

Elimination of Subminimum Wage

Person-centered, fulfilling employment:

Minnesota is an Employment First State. That means we have the expectation that people with disabilities can work in competitive integrated employment and our public supports help people meet their competitive employment goals – regardless of disability status. We believe the right job is out there, we just have to be creative and hard working to find it! **When we pay people subminimum wages, we are saying we do not value their work enough to pay even the minimum of what is legally acceptable to pay others.**



A historic over reliance on subminimum wages has created limited employment options for people with disabilities concentrated in few industries (light manufacturing, cleaning, etc.). Moving to competitive wages pushes our system to support people on individualized employment paths that finds what is important to them and what they like to do with their days and build a career around it.

In addition to increasing the size of paychecks, moving to competitive employment also improves the quality of the job fit. Employment is not just about having any amount of income. Employment is about contributing through our unique skills and strengths to our community/society and earning the resources each of us needs to live our best life. **As a society, we are placing low value on the contributions people with disabilities make every day they work.**

“But what about...”

Current Jobs and Day Programming:

People in work and day programs currently can continue their same programming, we simply want this work done for at least minimum wage pay. This bill does not decrease options for those in other programs but merely expands options to be explored by those looking to work in customized competitive fields.

Providers:

To support a successful transition in greater Minnesota, the task force recommends strengthening access to transportation supports, developing a technical assistance program to help providers move their business models to using competitive wages, and creating a grant program for counties (lead agencies) as well as changes to case management services to improve support planning for competitive employment.

Supporting Organizations:

