



November 2006

Position Statement on Segregated or Sheltered Employment

What we understand about segregated employment:

- Segregated employment occurs in settings where the majority of workers have disabilities, usually in workshops and enclaves.
- An FY-98 nationwide study found that the average wage for Vocational Rehabilitation “closed cases” in segregated employment was \$2.54 per hour and \$64.51 per week.
- Job skill training in workshops is not consistent with skills needed for community employment.
- Segregated employment workers are isolated from their communities and have fewer opportunities to develop community integration skills.
- Many individuals remain in segregated employment for extended periods of time and seldom transition to community employment.
- Approximately 550 individuals with developmental disabilities are enrolled in segregated employment services in Idaho.
- The United States Supreme Court in its Olmstead decision upheld the “integration mandate “of the Americans with Disabilities Act, requiring public agencies to provide services “in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of qualified individuals with disabilities”.
- The Attorney General of the United States interprets “the most integrated setting” to mean, “a setting that enables individuals with disabilities to interact with non-disabled persons to the fullest extent possible”.

Our Position:

- The Council agrees with U. S Department of Education regulations that govern state vocational rehabilitation services, in no longer recognizing segregated employment as being an appropriate employment outcome.
- The Council supports use of State General Fund dollars being used for programs that are consistent with integrated employment, federal minimum wage requirements, opportunities to grow and learn within specified time frames and that allow opportunities for choice and achievement of economic self-sufficiency.