

50-06.1-16. Committee on employment of people with disabilities - Appointment - Expenses - Director - Duties - Annual report.

1. There is established a committee on employment of people with disabilities.
 - a. The governor shall appoint four members of the public to serve as committee members with terms of three years, staggered so the terms of at least one but no more than two members expire July first of each year:
 - (1) The executive director of the North Dakota association of community providers or a designee of the director;
 - (2) One community employer representative;
 - (3) One individual with a disability; and
 - (4) One family member of an individual with a disability.
 - b. The following five individuals shall serve on the committee as ex officio members:
 - (1) The director of the department of commerce division of workforce development, or the director's designee;
 - (2) The director of the department of human services division of vocational rehabilitation, or the director's designee;
 - (3) The superintendent of public instruction's director of special education, or the director's designee;
 - (4) The director of the protection and advocacy project, or the director's designee; and
 - (5) The head of the department of human services developmental disabilities programs, as identified by the executive director of the department of human services.
 - c. A vacancy occurring other than by reason of the expiration of a term must be filled in the same manner as original appointments, except that the appointment may be made for only the remainder of the unexpired term.
2. The public members of the committee are entitled to be paid for mileage and actual expenses incurred in attending meetings and in performance of their official duties in amounts provided by law for other state officers and employees.
3. The goal of the committee is to remove barriers in reaching and identify how to further the goal of public and private employers considering competitive and integrated employment as the first option when supporting individuals with disabilities who are of working age to obtain employment. As used in this section:
 - a. "Competitive employment" means work in the competitive labor market which is performed on a full-time or part-time basis in an integrated setting, and for which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by an individual who does not have a disability.
 - b. "Integrated setting" means with respect to an employment outcome, a setting typically found in the community in which applicants or eligible individuals interact with individuals who do not have a disability, other than individuals who do not have a disability who are providing services to those applicants or eligible individuals, to the same extent that individuals without a disability in comparable positions interact with others.
4. The committee:
 - a. At the call of the chairman, shall meet at least quarterly.
 - b. Shall collaborate, coordinate, and improve employment outcomes for working-age adults with disabilities, including:
 - (1) Reviewing and aligning policies, procedures, eligibility, and enrollment and planning for services for individuals, with the objective of increasing opportunities for community employment for North Dakotans with disabilities.
 - (2) Developing cross-agency tools to document eligibility, order of selection, assessment, and planning for services for individuals with disabilities.
 - (3) Identifying best practices, effective partnerships, sources of available federal funds, opportunities for shared services among existing providers, and

means to expand model programs to increase community employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

- (4) Identifying and addressing areas where sufficient support is not currently available or where additional options are needed to assist individuals with disabilities to work in competitive employment in integrated settings.
 - (5) Establishing interagency agreements to improve coordination of services and allow for data sharing as appropriate to assist individuals with disabilities.
 - (6) Setting benchmarks for improving community employment outcomes and services for individuals with disabilities.
- c. Before January first of each year, shall issue an annual report. The committee shall submit the annual report to the governor and the legislative management. The report must detail the committee's activities, the committee's goals, and the progress the committee has made in reaching these goals. State agencies shall cooperate with the committee on the creation and dissemination of the annual report. The annual report must include identification of barriers to achieving the committee's goals and must include identified strategies and policies that can help the committee realize its goals.
5. The department of human services division of vocational rehabilitation shall provide the committee with administrative services.