



**February 19, 2025**

**Topic: Employment & Community Inclusion:** How do we ensure that individuals have the adequate supports and individualized services needed to work and build relationships in the community?

**Summary:** Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities desire to lead rich and meaningful lives. Historically, people with I/DD have been excluded and rejected from participating in everyday settings and activities, like work, school, community recreation, and social activities. This exclusion, compounded by limited transportation options, can lead to isolation and loneliness for individuals with I/DD.

**Inclusion Matters:** Creating an inclusive community benefits everyone, fostering diversity and enriching the lives of individuals with I/DD.

**Equal Opportunities for Employment:** Investing in job opportunities and employment supports promotes a path to self-sufficiency and enhances quality of life. Hiring people with disabilities is not only a socially responsible decision but also a smart business move, leading to increased workplace morale and employee engagement.

**Breaking Isolation:** Community Inclusion programs are essential to combat isolation and loneliness among individuals with I/DD.

**What We Need:**

- Investments in employment networks, including job developers and job coaches, to facilitate real jobs with competitive wages.
- Investment in Community Inclusion programs so individuals can do things they enjoy and have the appropriate supports to access them.
- Robust investments to make community spaces welcoming and accessible.
- Public education on the value individuals with I/DD bring to the workplace.

**What to Watch for This Session:**

- [Capacity Building Funds for Supported Employment and Community Inclusion Services](#)
- [Lowering the Age of Eligibility for Supported Employment & Community Inclusion](#)

Please help us create a more inclusive and equitable society where individuals with I/DD have the necessary supports to thrive in employment and community life.