

NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Pete Ricketts, Governor

November 25, 2019

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 43-517 requires the Department of Health and Human Services to provide an annual report to the Nebraska Legislature with information regarding the Employment First participants who are, or who have been, engaged in an Associate Degree educational program. This information is provided below:

- As of September 30, 2019 there were 81 Employment First participants engaged in an Associate Degree program. The graduation rate of participants from the past year October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019 averages less than 1%.
- The number of participants making satisfactory progress in their educational pursuits is 81. These participants spent an average of 3.68 months in education to complete the work requirement for their program.
- The average hourly earnings for participants in the program from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019 was \$12.19.
- 62 participants had been employed for at least six months and 69 had been employed for at least 12 months.
- Upon entry to the Employment First Program, seven participants had less than an 11th grade education, two participants had an 11th grade education, 24 had a 12th grade education, seven had received a certificate or diploma, two had an Associate Degree and one had a Bachelor's Degree.

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The Department does not have formal activities intended to promote post-secondary education opportunities for participants. Upon entry into Employment First, participants are assessed to determine their current educational levels, their career interests, and identify barriers they have in attaining economic self-sufficiency.

Following the assessment, case managers engage the participant in a discussion of activities in which they may participate in 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.

Should you have any questions, please contact my Office at (402) 471-9433 or email me at Dannette.Smith@Nebraska.gov.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dannette R. Smith" followed by a stylized "ed" monogram.

Dannette R. Smith, Chief Executive Officer
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services