

GEORGIA'S GOT GAME

SB 384 would make Georgia a Model Employer for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities

GEORGIA AS MODEL EMPLOYER (GAME) IS A POLICY THAT WOULD REQUIRE STATE AGENCIES TO SET GOALS FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. GAME POLICIES PUT THE STATE IN POSITION TO BE A LEADING EXAMPLE FOR EMPLOYERS THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

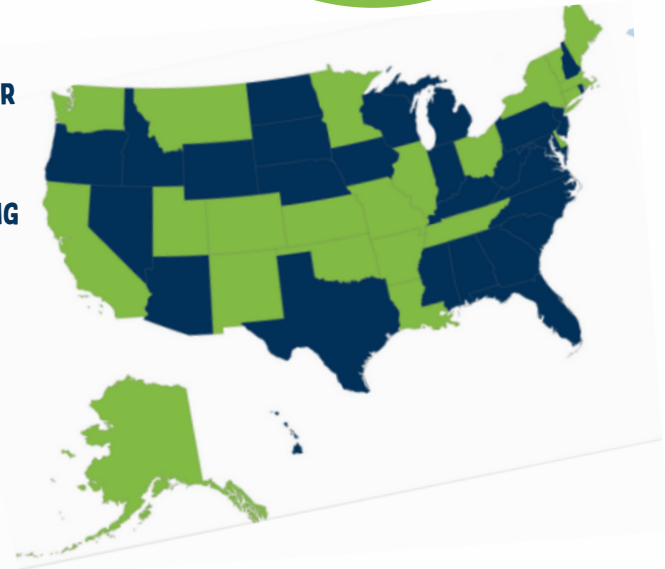
WHY SHOULD GEORGIA BE A MODEL EMPLOYER?

GAME establishes the state as a leader in inclusive hiring best-practices, creating an example for private-sector employers to follow.

Inclusive hiring of people with disabilities strengthens our communities by making sure that everyone has a meaningful part to play.

The state's benefits of enacting GAME outweigh the costs of not acting - both economically and socially.

CURRENTLY, MORE THAN 20 STATES HAVE STATE AS A MODEL EMPLOYER (SAME) POLICIES ENACTED EITHER THROUGH EXECUTIVE ORDERS BY GOVERNORS OR BY LEGISLATION. AS OF JANUARY 2023, THE STATES HIGHLIGHTED IN GREEN ARE THE STATES THAT ARE ALREADY MAXIMIZING INCLUSIVENESS AND PROSPERITY THROUGH SAME.



The National Conference of State Legislatures and the National Governors Association have both highlighted SAME as a bipartisan issue that state legislatures should adopt based on the economic opportunities presented.

\$1.46



Benefit-cost ratio of supported employees for every dollar spent. Employees with I/DD returned an average annual net benefit to taxpayers of \$3,016.08 per employee.
(Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities - TASH)

REAL JOBS FOR REAL WAGES

HB 1125 would end the provision that allows community rehabilitation programs to pay individuals with disabilities less than minimum wage.

FOR DECADES, IT HAS BEEN LEGAL TO PAY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES LESS THAN MINIMUM WAGE. THIS IS KNOWN AS A 14C CERTIFICATE AND ORGANIZATIONS HOLDING ONE CAN PAY PEOPLE AS LITTLE AS 22¢ AN HOUR.

WHAT'S THE WAY OUT?

Georgia has a federal Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment (SWTCIE) grant that is designated to assist organizations with the transition out of 14c.

GCDD's Advancing Employment project has already supported two organizations to stop paying people subminimum wages.

Number of community rehabilitation programs in Georgia with 14C certificates. *(US Department of Labor)* ⇒ **8**

Number of workers in Georgia paid less than minimum wage. *(US Department of Labor)* ⇒ **245**

A COMMON FEAR IS THAT INDIVIDUALS WILL LOSE THEIR BENEFITS

Many individuals with disabilities in these jobs receive supplementary security income (SSI) based on the criteria that they have less than \$2,000 in assets. However, there are ways around the \$2,000 SSI asset limit that are already established. Many Georgians with disabilities use ABLE or Special Needs Trusts that allow them to save beyond \$2,000 and maintain SSI eligibility.

There are also benefits navigators who can assist individuals with disabilities to ensure that they do not lose their benefits by going back to work. DB101 was funded by the federal SWTCIE grant to help people with disabilities and service providers understand the connections between work and benefits to ensure that there are not coverage gaps. **It will be tailored to Georgia-specific benefits by 2024.**

Ending 14c will not impact social security, Medicaid/Medicare benefits, or ABLE accounts. If the few hundred Georgians with disabilities currently earning subminimum wage continue working at minimum wage or higher, their incomes will go up, but their benefits eligibility will not change.*

**Unless their ABLE account exceeds \$100,000, in which case SSI is suspended but Medicaid remains intact.*

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT:



CHARLOTTE DENSMORE

Policy Director, GCDD, charlotte.densmore@gcdd.ga.gov, (404) 859-5316



CHARLIE MILLER

Legislative Advocacy Director, GCDD, charles.miller@gcdd.ga.gov, (404) 617-9957