

November 30, 2012

Patrick O'Donnell, Clerk of the Legislature
State Capitol, Room 2018
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509

Dear Mr. O'Donnell:

Nebraska Revised Statute 68-1721 requires the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to report annually to the Legislature, by December 1, information regarding persons participating in an Employment First self-sufficiency contract who are engaged in certain educational activities, and information on persons who obtain or maintain employment after they are no longer eligible for cash assistance.

The report is attached. If you have any questions, please contact me at 402-471-1878

Respectfully,



Thomas D. Pristow, MSW, ACSW, Director
Division of Children and Family Services
Department of Health and Human Services

Nebraska Revised Statute 68-1721

Report on Employment First

With passage of LB842 in 2012, the Department of Health & Human Services is required to provide an annual report by December 1st to the Legislature. This report is to include Employment First participants who are, or who have been engaged in an Associate's Degree educational program for the past year. Information in this annual report includes statistical data beginning July 1, 2012, the date at which the statutory changes became effective.

Associate's Degree Information – July 1, 2012, through October 31, 2012

Month	# of Participants Pursuing an Associate's Degree	# of Participants Making Satisfactory Progress	Average # of Months in Vocational Training	# Participants Who Graduated This Month
07/12	283	265	9.55	6
08/12	291	273	7.16	5
09/12	324	314	7.7	8
10/12	376	359	7.85	3

Employment Information – July 1, 2012, through October 31, 2012

The Legislature has also requested we provide data related to employment retention for Employment First participants. For the initial reporting period we are able to provide the average hourly earnings and the number of individuals retaining employment at six months. Information related to educational level and 12 month retention of employment is not currently available but will be provided with the annual report to the Legislature on December 1, 2013.

Month	Average Hourly Earnings	Educational Level Attained	Employed Six Months	Employed Twelve Months
07/12	\$9.11	*	100	*
08/12	\$9.30	*	133	*
09/12	\$9.33	*	156	*
10/12	\$9.14	*	142	*

Summary of Activities – Promoting Post-Secondary Education

The Department does not presently have formal activities that are intended to promote post-secondary education opportunities for our participants. Upon entry into Employment First, participants are assessed to determine their current educational levels, their career interests, as well as any barriers they may have to attain economic self-sufficiency. Following the assessment, case managers engage the participant in a discussion of activities they may pursue to reach their ultimate career goal. When the participant's goal requires additional training or education, it is encouraged by the case manager and included as a work activity on the participant's plan.