

Measuring and monitoring for outcomes and an end to subminimum wages

This background brief highlights examples of outcomes systems from the states of Maryland, Ohio, and Oregon. These three states use information systems to measure and monitor outcomes for people with disabilities and to move away from employment at subminimum wages.

On behalf of the Task Force on Eliminating Subminimum Wages, Management Analysis and Development (MAD) interviewed officials in these model states, which either no longer allow subminimum wages (Maryland) or have dramatically reduced the number of people with disabilities earning subminimum wages (Oregon and Ohio). MAD conducted this research to support the task force as it explores recommendations for ending use of subminimum wages in Minnesota.

MAD compiled the information on employment outcomes systems from its interviews and from documents and websites about efforts in Maryland, Ohio, and Oregon. While MAD also interviewed officials in Iowa, this background document highlights just these three states because there was enough information available about their systems. Of course, there are other states that use information systems to monitor outcomes, as well.

Summary: Quick takes on three state approaches

Maryland

Maryland used the StateData.Info project and the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) to develop its Employment Outcome Information System (EOIS). The EOIS website offers public access to summary reports for wages, hours worked, and self-employment by region, county, and provider. It also offers detailed reports on providers and lets users compare data on different providers. The system captures data on both employment and non-work activities. EOIS data over time allows Maryland to improve employment outcomes and advance competitive integrated employment. People with disabilities and their families can use EOIS to help them choose providers based on data about activities and outcomes. For information about the data collected, review the section below on page 4.

Ohio

Ohio developed its Outcome Tracking System (OTS) with help from an Ohio-based national expert and revised the system in 2019. The state's developmental disabilities agency operates OTS. Employment service providers are required to record data through OTS once a year. OTS focuses on how people with disabilities spend their days. Employment service providers must report data regarding jobs and self-employment and are asked to report on non-work activities. The state agency uses OTS to improve the lives of people with disabilities and uses OTS measurements for some of its key performance indicators. For information about the data collected, review the section below on page 5.

Oregon

For the Oregon system, providers report twice a year on employment services and outcomes for people with disabilities. The state's Employment Outcomes Systems (EOS) focuses on jobs, the employment pathway, and

employment discovery. The data helps people with disabilities, their families, and their counselors find and choose providers. The state's developmental disabilities agency uses EOS to identify and address gaps in service. Providers use the system for outreach and marketing to potential customers. For information about the data collected, review the section below on page 6.

The Maryland, Ohio, and Oregon systems for measuring and monitoring

Maryland's Employment Outcome Information System

The State of Maryland, which ended use of subminimum wages in October 2020, joined the [National Core Indicators \(NCI\)](#) in 2011. NCI is a voluntary effort led by the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services and the Human Services Research Institute for states to standardize measures to assess service outcomes. (Minnesota participates in this program.) In 2012, Maryland convened a group of stakeholders, including providers, to determine guiding principles and goals for what is now its [Employment Outcome Information System](#).

For development of EOIS, Maryland's Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) depended on [SELN](#) and the [StateData.Info project](#) at the University of Massachusetts' Institute for Community Inclusion (UMass ICI). SELN supports states in offering community-based employment options. It may be of note that Minnesota is a member of SELN, and SELN member benefits include assistance with data tracking systems. In addition, the current, state-funded Minnesota Transformation Initiative includes plans for a pilot effort to collect data from some providers using UMass ICI's approach to information systems.

At present, Maryland's DDA offers an EOIS website with [summary reports](#) for wages, hours worked, and self-employment by region, county, and provider. In addition, the website allows users to view [detailed reports on providers](#) across the range of data collected. Website users can compare data from different providers. For more background on EOIS and for instructions on how providers use it, download this [2018 description](#) from DDA.

Maryland uses other datasets and systems for program and policy purposes. For example, the state's Division of Rehabilitation Services and its Department of Education use AWARE case management software for vocational rehabilitation to track and share information. In addition, the Department of Education collects data related to the transition from high school for youth with disabilities, including data on post-school outcomes using indicator 14 of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Ohio's Outcome Tracking System

Ohio, which allows subminimum wages but has substantially reduced their use, launched an Employment First Outcome Tracking System in 2014 after a task force recommended a statewide data system on outcomes for people in Ohio's developmental disability system and enrolled in employment services. The state's Employment First partnership asked a national expert based in Ohio to help develop the tracking system. In 2019, the [Outcome Tracking System](#) of the state's Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) replaced the Employment First system, in part to capture more data on how people with disabilities spend their days. Ohio requires employment service providers to participate in OTS and collects data once a year. For overview information about OTS, [review this website](#). For detailed information about the OTS data collection process, download this [2020 user guide](#).

Ohio also participates in and uses the National Core Indicators. The state draws on other data, as well, for program and policy purposes.

Oregon's Employment Outcomes System

The [Employment Outcomes System](#) for the State of Oregon started well before the year 2000 as a semi-annual, published report for the Department of Human Services (DHS). The report presented data collected twice a year from providers about people with developmental disabilities, the services they receive, and outcomes. In 2016, the system moved to an online platform. Providers still have to report twice a year about people with disabilities receiving services from the Oregon Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS). By law, Oregon must end use of subminimum wages in June 2023.

According to an ODDS official, having outcomes data is important to ending subminimum wage jobs for people with disabilities because it shows what works and does not. For example, she said, Oregon used EOS data in its [2013–2015 integrated employment plan](#) to cover hours worked in the community, wages earned in the community, number of people participating in discovery services, and numbers for job development and employment.

The Oregon Department of Human Services uses an [online dashboard](#) to present EOS data from September 2015 forward on employment counts, average wage per hour, and average hours per week for people with disabilities. The dashboard lists the data by employment service type. Users can view breakdowns by county and by provider.

For program and policy purposes, Oregon draws on other data, too. For example, Oregon DHS produces reports twice a year that includes state data on services and employment for youth and young adults who are at the age for transitioning from school, and for individuals in sheltered workshops, which can no longer receive funding from the state for employment services because of a court order. For more on this data, review this [February 2022 report](#). Like Maryland and Ohio, Oregon participates in and uses the National Core Indicators dataset.

Purpose for measuring and monitoring systems

Maryland

A major aim for Maryland's EOIS is to provide DDA, stakeholders, and policymakers with data over time that they can use to improve employment outcomes, gauge progress, and advance competitive integrated employment. The data covers types of employment and how people are spending their time, including non-work activities. The State of Maryland compiles the data in an annual report, such as [this 2020 version](#), and also makes data available to the public, but not of course at the level of the individuals with disabilities. EOIS focuses on employment outcomes, not the service a person receives.

People with disabilities and their families can use EOIS to help them choose providers based on data about activities and outcomes. A Maryland official reported that having data is key for this process and that making it public "lifted the veil" so that people know which providers succeed with competitive integrated employment.

An official with a Maryland nonprofit advocacy group cited accountability at the state level as another reason for data collection. He said the legislation that set the 2020 end date for subminimum wages included provisions on measurement and outcomes in part to hold state agencies accountable for moving people with disabilities out of sheltered work and into community employment.

Ohio

With its focus on how people with disabilities spend their days, Ohio's OTS provides information about systems outcomes from the services for people with disabilities. DODD uses OTS to align procedures, policies, and legislation to improve the lives of people with disabilities for work and recreation in their communities. OTS data relates to key performance indicators for DODD.

Oregon

A report on Employment First capacity from the Oregon DHS identifies four primary purposes for that state's EOS:

- Data on providers and their services can help people with disabilities and their families find and choose providers.
- Service coordinators and vocational rehabilitation counselors can also use EOS data to inform their work with individuals who are choosing providers.
- ODDS uses the data to identify service capacity gaps by region and focus on capacity-building efforts where needed.
- Providers can use EOS as an outreach and marketing tool for potential customers.¹

The Oregon official also noted that trend lines from the EOS data on employment, wages, hours, and employment service type can help inform policy.

Data collected

Maryland

For each adult who receives Maryland DDA services, providers record information in both May and October each year in EOIS. Providers use data from 14-day periods. The data covers the following activities:

- Individual competitive job
- Individual contracted job
- Self-employment
- Group integrated job
- Facility-based job (phased out by law)
- Community-based non-work, including volunteer job
- Facility-based non-work

For job activities, EOIS collects data on:

- Gross wages earned
- Paid hours worked
- Paid time off

¹ Oregon Department of Human Services, "Employment First Capacity Report: July 1, 2017– June 30, 2018," September 1, 2018, p. 10, <https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/EMPLOYMENT/EMPLOYMENT-FIRST/DataReports/Employment-First-Capacity-Report-2018.pdf>.

To ensure accuracy, the system calculates hourly pay based on gross wages and hours worked, rather than depending upon providers for information about hourly wages. The EOIS questions for self-employment differ some from those for jobs because the circumstances of a small business differ. For community-based non-work, providers are asked if the person had a volunteer job as part of their exploration of employment opportunities.

Ohio

Providers enter data into OTS once a year for individuals served in the month of September, but they have until March 31 of the following year to complete their data reporting. Providers answer six overarching questions, listed below. Providers who offer employment services must answer the first four questions. The State of Ohio encourages answers to the last two questions, but they are optional.

- Is the individual in a competitive job?
- Are you supporting this individual in a group integrated job?
- Is the individual in facility-based work?
- Is the individual in self-employment?
- Are you providing the individual facility-based non-work services?
- Are you providing the individual community-based non-work services?

Based on responses to the six questions, OTS collects additional data from providers on issues such as the following:

- Employment
 - People's place on the path to community employment
 - Job type
 - Wages per hour
 - Hours per week
 - Benefits
 - Transportation
- Community-based non-work services
 - Hours spent in the community
- Facility-based non-work services
 - Hours spent in a facility

DODD adds individuals to a provider's OTS dashboard for data collection if they are receiving services as part of Ohio's developmental disabilities system. For example, a person is added into the data record for a provider of adult day and employment services if the provider has billed for waiver services to that individual regarding adult day support, vocational habilitation, group employment, individual employment, or career planning.

The State of Ohio requires participation in OTS by DODD-certified providers of employment services from among the state's providers of adult day and employment services, intermediate care facilities, developmental centers, and county boards of developmental disabilities. For those types of organizations that do not offer employment services, the state encourages but does not require them to provide data through OTS for the two questions about non-work services in order to allow for more complete data on how people with disabilities spend their days.

More broadly, Ohio draws on data beyond OTS regarding people with disabilities and employment, according to an official with the state. Other data sources include the Census Bureau, Medicaid waivers, Ohio's county boards of developmental disabilities, the Ohio Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, and the US Department of Labor.

Oregon

For EOS, Oregon collects data from providers for the months of March and September each year on the number of people with disabilities participating in the following types of services:

- Individual supported employment
- Small group employment
- Employment path community (used to build skills related to exploring or achieving competitive integrated employment)
- Discovery profiles (used to identify strengths, interests, abilities, skills, experiences, and support needs for employment)

For employment activities, providers enter data into EOIS for:

- Hours worked per week
- Wage per hour

Data for the category of employment path community includes hours and wages in cases where people with disabilities hold paid jobs

MAD's research interviews with the model states

In consultation with officials in the Disability Services Division (DSD) at the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), MAD identified Iowa, Maryland, Ohio, and Oregon as states to interview based on input and guidance from the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN). These states stand out for their successful efforts to move people with disabilities away from jobs that pay subminimum wages. Maryland and Oregon have laws ending the use of subminimum wages, so they engaged in policies and practices to transition toward that end goal. Iowa and Ohio allow subminimum wages but have taken steps to substantially reduce the use of subminimum wage jobs. This background document focuses on the measurement and monitoring systems from Maryland, Ohio, and Oregon.

The following individuals from Maryland, Ohio, and Oregon participated in MAD interviews:

Maryland—Ken Capone, People On the Go Maryland; Jade Gingerich, Department of Disabilities, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA); Stephanie Jones, Department of Health, Maryland DDA; and Patricia Sastoque, Department of Health, Maryland DDA

Ohio—Stacy Collins, Division of Policy and Strategic Direction, Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

Oregon—Acacia McGuire Anderson, Office of Developmental Disabilities Services, Oregon Department of Human Services

Additional sources not previously cited or included as a website link

Jean Winsor, Cady Landa, Allison Hall, and Caro Narby, "Pushing the Integrated Employment Agenda: A Case Study of Iowa's High-Performing Employment System," Bringing Employment First to Scale, Issue 24, Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts Boston,

https://www.thinkwork.org/sites/default/files/files/ISSUE24_IOWA.pdf.

Jean Winsor, Cady Landa, Allison Hall, and Caro Narby, "Pushing the Integrated Employment Agenda: A Case Study of Maryland's High-Performing Employment System," Bringing Employment First to Scale, Issue 16, Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts Boston,
<https://scholarworks.umb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1032&context=thinkwork>.