



Workforce Shortage Workgroup Recommendations Summary

Background

Dakota County created a time limited Workforce and Provider Shortage workgroup from November 2022 through June 2023 to work collaboratively with stakeholders to address the shortage of workers impacting people with disabilities. The workgroup consisted of County Commissioners, people with disabilities, their family members, state agency leaders and private sector leaders. The workgroup focused on learning about the impact the workforce shortage is having on people with disabilities through listening sessions, learning about what others are doing at a local and statewide level to address the workforce shortage, and brainstorming potential solutions that Dakota County could implement. The workgroup developed 13 recommendations presented to the County Board in July 2023. The full list of recommendations is available on the Dakota County website and is linked [here](#).

Legislative Appropriation

Dakota County's 2024 legislative priorities included a request for a direct appropriation to support the implementation of these recommendations. As a result, the legislature appropriated \$250,000 to be used to develop and test an online application for matching requests for services from people with disabilities to available staff, and up to \$250,000 to be used to develop a communities-for-all program that engages businesses, community organizations, neighbors, and informal support systems to promote community inclusion of people with disabilities. This work directly ties to the recommendations of the workgroup. The specific recommendations and deliverables from the overall recommendations that will be funded by the DHS appropriation are summarized below.

Summary of Workgroup Recommendations Funded by DHS Appropriation

	Communities for All	Gig Economy App
Goal	Pilot a program to provide training, technical assistance and/or micro grants to mainstream organizations and businesses to support the inclusion of people with disabilities.	Develop an online application that uses a "gig economy" approach where people who need assistance can seek available staff to meet their needs.
Current Work	Complete community assessment to set priorities and gather baseline data.	Current RFP is active seeking vendor to build the application and run the staffing program.
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active solicitation for community partners Begin implementing pilot programs and distributing micro grants in January 2025. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select vendor, award contract, and determine deliverables and scope. Begin the app design phase. Pilot the use of the app with Dakota County individuals.