Ohio Workforce Integration Task Force in 2014 to gather and analyze data and make recommendations regarding barriers to employment and income parity for Ohioans who are deaf or blind. The goal was to better understand the employment environment for deaf and blind communities and develop strategies to help them reach their highest employment potential. This toolkit was created in response to a task force recommendation.



Mike DeWine, Governor

Kimberly Hall, Director, ODJFS

Kevin Miller, Director, OOD

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