

DBHDS Semi-Annual Report on  
Employment  
Semi Annual Report (December 2025 Data)  
*March 2026*

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## **Introduction:**

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS or department) recognizes the importance of employment in the lives of individuals with and without disabilities. Both in policy and in practice, the department has undertaken efforts to support individuals with disabilities in having increased access to integrated community-based employment as the first and priority service option. In order to understand the impact of the Employment First Initiative in the Commonwealth, DBHDS has collaborated with the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) for data gathering and analysis.

This is the twenty second semi-annual employment data gathering effort. A portion of the data for this report was gathered from DARS through a data sharing agreement between DARS and DBHDS; all data for individuals with developmental disabilities receiving long term follow along services through Extended Employment Services (EES) and Long-Term Employment Support Services (LTESS) funded through DARS. Additionally, DBHDS identified employment service organizations (ESOs) who had billed for employment related services through the Medicaid Waivers and requested that they complete a survey concerning the waiver recipients with the following primary data elements:

- Unique Identifier,
- Date of Birth,
- Employment Start Date,
- Type of Employment (Individual, Group, Sheltered),
- Current wage per hour,
- Typical hours worked per week, and
- The primary disability (intellectual disability or other developmental disability).

Through extensive efforts of the ESOs, DARS, and the data subcommittee of the Employment First Advisory Group data was returned from all providers. This represents a 100% return rate including waiver providers. This semi-annual report we did not receive data from one Employment Service Organization.

Virginia has an active and engaged stakeholder group, the Employment First Advisory Group, which has set the following data target goals:

**Target as of 6/30/2015:** 25% of individuals with DD either on the waitlist or on the waivers ages 18 to 64 will be employed by December 31, 2025. Specifically, this translates to:

- ❖ 25% of (20,994 the total number of individuals with DD ages 18 to 64 on the waivers or the waiver waitlist as of 12/31/2025) would be employed by December 31, 2025, or a total of 5,246 individuals
- Supplemental Targets to be achieved:
  - ❖ 86% of DD Individuals with Case Management services will have discussed employment options at least annually.

- ❖ 50% of DD Individuals with Case Management services will have an employment or employment-related goal in their individualized services plan.

**Targets for Waiver Funded Supports** for Individual & Group Supported Employment:

The chart below reflects the annual targets for Individual Supported Employment (ISE) as well as Group Supported Employment (GSE) under the waiver. This reporting period we added the actuals to make comparison easier.

**Data Targets:**

Fiscal Year	Total	Actual Total	ISE	Actual ISE	GSE	Actual GSE	% of total
2016	808	890	211	225	597	665	100%
2017	932	826	301	305	631	521	89%
2018	1297	972	566	422	731	550	75%
2019	1211	1078	661	555	550	523	89%
2020*	1486	715	936	480	550	235	48%
2021**	1685	708	1135	469	550	239	42%
2022	1211	764	661	530	550	234	63%
2023	1486	986	936	702	550	284	66%
2024	1142	1020	842	719	300***	301	89%
2025	1310	1,105	1010	792	300***	313	84%
2026	1512	1,138^	1212	836^	300***	302^	75%^

\*In December we were at 84% of the target for FY 20 and on target to reach our goal, with the onset of COVID-19 in March and the declaration of a state of emergency in Virginia, there were many individuals who took leaves of absences, were furloughed, or terminated as business closed or significantly reduced staffing due to the pandemic. \*\*Pandemic impact \*\*\*GSE has not rebounded post pandemic we will revisit these targets if we see an increase beyond what the current target is. ^ This is mid-year data.

Virginia has rebounded and exceeded pre-pandemic ISE waiver employment while the target is not yet met. This is a mid-year report and is most significantly impacted by a reduction in GSE, under the waiver.

**Historical Data Target Setting:** When the targets for individuals on the waiver were initially set in 2016, Virginia was in the beginning stages of assessing access to employment and the necessary supports to maintain employment. Since then, the Commonwealth has gained a much fuller understanding of the system, and there have been significant changes in the service environment and employment regulations at the federal level. The Employment First Advisory Group reviewed the data now available to the system and developed new targets (indicated in red above) based on that data and the broader

system environment. The GSE targets were reduced, as we have seen increasingly fewer individuals access GSE. The ISE targets were adjusted based on the rate of growth observed over the past 2 fiscal years with additional growth predicted. We added an additional fiscal year to bring us closer to overall target for Supported Employment under the waiver to show the Commonwealth’s commitment to Employment First. Additionally, during the third quarter of FY19, the Department set expectations of the CSBs to increase the percentage of waiver recipients receiving employment. This has allowed DBHDS to gain some additional data regarding individuals who are employed and, on the waiver, but not receiving supported employment services.

**Historical Target Setting:** The Employment 1<sup>st</sup> Advisory group met in April of 2022 and discussed FY 22 – 24 targets due to the impacts of the pandemic the workgroup decided to step back to 2019 targets and track rebounding through the next two years based on the FY 20 and 21 targets.

**Current Data Target Setting:** The data committee met to set targets for FY 24-FY 26. The data committee reviewed data pre and post pandemic and reviewed the percentage increase year over year to establish new waiver data targets for the Employment First Advisory Group. These were reviewed with the entire committee, discussed and supported.

This report reviews the data in relationship to the targets, as well as in relationship to the department’s desire for a cultural shift away from center-based, non-integrated services (both day support and sheltered workshops) to meaningful integrated employment services.

It should be noted that this data is point-in-time data as of 12/31/2025 and is meant to give a semiannual snapshot of the Commonwealth’s employment efforts and the substantiating data. DBHDS continues to see the historical dip in the December the data, that can only be best described as a seasonal impact.

This report summarizes data according to Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services Regions This is a realignment of CSBs. The Community Services Boards in *red italics* shifted from developmental disability regions back to the uniform mental health and developmental services regions.

**DD Western Region**

*(Charts labeled West )*

Harrisonburg- Rockingham  
Horizon  
*Alleghany Highlands*

Region 10  
Rockbridge Area  
Valley

*Rappahannock Area  
Rappahannock-Rapidan  
Northwestern*

**DD Northern Region**

*(Charts labeled North)*

Alexandria  
Arlington Co.  
Fairfax-Falls Church

Loudoun  
Prince William Co

**DD Southwest Region**

*(Charts labeled SW)*

Mt. Rogers  
Blue Ridge

Dickinson County  
Goochland- Powhatan

New River Valley  
Piedmont

Cumberland Mountain  
Danville - Pittsylvania

Highlands  
Planning District 1

Southside

**DD Central Region**

*(Charts Labeled Central)*

Chesterfield  
Crossroads  
District 19

Hanover  
Henrico Area

Richmond BHA

**DD Eastern Region**

*(Charts Labeled East)*

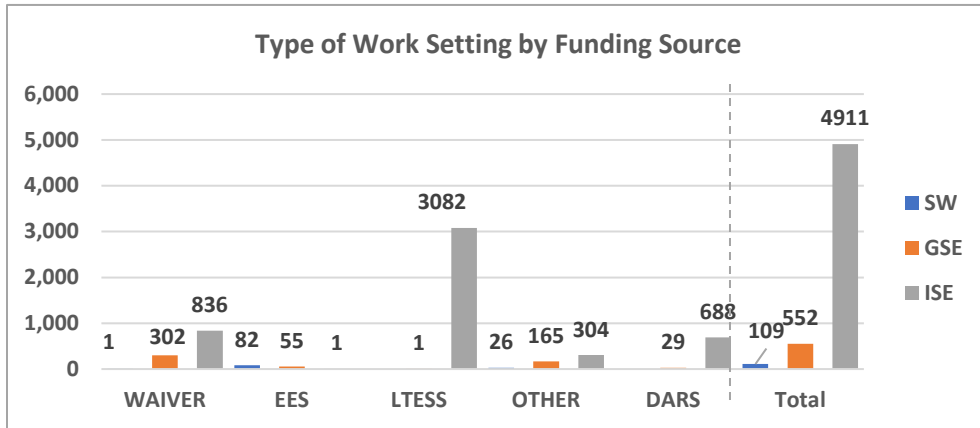
Chesapeake  
Colonial BH  
Eastern Shore  
Hampton- Newport News

Middle Peninsula- Northern Neck  
Norfolk CSB  
Portsmouth

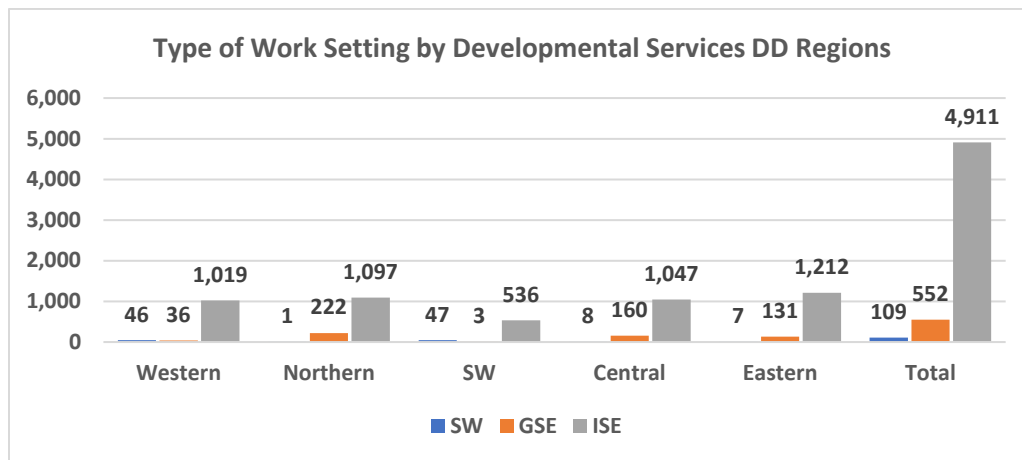
Virginia Beach  
Western Tidewater

## Statewide Data Analysis

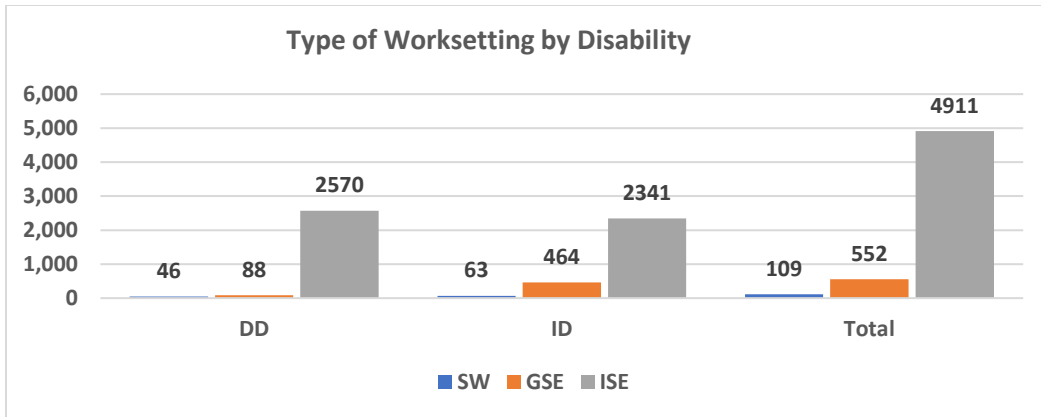
The data below indicates that 4911 (45 more than last reporting period) are in ISE services and 552 (24 less than last reporting period) are in GSE services. Additionally, 109 (13 less than last reporting period) are receiving services in sheltered workshops. Individuals in sheltered workshops are not counted toward employment targets. Although the Commonwealth is prioritizing integrated employment over sheltered employment, data regarding individuals in sheltered workshops continues to be captured and monitored. \*



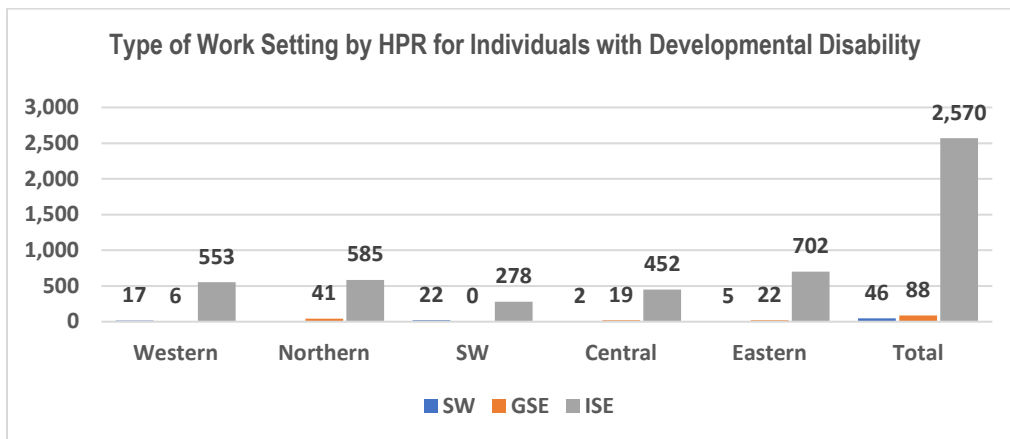
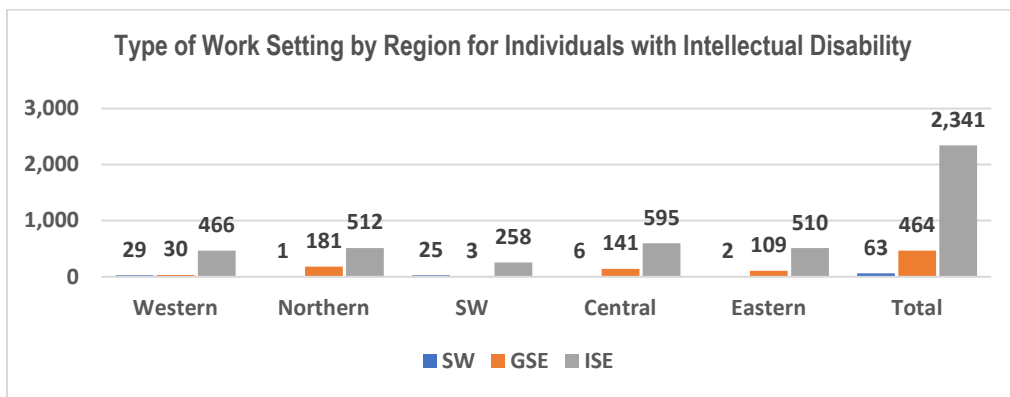
A total of 5463 people are employed with supports from ISE and GSE, which is a combined increase of 21 people from the previous data reported. It also indicates that of the total number of individuals 18-64 on the waivers and the waiver waitlists, **26% of people with DD are employed, this is an increase of 1%.**



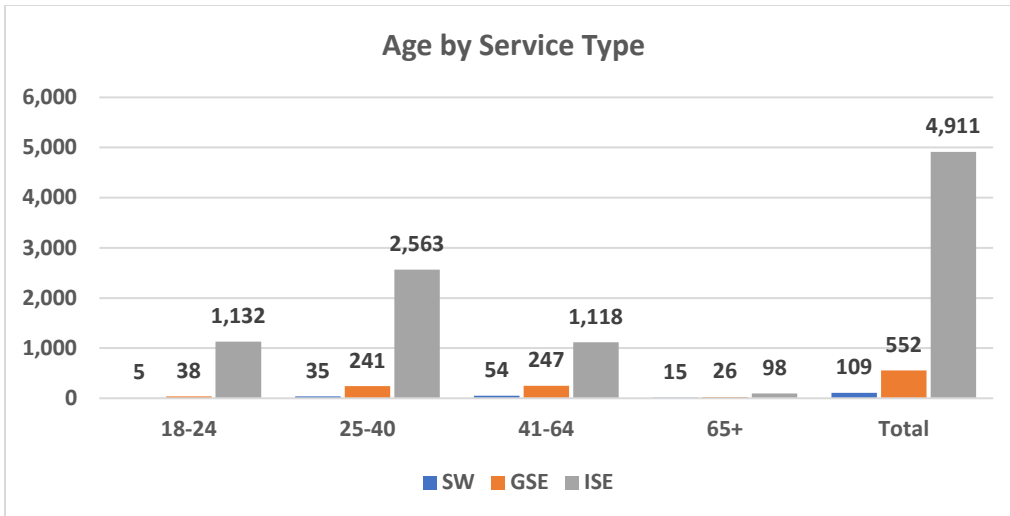
The graph above indicates variations in work settings throughout the five DBHDS Regions are starting to dissipate with most people in all regions accessing individual supported employment.



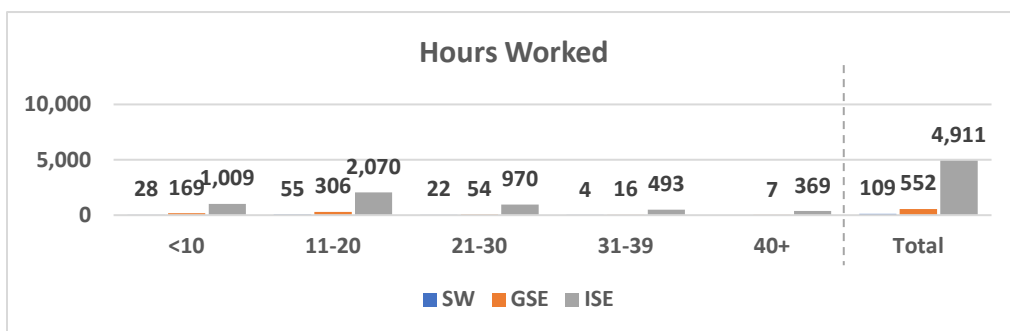
The data in the graph above compares employment settings by disability for the DD population.



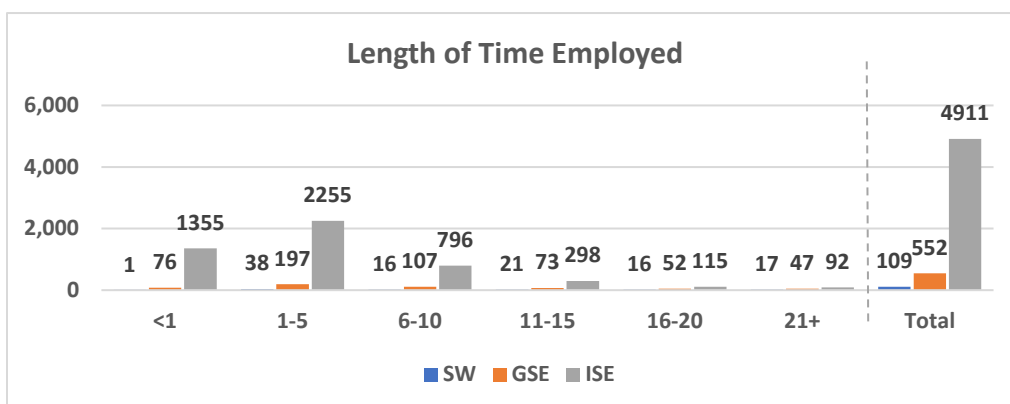
The data was further broken down by regions and disability type to see if any additional patterns emerged. ISE for individuals with DD (developmental disabilities other than an intellectual disability) appears to be more prevalent in relationship to other employment models.



The data above shows the type of employment services individuals receive by age. This graph was added so that the Employment First Advisory Group could monitor transition age youth and employment choices they are making with the initiation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

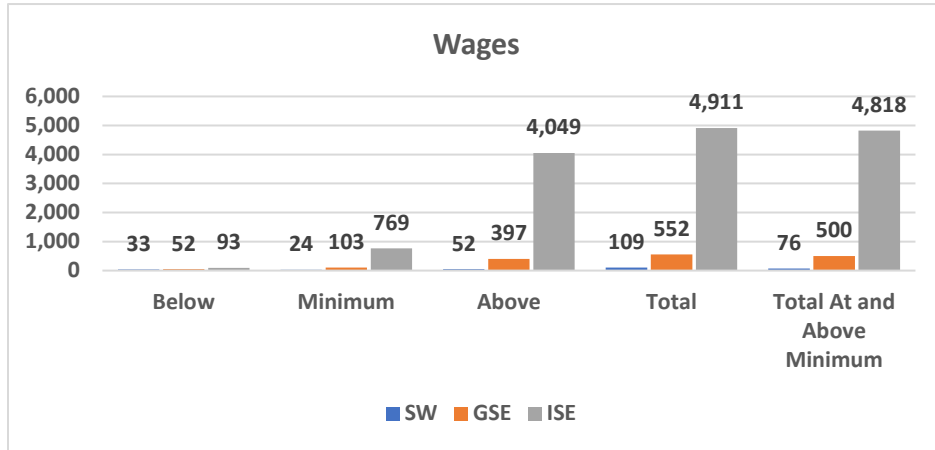


The above data details hours worked per week by service type.



The data for length of time in years employed in current position has been broken down to better understand the number of years a person is employed and to see where individuals are currently

choosing to gain employment. 73.8% of individuals have been employed for over a year. This is a decrease of 3 % from the last reporting cycle.



Additional details around wages were also added to gain better understanding of the number of individuals who are earning at or above minimum wage and the number of people earning below minimum wage. Currently there are 145 (2.7%) people employed who are earning below minimum wage while there are 5318 (97.3%) who are earning at or above minimum wage.

### Statewide Distribution of Wages

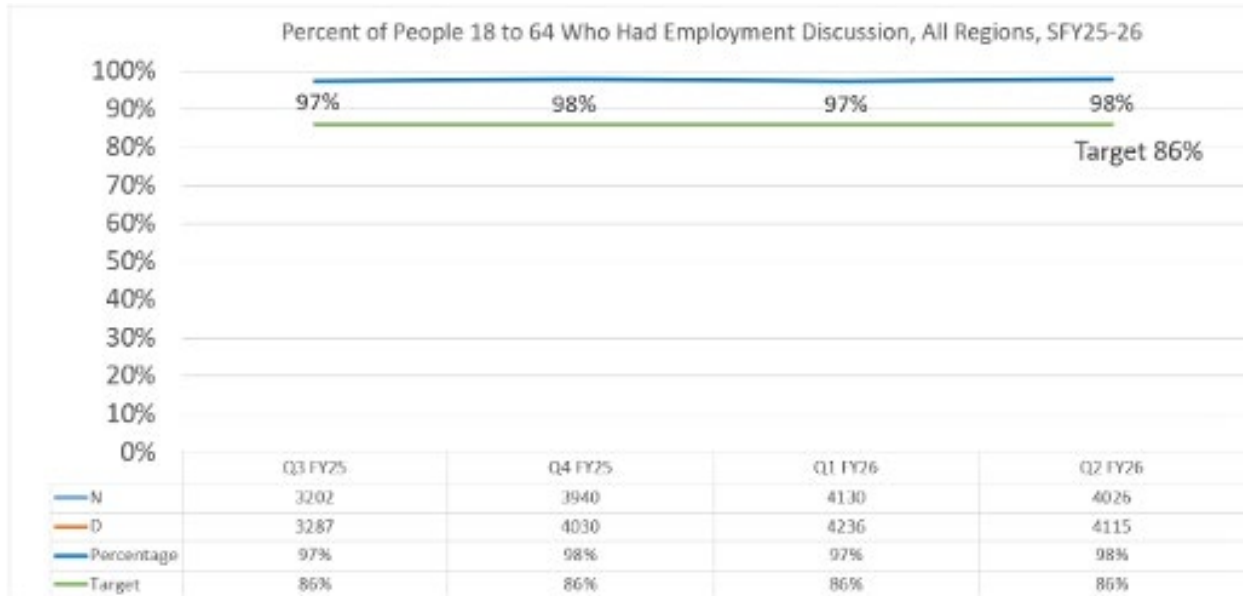
ID/DD	Lowest hourly wage	Highest hourly wage
Sheltered*	\$0.89	\$48.87
GSE	\$1.30	\$27.05
ISE	\$1.75	\$56.50

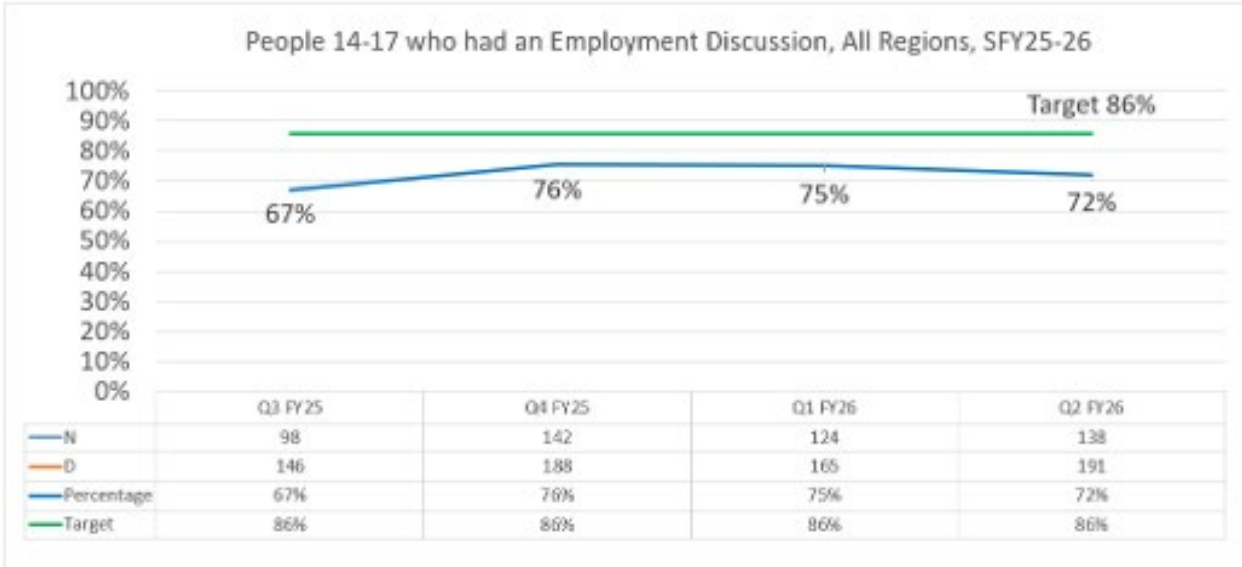
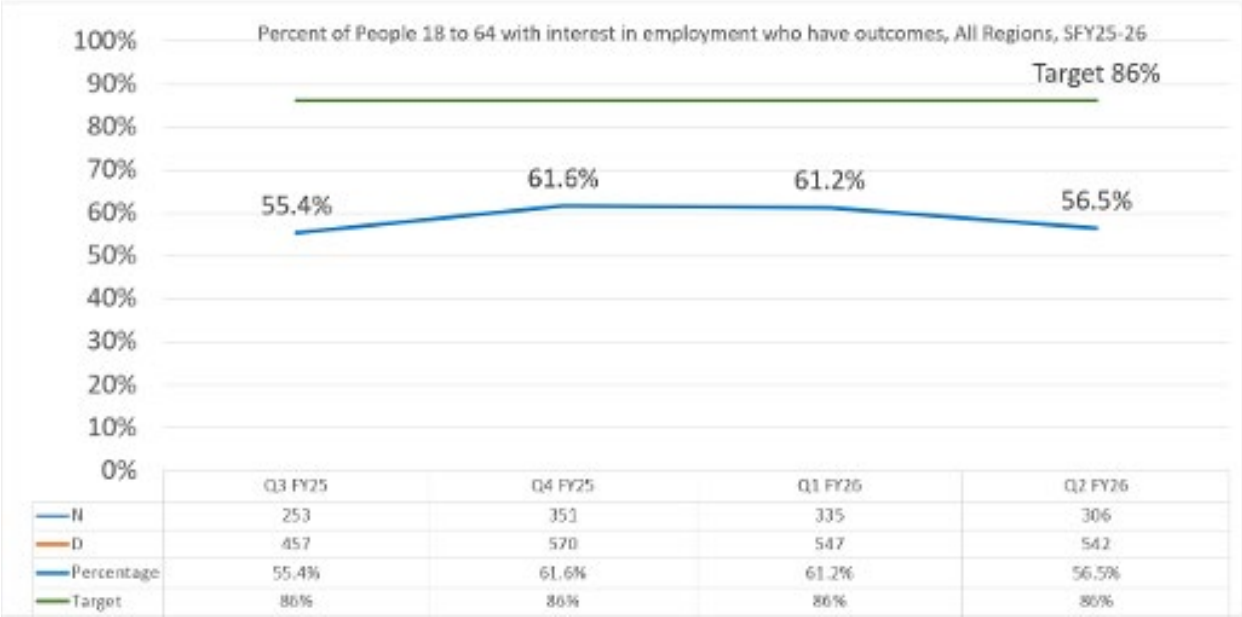
**Tracking Employment First Conversations/Outcome Development:**

DBHDS has worked to develop new measures as part of the CSB performance contract, which specifically collects data on:

1. discussing employment with individuals receiving case management services, and
2. developing individual employment related and/or readiness goals.

The results of the data collection are presented below for the first half of the fiscal year of FY2025 (7/1/24-6/30/2025).

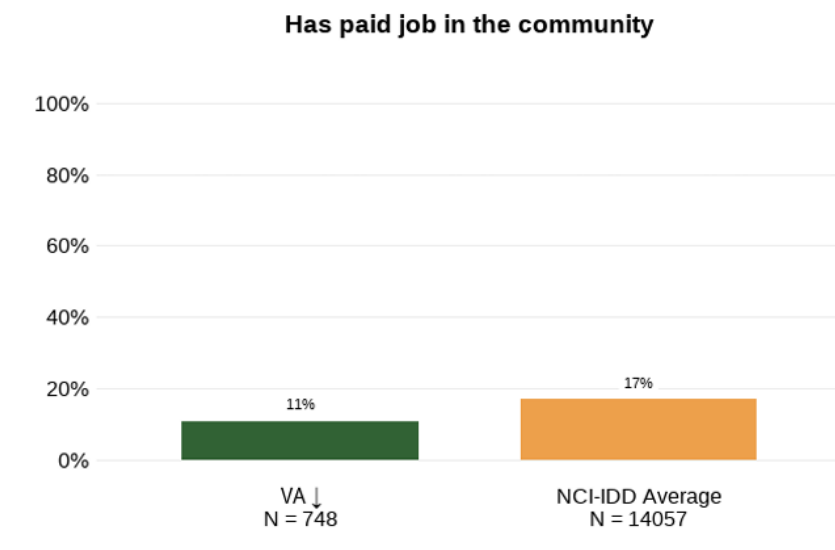




DS Region	CSB	Employment Discussions (18-64)		Employment Outcomes (18-64)	
		FY26 Q1	FY26 Q2	FY26 Q1	FY26 Q2
Region 1	Alleghany-Highlands	100.0 %	100.0 %	23.5 %	50.0 %
	Encompass	97.2 %	100.0 %	31.0 %	22.8 %
	Harrisonburg-Rockingham	100.0 %	98.6 %	31.3 %	40.6 %
	Horizon	99.5 %	100.0 %	15.0 %	14.2 %
	Northwestern	82.7 %	91.9 %	20.4 %	22.5 %
	Rappahannock Area	97.7 %	96.6 %	20.0 %	17.4 %
	Region Ten	100.0 %	100.0 %	20.4 %	14.9 %
	Rockbridge Area	100.0 %	100.0 %	20.8 %	31.6 %
	Valley	94.4 %	87.9 %	16.7 %	19.0 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>95.7 %</b>	<b>97.2 %</b>	<b>20.4 %</b>	<b>20.4 %</b>	
Region 2	Alexandria	100.0 %	96.8 %	33.3 %	16.1 %
	Arlington	94.6 %	93.0 %	35.7 %	17.5 %
	Fairfax-Falls Church	99.4 %	98.5 %	23.6 %	24.8 %
	Loudoun County	93.8 %	98.5 %	29.7 %	30.3 %
	Prince William	95.3 %	96.8 %	23.3 %	13.2 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>97.3 %</b>	<b>97.6 %</b>	<b>25.3 %</b>	<b>21.7 %</b>	
Region 3	Blue Ridge	100.0 %	98.4 %	27.0 %	18.7 %
	Cumberland Mountain	100.0 %	100.0 %	6.3 %	9.5 %
	Danville-Pittsylvania	98.6 %	96.8 %	16.9 %	14.3 %
	Dickenson	100.0 %	100.0 %	40.0 %	20.0 %
	Highlands	100.0 %	100.0 %	12.8 %	22.5 %
	Mount Rogers	100.0 %	98.1 %	11.8 %	12.0 %
	New River Valley	100.0 %	100.0 %	51.5 %	64.2 %
	Piedmont	98.8 %	98.8 %	9.3 %	13.3 %
	Planning District I	100.0 %	100.0 %	5.6 %	5.6 %
Southside	97.3 %	100.0 %	18.9 %	11.8 %	
<b>Total</b>	<b>99.5 %</b>	<b>98.9 %</b>	<b>19.9 %</b>	<b>19.4 %</b>	
Region 4	Chesterfield	98.4 %	97.0 %	30.8 %	28.1 %
	Crossroads	100.0 %	100.0 %	18.0 %	19.0 %
	District 19	87.7 %	95.9 %	20.2 %	14.3 %
	Goochland-Powhatan	100.0 %	100.0 %	12.5 %	20.8 %
	Hanover	100.0 %	100.0 %	33.8 %	40.5 %
	Henrico Area	100.0 %	100.0 %	23.2 %	29.1 %
	Richmond	98.3 %	100.0 %	22.5 %	35.3 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>97.6 %</b>	<b>98.4 %</b>	<b>25.5 %</b>	<b>27.7 %</b>	
Region 5	Chesapeake	98.0 %	94.9 %	15.8 %	9.1 %
	Colonial	100.0 %	100.0 %	43.8 %	42.6 %
	Eastern Shore	100.0 %	100.0 %	93.8 %	89.5 %
	Hampton-Newport News	97.3 %	96.3 %	13.0 %	14.0 %
	Middle Peninsula-NN	100.0 %	100.0 %	7.9 %	16.0 %
	Norfolk	95.0 %	94.5 %	13.8 %	12.6 %
	Portsmouth	100.0 %	100.0 %	8.8 %	8.3 %
	Virginia Beach	98.8 %	98.8 %	23.7 %	22.8 %
Western Tidewater	98.1 %	100.0 %	9.6 %	2.1 %	
<b>Total</b>	<b>98.1 %</b>	<b>97.4 %</b>	<b>19.7 %</b>	<b>16.6 %</b>	
<b>Total state</b>	<b>97.5 %</b>	<b>97.8 %</b>	<b>22.4 %</b>	<b>21.2 %</b>	

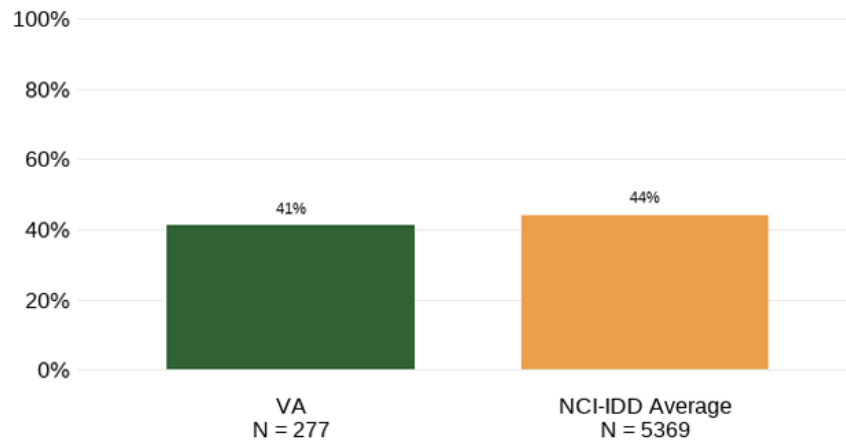
## **National Data:**

In the 2022/2023 Adult NCI data report, Virginia data indicate that 11% of people interviewed had a paid job in the community. It is important to note that this is only based on the waiver population whereas the data reported in this report is both individuals on the waiver and waiting list. Our data shows a little less than 10% but this is because individuals may not yet be using their waiver for services and are receiving services from DARS or because there are individuals who are employed without support as seen in the second graph.

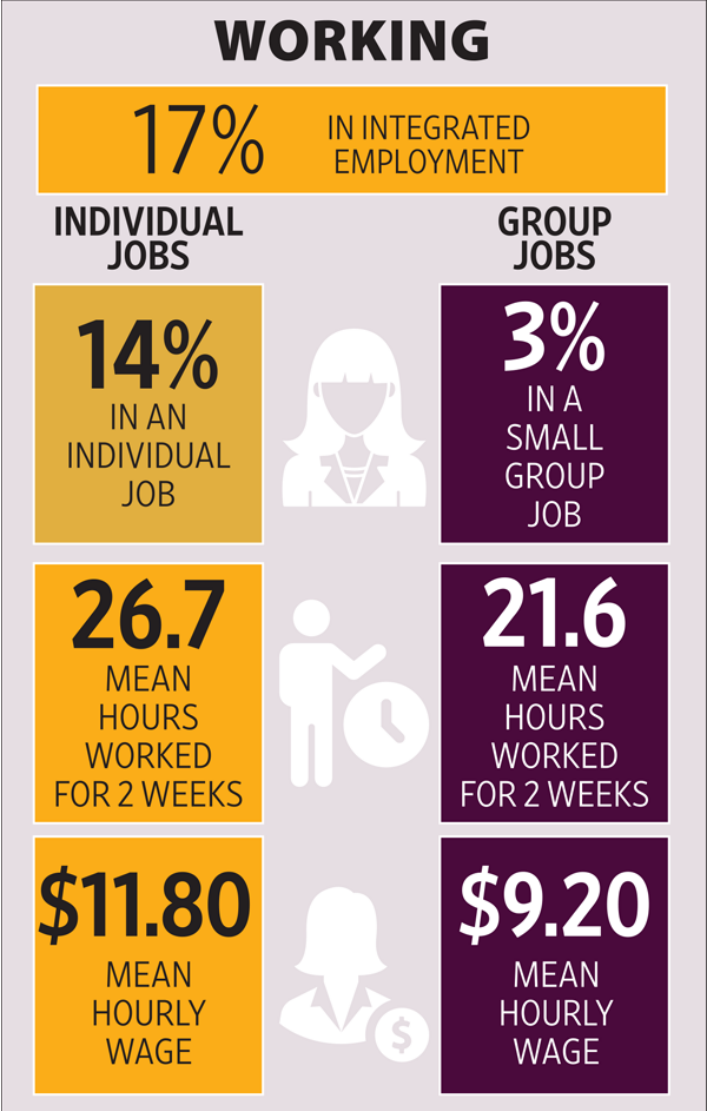


Additionally, NCI data indicated that 41% of individuals in Virginia interviewed wanted a paid job in the community but does not currently have one, this is slightly below with the national average.

**Does not have paid community job and wants a paid community job**



Data from the Institute for Community Inclusion shows that in 2023 data related to individuals working in Integrated employment and subsequently additional information on employment statistics.



**Summary:**

The twenty-second semi-annual data reporting period had a 100% response rate from providers. DBHDS is grateful to the Employment Service Organizations, DARS, and the Employment First Advisory Group Data Subcommittee for the work that they completed to make this report possible.

**Recommendations:**

1. Follow up on providers utilizing “waiver funding” for sheltered work to determine if they are truly billing sheltered work under the waiver.
2. Follow up with providers who are paying below minimum wage for Individual Supported Employment and compare providers with sub-minimum wage certificates.

3. Look at data where DARS is funding employment and cross reference with waiver status to ensure targets are reflective of all individuals with waiver.
4. Update ISP to identify additional people working under the waiver who are not receiving supports and services.