

# A PARENT'S GUIDE:

## Competitive Integrated Employment

This guide will break down what you need to know about competitive integrated employment (CIE) and sheltered workshop employment.



### Where to Start!

As your child with a disability approach working-age you will want to know the differences between CIE and sheltered workshops.



### What is CIE?

CIE refers to a community job that will pay your child at least minimum wage. Compensation will be equal to that earned by workers in the same job without disabilities who have similar qualifications.



### What is Sheltered Employment?

Sheltered employment occurs in a facility designed only for workers with disabilities. Job options for your child will be more limited and likely pay less than minimum wage.



### What is a 14c Certificate?

Sheltered facilities can legally pay workers with disabilities less than minimum wage by getting a special certificate called a "14c" from the U.S. Department of Labor.



### Shift from Sheltered to CIE

Over the past few decades, policy makers and advocacy groups have increasingly pushed to compensate workers with disabilities according to the same standards applied to those without disabilities by promoting CIE over sheltered workshops.

# What Does the Data Say about Sheltered Employment?

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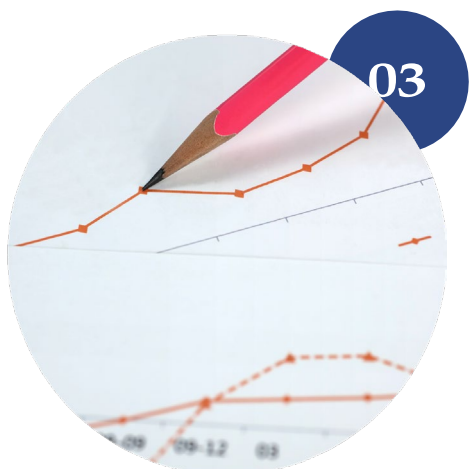
## How Many States/ Districts Have Eliminated Subminimum Wages?

States continue to reduce subminimum wage practices and instead promote CIE. As of April 2022, the U.S. Department of Labor reported the following had ceased use of 14c certificates: ME, NH, RI, AK, MD, DE, VT, HI, and DC.<sup>1</sup>



## How Many People with Disabilities Earn Subminimum Wage?

While 14c practices are becoming less common, more than 37,673 individuals with disabilities continue to be paid subminimum wages across the country during efforts to phase out 14c use.<sup>1,7</sup>



## Where is the Use of 14c Most Common?

Data from the U.S. Department of Labor indicates that subminimum wage practices are most prominent in the midwestern region of the United States.<sup>1</sup>



## Does Policy Support the Shift from Sheltered Employment to CIE?

Several U.S. policies support the use of services that help individuals with even the most significant disabilities obtain CIE. For example, The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) funds supported and customized employment. These two services are linked to CIE outcomes. WIOA (2014) also mandates that pre-employment transition services be provided to transition-age youth to better prepare them for post-school work.

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# Should My Child Seek Sheltered Work Before CIE?

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This is what the research says about why your child does not need to participate in sheltered work before CIE:



## 01 Wages

Individuals with disabilities in CIE who do not first participate in sheltered employment have a higher weekly income than their peers with a history of sheltered employment. <sup>3,4</sup>



## 02 Hours

Individuals with disabilities in CIE who do not first participate in sheltered employment work more hours per week than their peers with a history of sheltered employment. <sup>3,4</sup>



## 03 Benefits

Individuals with disabilities in CIE have access to employer provided fringe benefits like sick leave, paid time off, and retirement that is not available to their peers in sheltered employment. <sup>8</sup>



## 04 CIE Outcomes

- Research has found that individuals who do not participate in sheltered workshops before pursuing CIE are just as likely to secure competitive employment as those who first participate in sheltered work. <sup>3,4</sup>
  - Other research has found that individuals with disabilities in sheltered workshops for more than 5 years have more difficulty transitioning to CIE than those in a sheltered workshop for less than 5 years. <sup>2</sup>
  - No research has found that participation in sheltered employment leads to better employment outcomes. <sup>6</sup>
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# Why Should My Child Go Straight to CIE?

There are a number of supports and services to help your child transition directly to CIE over a sheltered workshop.



## Place-Then-Train Interventions

Interventions such as supported and customized employment focus on securing a job and then installing the supports necessary for your child to be successful rather than requiring that skills be learned before entering CIE. Supports are individualized to the needs of your child and the demands of a specific job to help ensure long-term employment success.



## Your Child will Learn More Skills

Your child does not need to know every skill required for a job prior to getting hired. Trained staff can help your child learn job specific skills. In CIE, your child will also have opportunities to develop other skills that help them become more independent. Research shows that individuals with disabilities who participate in CIE show significantly more growth in major life areas compared to those who are not in CIE, particularly in Lifelong Learning, Employment, Health and Safety, and Socialization.<sup>5</sup>



## Funding for Support Is available

Job supports and services for CIE are available for eligible adults with disabilities and potentially eligible transition-age youth through state Vocational Rehabilitation agencies and other community providers.



## Learn More

- <https://apse.org>
- <https://askjan.org/>
- <https://rsa.ed.gov/>

# The Research Discussed Above Comes From These Articles:

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1. **Avellone, L., Taylor, J., Wehman, P., Inge, K., & Brooke, V. (2023). State-Level Analysis of Subminimum Wage Use for Individuals With Disabilities in the United States: Implications for Policy and Practice. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 48(3), 127-138.**
2. **Christensen, J. J., & Richardson, K. (2017). Project SEARCH Workshop to Work: Participant Reflections on the Journey Through Career Discovery. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 46(3), 341-354.**
3. **Cimera, R. E. (2011). Does Being in Sheltered Workshops Improve the Employment Outcomes of Supported Employees with Intellectual Disabilities? *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 35(1), 21-27.**
4. **Cimera, R. E., Wehman, P., West, M., & Burgess, S. (2012). Do Sheltered Workshops Enhance Employment Outcomes for Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder? *Autism*, 16(1), 87-94.**
5. **Schall, C., Sima, A. P., Avellone, L., Wehman, P., McDonough, J., & Brown, A. (2020). The Effect of a Business Internship Model and Employment on Enhancing the Independence of Young Adults with Significant Impact from Autism. *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, 58(4), 301-313.**
6. **Taylor, J., Avellone, L., Brooke, V., Wehman, P., Inge, K., Schall, C., & Iwanaga, K. (2022). The Impact of Competitive Integrated Employment on Economic, Psychological, and Physical Health Outcomes for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 35(2), 448-459.**
7. **U.S. Department of Labor (2022, April). 14c Certificate Holders. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/workers-with-disabilities/section-14c/certificate-holders?msclkid=f3cfd068b2ba11ecb57d3afd25eabe24>**
8. **Wehman, P., Schall, C., Avellone, L., McDonough, J., Whittenburg, H., Dubois, T., & Broda, M. (2022). Effects of a 9-Month Military-Base Internship on the Competitive Integrated Employment of Military Dependent and Connected Youth with ASD. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 53, 3525-3541**