

## Removing Barriers to Work for People with Disabilities

People with disabilities can and want to work. A recent survey of unemployed, working age Missourians with disabilities found that 51 percent desire a paying job. When people with disabilities work, it betters their lives and **boosts Missouri's economy**. Improving Ticket to Work Health Assurance Program (TWhA) will remove barriers to work.

### Current Barriers to Work

- Many people with disabilities who can and want to work need some help with essential daily activities such as dressing, bathing, or meal preparation
- Personal care services are not covered by private health insurance and can **only** be accessed through Medicaid or private pay, which is not realistic.
- Of the estimated 836,153 working age Missourians with disabilities, only 206,530 are employed – this is a mere 35% labor force participation rate.

72%



### Improving Economic Self-Sufficiency

- Missouri's TWhA is the **only** program that allows people with disabilities on SSDI to access personal care services while working.
- Program eligibility should be changed to encourage more people with disabilities to work and accept jobs that allow for career advancement and full earning potential.
- Missouri should increase the income eligibility criteria so individuals can advance their careers without losing vital personal care
- Spousal income up to \$50,000 and retirement accounts should be excluded when determining eligibility.

38%

Workers with disabilities  
who earn less than  
\$15,000 per year

### Ticket to Work in Other States

- As of 2018, **44 states have a Medicaid Buy-In program** like Ticket to Work.<sup>1</sup>
- Kansas implemented Ticket to Work in 2002 with great success. Three years after implementation participant's yearly income tax increased \$74-\$123.
- Arkansas' program does not count spousal income. Freedom to work and start a family empowers people with disabilities to pursue the American dream and participate in the economy.<sup>2</sup>

### Recommendations

The Missouri Legislature should support **SB 773/HB 1927** to improve the Ticket to Work Health Assurance program to allow more Missourians with disabilities to achieve greater economic self-sufficiency.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/medicaid-eligibility-through-buy-in-programs-for-working-people-with-disabilities/?activeTab=map&currentTimeframe=0&selectedDistributions=monthly-income-limit&sortModel=%7B%22collid%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>

<sup>2</sup> [https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/daas/PUB-097\\_Workers\\_With\\_Disabilities\\_Brochure\\_rev\\_6-18.pdf](https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/daas/PUB-097_Workers_With_Disabilities_Brochure_rev_6-18.pdf)