

AN ACT concerning persons with disabilities.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Customized Employment for Individuals with Disabilities Act.

Section 5. Purpose. The purpose of this Act is to assist individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities or similar conditions resulting in a most significant disability who seek employment and require more individualized assistance to achieve and maintain integrated employment at competitive wages through a process of customized planning and negotiation.

Section 10. Customized Employment Pilot Program. The Department of Human Services, through its Division of Rehabilitation Services and in collaboration with the Division of Developmental Disabilities, shall establish a 5-year Customized Employment Pilot Program that serves a minimum of 25 individuals by the second year of the Pilot Program. The Pilot Program shall include the following components:

- (1) An intensive discovery phase during which the unique needs, abilities, and interests of the individual will be explored by the individual at his or her direction with assistance from family, friends, colleagues,

advocates, community-based service agencies, and others as determined by the individual.

(2) A customized person-centered planning process based upon information gathered during the discovery phase that involves capturing, organizing, and presenting the information in a blueprint for the job search.

(3) An employer negotiation process in which job duties and employee expectations are negotiated to align the skills and interests of the individual with the needs of an employer. The negotiation process may result in agreement on options such as (i) carving out a job for the individual, (ii) creating a new job description, (iii) creating a new job, (iv) job-sharing, and (v) agreeing on job supports, transportation needs, assistive technology, work hours, location, or supervision needs.

(4) A flexible timeline for a comprehensive discovery, planning, and job placement process to accommodate the unique needs of the individual.

The Customized Employment Pilot Program shall be implemented through an individualized plan for employment developed by the individual with a disability and the vocational rehabilitation counselor employed by the Division of Rehabilitation Services. The individual with a disability may choose to have a personal representative participate in the development of the individualized plan for employment.

Section 15. Selection of participants. Individuals shall be identified and referred to the Department to participate in the Pilot Program by community-based agencies serving persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities. A team of individuals identified during the discovery phase shall be created to work with the individual during the process. The team shall include at least one qualified staff person as described in Section 25. Selection preference shall be given to individuals who are currently working in a sheltered workshop setting for a subminimum wage and individuals for whom it is likely that their current employment options will be limited to working in a sheltered workshop for a subminimum wage.

Section 20. Diversity. Participants in the Pilot Program shall reflect the geographical, racial, ethnic, gender, and income-level diversity of the State.

Section 25. Community-based agencies and staff qualifications. The Pilot Program shall utilize a minimum of 4 Illinois non-profit community-based agencies that must:

- (1) assign at least one staff member who has received a certificate of completion for training in community employment, with a specialization in customized employment, from a recognized and qualified training entity such as the Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators; and

(2) have access to technical assistance on customized employment from a recognized and qualified training entity to work with each participant in the Pilot Program.

Section 30. Data collection and reporting. The Department shall collect data regarding the successes and challenges of the Pilot Program and shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly on March 1st of each year beginning in 2021 until the Pilot Program terminates. The reports shall: (i) make a recommendation as to whether the Pilot Program should continue or become a statewide program; (ii) provide cost estimates, including the average per person costs; and (iii) recommend ways in which the Pilot Program can be improved to better serve the needs of individuals with disabilities and employers.

Section 35. Advice and recommendations. In the creation, operation, and administration of the Pilot Program, the Department shall seek the advice and recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council, Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Illinois Task Force on Employment and Economic Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities, statewide disability advocacy groups, and organizations representing large, medium, and small businesses.

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Section 40. The Department may adopt administrative rules governing the Pilot Program; however, the Pilot Program shall not be delayed pending the adoption of rules.