

Employment

Trust
Alaska Mental Health
Trust Authority

Alaskan **Seniors**
Living Longer **Growing Stronger**
from the Alaska Commission on Aging

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GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON
DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL EDUCATION



Investment in cross-disability, cross-system efforts that promote community-based, competitive, integrated, and self-directed employment opportunities are needed for Alaskans with disabilities across the lifespan.

Alaska is an Employment First State

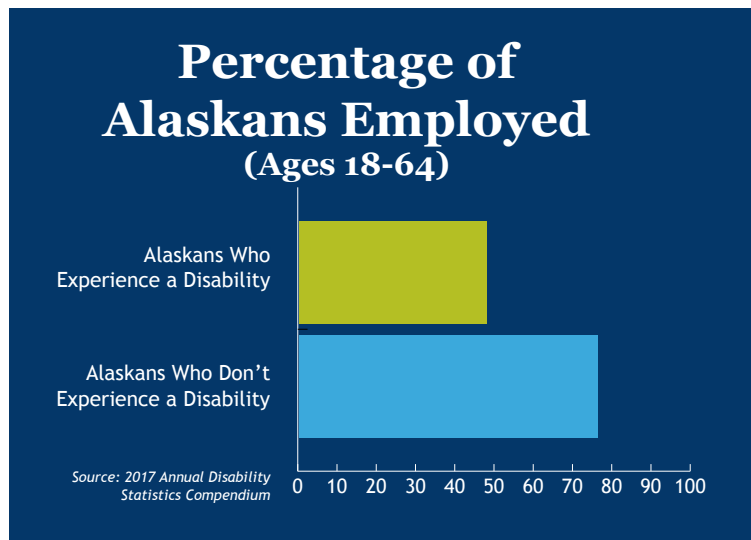
- When Alaskans with disabilities are employed, they contribute positively to their communities, pay taxes, and experience meaningful engagement that reduces isolation and promotes health and wellbeing.
- Supports for Alaskans with disabilities include resource coordinators at job centers, public school transition services, vocational rehabilitation, and more.
- Following a national movement, Alaska promotes employment in the general workforce as the preferred option for people experiencing disabilities receiving assistance from publicly funded systems.

Working Side-by-Side

Supported employment services help Alaskans with disabilities — including people with intellectual and/or developmental and behavioral health disorders, dementia, and traumatic brain injury — find and keep employment in typical work settings, earning competitive wages and benefits, side-by-side with people who do not experience disabilities. Alaskans with disabilities may benefit from a range of employment supports; some may only need help finding a job, whereas others may need on-site coaching or mentors as they learn and/or maintain their job duties.

Positive Outcomes Through Employment

Employment is an essential part of recovery for many individuals with behavioral health disorders, offering positive impacts on life satisfaction, self-esteem, independence, and symptom reduction. Additionally, employment is a path to self-sustainability and can prevent people from becoming homeless or entering institutional or criminal justice systems.



Some services and programs that support employment for Alaskans with behavioral health disorders and disabilities include:

- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation
- Medicaid Waiver supported employment services
- The Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model

Key Points

- When Alaskans with disabilities are employed, they have the opportunity to contribute positively in their communities, pay taxes, and experience meaningful engagement that reduces isolation and promotes health and wellbeing.
- It is important that employment services are flexible to meet the needs of individuals.
- Employment is a pathway to independence and financial security for many Alaskans.