



EMPLOYMENT FIRST - EMPLOYMENT NOW

2014 Take Your Legislator to Work Day Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is APSE?

APSE, the *Association for Persons Supporting EmploymentFirst*, is the only national organization with an *exclusive focus* on integrated employment and career advancement opportunities for individuals with disabilities. APSE is a 3,000+ growing national non-profit membership organization, founded in 1988. Our members include individuals with disabilities, families, disability professionals, and businesses.

Q. What is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)?

Held each October, National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is a national campaign that raises awareness about disability employment issues and celebrates the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. The theme for 2014 is "Expect. Employ. Empower."

Q. Why is it important for APSE State Chapters to be a part of the Take Your Legislator to Work Day campaign?

As Employment First champions, APSE State Chapters raise the expectation that employment and careers are the preferred outcomes of all publicly funded services for those with disabilities. Since our APSE Chapters have connections with many individuals in community based employment, we see this as an excellent opportunity to highlight all of the success stories around the country!

Q. What does “employment in the general workforce” mean?

Employment in the general workforce means regular jobs like everyone else in society: in typical work settings, working side-by-side with people without disabilities, earning regular wages and benefits and being part of the economic mainstream of our society.

Q. What is the Take Your Legislator to Work Day campaign?

The Take Your Legislator to Work Day campaign is an opportunity for employees with disabilities to invite their legislator(s) to visit their workplace to show first-hand the power of community-integrated employment for people with disabilities.

Q. What does an “average” Take Your Legislator to Work Day look like?

The average visit consists of a short tour (30-45 minutes) of an employee's workplace highlighting job duties, introducing legislators to an employee's co-workers and employer, and discussing an employee's experience working in a job in the community.

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Q. How can I find out how to contact my legislator(s)?

Please visit the websites below to identify the people who represent you.

U.S. House and Senate

House of Representatives: <http://www.house.gov/Welcome.shtml>

United States Senate: http://senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

State Government

State Legislator: <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/state-legislatures.html>

Q. What if October does not work for my legislator(s)?

Although we originally envisioned this event to be a component of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, there is no wrong time to connect with a legislator! It is important to be flexible with the primary focus being to open up communication about the importance of community, integrated employment with your legislator(s)!

Please note: the earlier you start planning, the better chance you will have at setting up an October date that works for everyone.

Q. Who is the facilitator?

A facilitator could be a provider, job coach, friend, family member or just an interested individual. The facilitator should encourage the employee with a disability to be as independent as possible while arranging the details of the event, but also available to provide supports to the participant as necessary.

Q. What is the facilitator's responsibility?

The facilitator is responsible for assisting interested individuals in filling out and sending in the *Individual Application Form* and ensuring that those who are interested complete the checklists in the Take Your Legislator to Work Day Toolkit.

Q. How can those interested prepare for the legislator's visit?

APSE has put together a Legislative Toolkit that consists of information about the legislative process, legislative advocacy approaches, communication techniques and additional information to assist in your advocacy efforts. This toolkit is available under the Policy and Advocacy page of the APSE website: <http://www.apse.org/policy-advocacy/>

Also, we will be holding a series of webinars in August to prepare those interested. Please do not hesitate to contact Ryley Newport at ryley@apse.org or (301) 279-0060 for more information.