

■ **Aug. 14, 2015**

To: Employment First Stakeholders

From: Mike Maley, Statewide Employment First Coordinator

Re: Update on Transformation Grants

(Please forward to your local partners & stakeholders)

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Transformation grant update

In recent months we have had inquiries about the service provider transformation project. This message is to give a brief update.

Oregon will continue its work helping people find integrated jobs in their local communities. In doing this, it is important for service providers to make changes within their organizations to help us achieve this goal.

In fact, much of our long-term success is dependent upon current providers shifting from facility-based services to new ways of serving people. Many providers around Oregon are already switching to community-based employment services. This transformation project is a way to formally assist these efforts.

At the end of 2014, the Department of Human Services (DHS) [awarded grants](#) to 25 service provider agencies that currently provide facility-based employment or day services to help transform to community-based, integrated employment services.

[Washington Initiative for Supported Employment](#) (WiSe) and [Living Opportunities](#) are working directly with the 25 provider agencies. The transformation of providers is a multi-year process.

In this first phase, WiSe and Living Opportunities are helping agencies develop a strategic plan around community employment services. In addition, each provider agency committed to helping a targeted number of people get

community jobs.

We are about halfway through this phase of the project. Much of the work is focused on strategic planning and initial technical assistance. Early reports show about 27 people previously in sheltered workshops have already started working in the community due to the transformation project. We expect this number to increase in the coming months.

The second phase will launch in late 2015 or early 2016. This phase includes strategies for ongoing support of those agencies currently in the project and an invitation for additional agencies to participate. This will be fully implemented by July 2016 and carry us through June 2018.

Thank you all for your continued involvement, support, and advocacy for services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Oregon. If you have comments or other questions, please email them to employment.first@state.or.us.

